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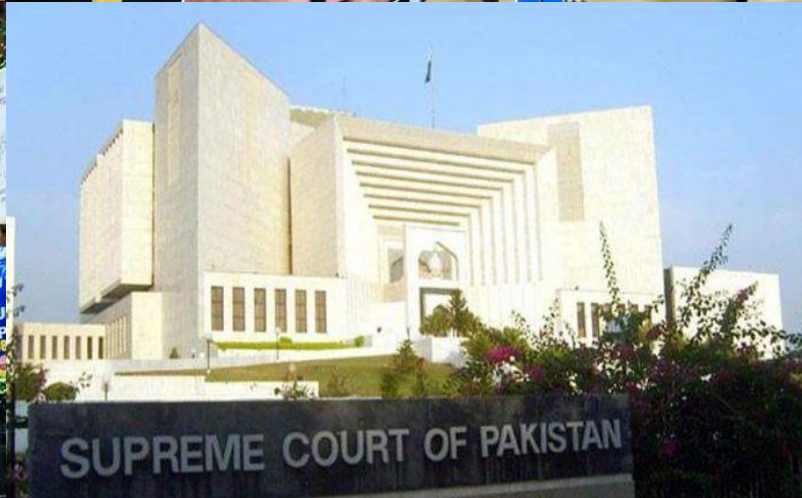
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Punjab's new Chief Minister: A profile of Chaudhry Parvez Elahi

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Daily Focus, 8 August 2022

Punjab's new Chief Minister: A profile of Chaudhry Parvez Elahi

The PTI's issue with the ECP stems from technical differences and mistrust

Joel Jacob



Image Source: Dawn

On 27 July, following the Supreme Court's intervention, Chaudhry Parvez Elahi was sworn in as Chief Minister of Punjab. Elahi secured 186 votes against 179 votes of Hamza Shehbaz but was denied becoming the Chief Minister first. The Deputy Speaker rejected the ten votes of PML-Q lawmakers, following the party chief's instruction Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain through a letter directed his party lawmakers to vote for Hamza.

The Supreme Court, in an 11-page order, said: "We find that the understanding and implementation of the said short judgment as well as the provisions of Article 63A(1)(b) of the Constitution by the Deputy Speaker, Provincial Assembly of Punjab, Lahore was patently incorrect and erroneous and cannot be sustained." As a result, the ruling by the Deputy Speaker of the Punjab Assembly is set aside and declared to be void. Elahi became Punjab's 19th Chief Minister.

Who is Parvez Elahi? What is his background?

Parvez Elahi belongs to a Punjabi Jatt family of Gujarat to the industrialist Chaudhry Manzoor Elahi Warraich. Manzoor Elahi, along with his brother Chaudhry Zahoor Elahi owned a textile business in Gujarat

and established two textile units - Gujarat Silk Mills and Pakistan Textile Mills. In 1950, the business expanded to Lahore where they established Parvez Textile Mills. After the death of the elder Elahi brothers, the family business was taken over by Parvez Elahi and his brother Javed Elahi in Pakistan. Parvez Elahi holds a diploma in industrial management. Elahi's cousin, former Prime Minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain did not interfere in business and engaged in active politics.

Elahi started his political career in the local body elections and got elected as a member of the Punjab assembly for six consecutive terms during 1985 -2002. After the 1985 party-less elections, he had set up a group against the then chief minister Nawaz Sharif on account of differences on various issues. The initiative led to permanent distrust between the Chaudhrys and the Sharifs, although they have been working together till the ouster of the PML-N government in October 1999.

During 2002-2007, Elahi became the Chief Minister of Punjab following the general elections. In the 2008 election, Elahi was elected as a member of the National Assembly of Pakistan and as a member of the Provincial Assembly of Punjab for the seventh time. PML-Q nominated Elahi as its candidate for the post of prime minister following the 2008 general elections. In 2011, the ceremonial post of deputy prime minister was created to appoint him as the first deputy prime minister having no powers even in the absence of the prime minister. In the 2013 general election, Elahi contested for the National Assembly from the NA-105 Gujarat constituency; he and

won defeating candidates of PPP and PML-N. In the 2018 general elections, Elahi in alliance with PTI contested from two National Assembly seats as well as the provincial, and having won on both NA seats, he vacated them and retained the provincial seat.

On 16 August 2018, he was re-elected as Speaker of the Punjab Assembly until 2022.

Elahi with Musharraf and PPP

Soon after Pervez Musharraf toppled the PML-N government in the 1999 military coup, a group of the former ruling party emerged as the 'likeminded' faction. The group later turned into the PML-Q. After the coup in 1999, the Chaudhrys grabbed the opportunity when Musharraf offered the two Chaudhry brothers key positions, interior and chief minister Punjab under a new party, the PML-Q.

After the exit of Nawaz Sharif's family from the country in 2000, Chaudhary Shujaat Hussain emerged as the principal actor. In 2008, the PML-Q leader was made the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly.

In 2011, the PML-Q entered into an alliance with PPP, a longstanding demand of the party was fulfilled and Elahi was awarded the post of deputy prime minister.

The PTI-PMLQ coalition in 2018

In the 2018 senate elections, PTI agreed with PML-Q to win the elections and the PTI emerged as the single largest party but short of a majority in the National Assembly. By gaining the support of a number of independent candidates and smaller parties like PMLQ, BNP-M, BAP, and MQM, the PTI was able to form a government without PPP's support. Elahi said the PTI has nominated him as a joint candidate for chief minister in Punjab. Nawaz Sharif accepted the condition of PML-Q over the Punjab Chief Minister slot.

The proposal, which was earlier rejected, has been taken to get the support of the government ally on the no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Rift within the Chaudhry Family

On 29 March, Shujaat Hussain denied reports of a rift within the Chaudhry family and the party, saying all decisions taken had his "complete backing". The statement came in the wake of his party's deal with the ruling PTI as Imran Khan agreed to give the coveted slot of the Punjab chief minister to Elahi in return for the support on the no-confidence motion submitted by the opposition. Initially, Shujaat supported Elahi but later withdrew his support stating that he differs from the state institutions. The efforts to bring the Chaudhry brothers of Gujarat back on the same page did not find the result as the sons of Shujaat declared they will maintain their alliance with the party of the Sharifs. Salik Hussain and Shafay Hussain gave full support to Hamza Shahbaz and to the PML-N-led federal government and reassured them that their political alliance would continue in the future as well.

PML-Q workers have staged a protest against Shujaat over his decision not to vote for Elahi during the Punjab election. After the election of PTI-backed candidate Elahi as Punjab Chief Minister, PML-Q decided to remove Shujaat and hold a fresh election for the seat stating his ill health, but on the basis of Shujaat filing a case in Election Commission on 5 August, he said he would remain the PML-Q president until the next hearing.

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PAKISTAN IN BRIEF

INTERNAL

TTP does not intend to fight with any political or religious party

On 18 August, Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) issued a statement which alleged that TTP was keen on the success of peace talks with the government of Pakistan and some pro-western groups were frustrated as the situation in Pakistan showed signs of improvement owing to its peace talks with the government. It said that TTP had reiterated its stance on many occasions that it wanted real peace in the country. It added that TTP was neither anti-state nor was it working for anti-Pakistan powers. TTP recently denied its involvement in extortion, amid the resurgence of armed groups in Swat, Dir and other parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Awami National Party recently highlighted the issue of extortion and resurgence of militants in the province. (“[TTP warns nationalists against levelling allegations.](#)” *Dawn*, 19 August 2022)

ECP to take up disqualification case against Imran Khan in Toshkhana case

On 18 August, A five-member bench headed by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikander Sultan Raja will hear the reference in the Toshkhana case. Article 63 of the Constitution disqualifies an elected or chosen as a member of Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) unless [...] he is sagacious, righteous and non-profligate, honest and ameen, there being no declaration to the contrary by a court of law. Former prime minister Nawa Sharif was disqualified under the same provision. (Saqib Virk, “[Hearing on Imran’s disqualification reference today.](#)” *The Express Tribune*, 18 August 2022)

PPP raises concern over government’s decision on petrol hike

On 16 August, Asif Ali Zardari expressed his concern over the federal government’s decision to increase the price of petroleum products by Rs 6.72 for the next fortnight,

saying that “consultation on such decisions” was important. Zardari said that PPP and other coalition parties had joined the government to give relief to the people, calling it “our top priority”. Miftah Ismail, in a series of tweets earlier today, said that the government had not imposed new taxes on petroleum products and the changes had been accorded to purchasing by the Pakistan State Oil. (“[Zardari expresses concern over Shehbaz govt’s decision to raise petrol prices.](#)” *Dawn*, 17 August 2022)

Senate committee expressed concern over PNSC crisis

On 16 August, the Senate Standing Committee on Maritime Affairs expressed concern over the administrative crisis in the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC), triggered by the refusal of the former chairman to hand over charge to his successor, on the basis of a stay order. The committee meeting, presided over by Senator Rubina Khalid, was informed that Shehbaz Sharif had appointed Rear Admiral Jawad Ahmed as the chairman of the PNSC on 5 August and the new chairman went to the PNSC headquarters the same day to take charge. However, the former chairman of the state-owned entity, Mr. Rizwan Ahmed, refused to vacate the office on the grounds that he had obtained a stay order from the Sindh High Court. The committee said that non-compliance with the prime minister’s order was a criminal offense, and the chairperson of the committee directed the Ministry of Maritime Affairs to take stern action against Mr. Ahmed and curtail his financial and administrative powers. (Kalbe Ali, “[Senate panel expresses concern over crisis in Pakistan National Shipping Corporation.](#)” *Dawn*, 17 August 2022)

Elahi challenges ECP’s domain to hear intra-party polls case

On 16 August, Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi challenged the jurisdiction of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in deciding the intra-party elections of his party, the PML-Q. Elahi’s

counsel contended the PML-Q was without a leadership since the ECP's decision. A five-member bench of the ECP, headed by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja had heard the petition against the removal of PML-Q President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain from his post as well as the holding of the intra-party polls. ([“Elahi challenges ECP's domain to hear intra-party polls case,”](#) *The Express Tribune*, 17 August 2022)

National Assembly hold Minority Convention for the first time

On 11 August, a minority convention was held in the National Assembly to commemorate the speech of Muhammad Ali Jinnah regarding the freedom and equality of minorities in the then constituent assembly on 11 August 1947. This was the first meeting of its kind in Pakistan's parliamentary history. During the meeting, a unanimous resolution was passed for the rights of minorities, in which all the representatives of the all minority communities declared parliament as the centre of their hopes. Meanwhile, NA Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf announced that the minority convention would be held on 11 August every year. ([“NA hosts ‘Minority Convention’ to uphold their rights,”](#) *Dawn*, 12 August 2022)

We will celebrate Pakistan's “real freedom” on 13 August, says Imran Khan

On 11 August, Imran Khan stated that during the rally on 13 August Pakistan's “real freedom” will be celebrated. Further, while addressing the convention of the minority community he said, “If there is no justice in a society, that society cannot develop. There is no justice in the animal society ... the powerful rule, but there is justice in human society and justice means implementing human rights.” Additionally, he assured the minority community that “we will protect the rights of the minorities in Pakistan, as we are the protectors of the rights of the minority community.” ([“Imran says he will show how to achieve ‘real](#)

[freedom’ on 13th,”](#) *The Express Tribune*, 12 August 2022)

PPP calls for reviewing the seven-year-old National Action Plan

On 11 August, PPP Senator Raza Rabbani while speaking to Dawn called for revisiting the policy of engagement with the TTP and review of the seven-year-old National Action Plan (NAP) against terrorism. Further, he suggested that the new NAP should be prepared by the Parliamentary Committee on National Security (PCNS) having representation of all stakeholders. Further, while speaking on the increased terrorist attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa he said, “These attacks suggest the need to revisit NAP as also the policy of engagement with the TTP as it also no longer seems to have a unified command.” (Amir Wasim, [“Raza Rabbani for revisiting policy of engagement with Tehreek-i-Taliban,”](#) *Dawn*, 12 August 2022)

Meanwhile, The Express Tribune reported that the government is preparing a ‘contingency plan’ to deal with the resurgence of the TTP. Additionally, according to The News International, the TTP has established a check-post on the Balasoor Top besides moving in other areas of Matta tehsil of Swat district. ([“Govt cobbles up plan to tackle TTP resurgence,”](#) *The Express Tribune*, 12 August 2022; [“TTP militants set up ‘checkpost’ in Swat,”](#) *The News International*, 12 August 2022)

Politicians are required to respect the national institutions, says Asif

On 11 August, Khawaja Asif while addressing the soft launch ceremony of the 11th International Defense Exhibition and Seminar -2022, said that “leaders of all political parties were required to respect the national security institutions, warning that if anyone showed disrespect, he would definitely face the law.” According to Asif, the motto of IDEAS-2022 ‘Arms for Peace’ highlighted “our commitment to the

international community for peace and harmony”. He added: “Besides meeting the domestic requirements our defense products are now gaining market shares at the international level as well.” (“[Asif says politicians required to respect national institutions](#),” *The Express Tribune*, 12 August 2022)

Raid on Gill's driver's house 'legal,' says ICT police

On 10 August, the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) stated that the raid conducted on PTI Shahbaz Gill’s driver’s house was ‘legal.’ The police claimed that they were collecting “all evidence” related to the case. They said, “Wherever legal action is required, the police will do its job,” adding that the scope of this particular case could be extended to other provinces beyond Islamabad. Further, they said that legal action would be taken against those who were found “concealing evidence or erasing evidence.”

Meanwhile, Punjab Chief Minister Parvez Elahi said that he advised the PTI leadership to disassociate itself from the anti-army statement given by Shahbaz Gill adding, “I have given a statement against Shahbaz Gill’s tirade against Pakistan Army, which is an important national institution, and asked him whether he had gone out of his senses.” (“[ICT police says raid on Gill's driver's house 'legal'](#),” *The Express Tribune*, 11 August 2022; Mansoor Malik, “[Elahi advises PTI to distance itself from Gill’s remarks](#),” *The Express Tribune*, 11 August 2022)

TTP claims not involved in Dir lawmaker attack

On 10 August, the TTP denied involvement in the recent armed attack on PTI MPA Malik Liaquat Ali Khan. Additionally, the TTP ‘strongly’ condemned the attack and was carrying out an investigation to check whether any of its members were involved in it. (“[TTP claims not involved in Dir lawmaker attack](#),” *The News International*,

11 August 2022)

Qasim Suri gets notice to appear before FIA over Fund’s probe

On 10 August, FIA summoned Qasim Khan Suri among four other PTI leaders to appear in person before the agency today in a case about the ECP in a prohibited funding case. The financial watchdog pointed out that Rs5.3 million were withdrawn from the PTI accounts in the aforementioned three years out of the total deposited Rs5.5m in the same period. The agency said, “The bank account where the money was transferred is registered in the name of Qasim Khan Suri and three other PTI leaders. “Replying to the notice Suri responded that none of their leaders will appear before the FIA as the Islamabad High court has already declared such notices unconstitutional.” He added the money was deposited into the official account of the PTI from 2011 to 2013 and the funds were used for party affairs. (Ghalib Nihad, “[FIA summons PTI's Qasim Suri, other leaders in funds probe](#),” *Dawn*, 11 August 2022)

Taliban confirms TTP leader’s killing in Afghanistan

On 8 August, Taliban spokesman Muhamamad Khorasani confirmed the killing of senior Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) leader Omar Khalid Khorasani and two others in a roadside bomb attack in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, TTP officials urged the Taliban government in Afghanistan to investigate the incident and unearth “spies” who could be responsible for the death of senior TTP leaders. (Tahir Khan, “[Senior TTP leader Omar Khalid Khorasani killed in Afghanistan, Taliban spokesperson confirms](#),” *Dawn*, 9 August 2022)

TLP to hold Nazriya-e-Pakistan march from Liaquat Bagh till Faizabad Interchange

On 9 August, The Express Tribune reported that the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) has announced that it will hold the Nazriya-e-Pakistan march from Liaquat Bagh till

Faizabad Interchange on 13 August. According to TLP leader Pir Inayatul Haq Shah stated that they had given an application to the Islamabad administration more than a month ago seeking permission to hold the conference at the Parade Ground, however, the additional deputy commissioner and the AC has denied permission citing sanctity associated with the month of Muharram. ("[TLP to hold Nazriya-e-Pakistan march on Aug 13,](#)" *The Express Tribune*, 9 August 2022)

PML-N raises disqualification for Imran Khan in Toshkhana Reference

On 8 August, Rana Sanaullah while talking to reporters stated that PML-N is confident that Imran Khan is going to be disqualified in the Toshkhana reference as he has not declared in his assets the amount he received from the sale of state gifts. He further said, "A standard has been set by disqualifying Nawaz Sharif for not receiving salary from his son's company. If he can be disqualified over it then Imran Khan is certain to face the same fate for not declaring millions of rupees in his assets that he got after selling the Toshkhana gifts." Last week, the government filed a reference with the ECP seeking disqualification of Khan from holding public office for allegedly acquiring gifts from the Toshkhana state repository. (Zulqernain Tahir, "[PML-N certain of Imran's disqualification in Toshkhana reference,](#)" *Dawn*, 9 August 2022)

TTP's top commander Omar Khalid Khorasani killed in Afghanistan

On 8 August, The Express Tribune reported that a vehicle carrying senior commanders of the TTP, including Omar Khalid Khorasani was targeted by an explosive device in eastern Afghanistan. According to a source, "A vehicle reportedly carrying TTP Mohmand chief Omar Khalid Khorasani, aka Abdul Wali Mohmand, Mufti Hassan and Hafiz Dawlat Khan, was targeted in Sharki village, near Margha, in Bermal district of Paktika province." Meanwhile, TTP has not yet confirmed

these killings. (Shahabullah Yousafzai, "[TTP's top commander Omar Khalid Khorasani reportedly killed in Paktika blast,](#)" *The Express Tribune*, 8 August 2022)

Role of money to be regulated by Fafen

On 7 August, The Free and Fair Election Network called upon parliament and political parties to strengthen the regulations on political finance to curtail the role of money in elections. It noted that unchecked use of money in electoral exercises practically deprived the majority of the population of exercising their right to contest elections. In a statement, it asked the parliamentary parties and those outside the Parliament to develop a consensus on critical electoral reforms, including those required to regulate the use of money in elections. It also recommended strengthening the legal framework to regulate expenses incurred during an election by contesting candidates and political parties alike, and timely scrutiny of assets and liabilities submitted by the members of parliament and provincial assemblies. (Iftikhar A. Khan, "[Fafen seeks reforms to regulate role of money in politics,](#)" *Dawn*, 8 August 2022)

Imran Khan announces a 'counter-fascism' strategy on 13 August against the government

On 7 August, Imran Khan said that in order to counter the 'fascist' government led by coalition parties, he will announce a strategy to "counter this fascism" during a rally at Islamabad's Parade Ground on August 13. The decision to organize what Mr. Khan termed 'Azadi March' a day before Independence Day was taken by the PTI leadership on 6 August (Ikram Junaidi, "[Imran to spell out 'counter-fascism' strategy on Aug 13,](#)" *Dawn*, 8 August 2022)

PROVINCES

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Preparations for next general polls to get started

On 19 August, The Express Tribune reported that the ECP has directed its officials to prepare the lists of polling staff and stations and also sought the proposed lists of staff from the provincial election commissioners. For the upcoming election polls, the election staff will be trained on modern lines instead of traditional methods. They will be made aware of the electoral provisions included in the Constitution. In the new delimitation, the number of general seats of the National Assembly has been reduced from 272 in the present assembly to 266. The reduction of six seats came in accordance with the 25th Constitutional Amendment, following the merger of erstwhile Fata with Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. ("[ECP orders preparations for next general polls](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 19 August 2022)

Balochistan: PM assures relief to flood-hit people as death toll rises

On 17 August, Shehbaz Sharif expressed serious concern about the devastation caused by the recent floods across Pakistan, vowing that the provision of humanitarian relief to the affected people was a high priority of his government. The torrential rain and flash floods ravaged many parts of Balochistan and the government called upon the Centre to provide a special package of Rs60 billion for the repair of infrastructure and rehabilitation of flood-hit families. Officials put the death toll across the province at 205 after floodwaters swept away five people near the Saranan area of the Pishin district and no rail and road link between Quetta and the rest of the country despite all-out efforts for the past several days. (Saleem Shahid, Syed Irfan Raza, "[Death toll in Balochistan rises to 205](#),"; "[Relief to flood-hit people will be provided on priority: PM](#)," *Dawn*, 18 August 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Militants will not be allowed to disturb peace, says Swat Jirga

On 17 August, the leaders of different political parties addressing a conference organized by the Swat Quami Jirga said that they will not allow militants to disturb the peace. The local leaders of all political parties except PTI besides elders, traders, transporters, lawyers, and youth activists attended the conference. They condemned FIRs lodged by police against the peaceful protest recently and also condemned the proposed route of the second phase of the Swat Expressway and termed it the economic murder of the people of Swat as it disturbs the environment. ("[Militants won't be allowed to disturb peace: Swat jirga](#)," *Dawn*, 18 August 2022)

Sindh: The second phase of LG polls is to be started as ordered by the Supreme Court

On 17 August, The Supreme court after three days of continuous hearing on a set of petitions ordered the ECP to go ahead with the second phase of local government elections in Sindh. Umar Ata Bandial said the process to hold the local government elections cannot be stopped at this stage. The bench, consisting of the CJP, Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah, and Justice Ayesha Malik, had taken up a set of petitions filed by the MQM, PTI, and others against the Sindh Local Government Act (SLGA) as well as seeking postponement of the second phase of local government elections in Sindh, slated for Aug 28. The advocate general drew the court's attention to the guidelines suggested by the Sindh High Court through a 2016 judgment in a similar case for carrying out the delimitation process for local government elections. (Nasir Iqbal, "[SC tells ECP to go ahead with second phase of LG polls in Sindh](#)," *Dawn*, 18 August 2022)

Punjab: River Ravi following at 29,000 cusecs and had a normal look, says Flood Forecasting Division

On 17 August, the Flood Forecasting Division officials stated that the river Ravi was flowing at 29,000 cusecs and had a normal look. The officials stated that

although India released 171,000 cusecs of water in two days, the dry bed phenomenon worked in favour of Pakistan and only 29,000 cusecs arrived at Shahdara. The official said, “Speed of flow drops, massive quantity of water is lost in quenching riverbed’s thirst and duration of water flow increases. It is precisely for this reason, flow in the Ravi at Shahdara is completely normal. To put the flow in context, the bridge on the Ravi at Shahdara is designed for 235,000 cusecs and Wednesday’s flow is a paltry 29,000 cusecs.” ([“Flow in Ravi well under control,” Dawn, 18 August 2022](#))

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Two police officers on polio duty killed in Tank

On 16 August, two police officers providing security to polio workers were killed after “unknown terrorists” opened fire on them in Tank, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Following the incident, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said, “Police force has been rendering unmatched sacrifices against terrorism,” the report quoted the prime minister as saying, adding that he expressed the commitment to eliminate the “menace of terrorism.” ([“2 police officers on polio security martyred by firing in KP’s Tank,” Dawn, 16 August 2022](#))

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Thousands protest in Lower Dir against lawlessness

On 16 August, thousands of people protested the non-arrest of the culprits behind the attack at PTI MPA Liaqat Ali Khan in Timargara, Lower Dir. They accused the government of inaction in the face of increasing lawlessness and said that police failed to arrest the culprits behind the attack despite the passage of 12 days. A complete shutter-down was also observed across the district on this occasion. (Syed Amjad Ali Shah, [“Thousands protest in Lower Dir against lawlessness,” The Express Tribune, 17 August 2022](#))

Balochistan: Cabinet decides to set up commission for missing persons

On 16 August, the cabinet decided to

constitute a high-powered parliamentary commission on the issue of missing persons. The body will be headed by the home minister and include two members each from the government and the opposition and the summary of the commission should be submitted to the Chief Minister. The provincial cabinet reviewed the situation in the wake of the devastating rains and floods. An official of the Board of Revenue informed the cabinet about the human and financial losses caused by floods in the province. The cabinet ordered the completion of surveys about losses caused by the floods and rains so that relief and rehabilitation work could begin soon. (Saleem Shahid, [“Balochistan cabinet okays commission on missing persons,” Dawn, 17 August 2022](#))

Sindh: Government launches week-long anti-polio campaign to inoculate over 9.9 million children

On 15 August, the Sindh government launched a week-long anti-polio campaign to inoculate over 9.9 million children under five. Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah formally launched the drive at the National Institute of Child Health (NICH). The campaign is scheduled to be held until 21 August in Karachi and Hyderabad divisions and then extended to Shaheed Benazirabad, Mirpurkhas, Sukkur, and Larkana divisions. (Tahir Siddiqui, [“Week-long drive to vaccinate 9.9m children against polio begins in Sindh,” Dawn, 16 August 2022](#))

Sindh: LG law is ‘discriminatory’ says MQM

On 15 August, MQM told the Supreme Court that section 10 (1) of the SLGA, 2013 was discriminatory as it deprived the party of any opportunity to have its own mayor to serve Karachi and other cities of the province. Representing MQM, Barrister Dr. Farogh Naseem argued before the top court that through section 10(1) of the SLGA, the Sindh government had violated the Supreme Court’s 2014 directions in which the

Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) was empowered to delimit local government constituencies under Article 140-A, 218 and 222 of the Constitution and the federal, Sindh and Punjab governments were asked to make laws to enable the ECP to delimit constituencies of local governments. Headed by Umar Ata Bandial, the Supreme Court bench also comprising Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Ayesha Malik, had taken up a set of petitions filed by MQM, PTI, and others against the SLGA. (Nasir Iqbal, "[MQM terms Sindh LG law 'discriminatory'](#)," *Dawn*, 16 August 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Landmine blast injures Khar tehsil Chairman

On 15 August, Khar tehsil council chairman Haji Said Badshah was injured along with his two companions in a landmine explosion in tehsil at about 9:30 am. Police said that the vehicle of Badshah was hit by a landmine planted along the roadside and is under investigation to find the elements behind the attack. A team of medical workers immediately reached the area and shifted all the injured to the district headquarters hospital in Khar for treatment after providing first aid to them. The officials were told by the doctors that the condition of the wounded persons was stable. (Anwarullah Khan, "[Khar tehsil chairman among three injured in landmine blast](#)," *Dawn*, 16 August 2022)

Balochistan: ANP alleges province being pushed into fire, demands judicial probe into police shooting in Harnai

On 15 August, Awami National Party (ANP), a coalition partner in the Balochistan Awami Party-led provincial government, and some opposition members demanded formation of a judicial commission, headed by a senior judge of the high court, to probe into alleged killing of an ANP activist. It is pertinent to mention that neither the local police, nor the Balochistan government, nor the military have addressed the alleged incident and the subsequent protest. ANP parliamentary alleged that police and local

administration were not registering an FIR against those who fired on the protesters. (Saleem Shahid, "[Demand for judicial probe into Harnai shooting](#)," *Dawn*, 16 August 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Assembly accepts adjournment motion over lawlessness in Swat and Malakand Division

On 15 August, an adjournment motion on the 'deteriorating' law and order situation in Swat and other districts of Malakand division and tribal districts for general discussion was jointly tabled by MPAs of the opposition MMA. It added that a wave of lawlessness had swept through the region and, after repeated incidents of targeted killings, some armed men held officials of the law-enforcement agencies, including a deputy superintendent of police, hostage in Swat. ("[KP Assembly admits opposition's motion for debate on Malakand 'lawlessness'](#)," *Dawn*, 16 August 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Qasim Suri avoids FIA notice and gets court stops action against the ex-speaker

On 12 August, *Dawn* reported that Qasim Suri challenged the call-up notice issued to him by the FIA. In its ongoing probe into the case, the Peshawar High Court restrained the FIA from taking any action against the former National Assembly speaker. The bench directed the court's office to fix for hearing in the last week of August the petition that requested the court to set aside a notice issued by the FIA to Qasim to appear before an inquiry officer in connection with the probe into two bank accounts managed by the former speaker from 2018 till 2013 as the PTI provincial head. The petitioner wants the inquiry to be declared illegal and based on mala fide. (Malik Asad, "[Court stops action against ex-speaker, Suri 'ignores' FIA notice](#)," *Dawn* 12 August 2022)

Punjab: Criticism over removing Astro turf in Lahore's National Stadium

On 11 August, Former hockey Olympian

Manzoorul Hasan Senior said that the Punjab government's decision of removing the AstroTurf from the National Hockey Stadium for the PTI public rally was described as a great loss of hockey. It is the biggest hockey stadium in Asia and has hosted several momentous tournaments such as the World Cup. He questioned Sports Minister Malik Masood's claim that the turf was being replaced and now it would be installed in Sargodha and that it had to be changed by the Buzdar government because it was already quite old. He further stated that the decision to change the turf had already been taken by the previous government so it was not being replaced owing to the public rally. (Mohammad Yaqoob, "[Punjab takes the flak for removal of Lahore's National Stadium AstroTurf](#)," *Dawn*, 12 August 2022)

Balochistan: One killed in grenade and bomb attacks in Khuzdar and Noshki areas
On 10 August, one person was killed and 10 others were injured in grenade and bomb attacks in Khuzdar and Noshki areas in Balochistan. According to the police, unknown motorcyclists targeted a stall selling Pakistani flags and other decoration items in Khuzdar while an improvised explosive device planted in a vehicle was used in Anam-Bostan road in Noshki. ("[One killed, 10 injured in grenade, bomb attacks in Khuzdar and Noshki](#)," *Dawn*, 11 August 2022)

Sindh: Assembly fails to meet for 100 working days for the first time
On 11 August, *Dawn* reported that the Sindh Assembly for the first time in the past many years met only less than 100 working days in the current parliamentary years. The Rules of Procedure stated that "the house shall meet for not less than one hundred working days in each parliamentary year", it remained in session for just 71 days in the current parliamentary year ending on 12 August. The Sindh Assembly did not observe the timings of sittings from 10 am to 2 pm as per the assembly rules. Mukesh

Kumar Chawla said that the assembly could not meet for 100 days as per assembly rules mainly due to devastating rains of monsoon season, though monsoon rain started on 4 July. (Tahir Siddiqui, "[For first time, Sindh PA fails to meet for 100 days in parliamentary year](#)," *Dawn*, 11 August 2022)

Sindh: 130 villages submerged after the rise in the Indus River

On 11 August, *Dawn* reported about 130 villages came under water and standing crops worth millions of rupees were destroyed in the riverine area after rising in the Indus river across many districts of Sindh. The district administration and irrigation department had made joint efforts and started patrolling along the dyke while flood-fighting material and machinery were made available. Officials said that water would start receding in the river in the districts within two or three days and it did not pose any harm to embankments. ("[130 villages in Sindh's riverine area come under water after rise in Indus level](#)," *Dawn*, 11 August 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Militant search still in process in Swat Mountains

On 10 August, police said that a search operation was being conducted in different areas to arrest the militants who opened fire at a police party two days ago in the mountainous area bordering Swat and Dir districts. Following the incident, the district police, counterterrorism department, and Elite Force reached the spot and extended the search operation to adjoining areas. A video being circulated on social media purportedly shows a man claiming to be a Taliban militant interviewing DSP Khan and two officers, who as per unverified claims, belonged to Pakistan Army. (Fasal Khaliq, Haleem Asad, "[Search for militants in Swat's mountains continues](#)," *Dawn*, 11 August 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Four soldiers killed in North Waziristan suicide attack

On 9 August, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said that four soldiers were killed in a suicide blast at a military convoy in the Mir Ali area of North Waziristan district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to the ISPR, intelligence agencies have begun investigations to find out details about the suicide bomber who carried out the attack and his handlers and facilitators. (Naveed Siddiqui, "[4 soldiers martyred in North Waziristan suicide attack: ISPR](#)," *Dawn*, 9 August 2022)

Punjab: PTI's participation in by-polls gets questioned by Gilani

On 8 August, Yousuf Raza Gilani while attending the mourning processions in Multan raised questions against PTI participation in the National assembly by-election. He said, "Since PTI MNAs are not participating in the assembly session after submitting their resignations, they have no right to contest the by-election." He further said people would vote for a candidate having the ability to represent them in the National Assembly instead of a candidate whose party was boycotting the assembly after submitting resignations. ("[Yousuf Raza Gilani questions PTI participation in by-poll](#)," *Dawn*, 9 August 2022)

Balochistan: Tightened security deployed in the capital during Muharram

On 8 August, Quetta's DIG Syed Fida Hussain Shah while addressing a press conference stated that 8,000 security personnel, including 2,000 Frontier Corps and Levies personnel, had been deployed in the provincial capital while Pakistan Army would be on standby during the Muharram 10 procession. Besides, helicopters will provide aerial surveillance and mobile service will remain suspended throughout the day. DIG Shah said routes of the procession had been sealed and foolproof security arrangements had been made despite the absence of Muharram-related threats. He also urged the organizers of the processions and congregations to ensure the implementation of SOPs issued by the

Balochistan government for Muharram. (Saleem Shahid, "[8,000 officials deployed for Ashura security in Quetta](#)," *Dawn*, 9 August 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Delay in Dasu Hydro Power Project to cost up to USD 500 million

On 8 August, a Water and Power Development Authority official informed The News International that WAPDA hydroelectric company has sought an extension in COD (commercial operation date) for three years till 2026-27 from National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) in its petition with the regulator. An officials said, "The project was approved in 2014 with a cost of Rs586 billion. The World Bank has also provided funding, which is equal to 20 per cent of the total cost. Now under the new scenario, the cost overrun during three years is feared to increase by Rs100 billion. This will cause an increase in the cost of the project to almost Rs686 billion." (Khalid Mustafa, "[Rs100bn cost overrun likely to hit Dasu hydropower project](#)," *The News International*, 9 August 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Protests laid off for 24 hours by North Waziristan

On 7 August, The elders from the settled districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa approached the Jirga of the Uthmanzai tribe and requested them to end their three-week-long protest against the incidence of targeted killing and to reopen the roads and bazaars. Dozens of loaded vehicles had been stranded on the highway. Trade with Afghanistan via Ghulam Khan Border crossing has also been halted due to the closure of roads in the district. The elders, in accordance with the Pakhtun traditions, also presented sheep to the Jirga as Nanawati, which is a way of seeking reconciliation or mediation. According to the local traditions, Nanawati is always accepted. Officials said that the tribe had accepted the Nanawati and postponed their strike for the next 24 hours. ("[North Waziristan tribe puts off protest for 24](#)

[hours](#),” *Dawn*, 8 August 2022)

Balochistan: Reko Diq Deal gets questioned by Economic Forum President

On 7 August, Balochistan Economic Forum President, Sardar Shoukat Popalzai expressed reservations over the recently signed agreement on Reko Diq between the Balochistan government and Barrick Gold Corporation, saying serious concerns needed to be addressed before implementing the project. He said “More and more voices were now being raised against the compromise solution with the investor and calling for autonomy and mineral rights. Corruption and malpractice in awarding contracts, shares in the income beyond royalties and shares of locals in revenue were also the issues that have hampered projects in the past.” He added that Pakistan had suffered international embarrassment due to the six billion USD penalty imposed on the country for the Reko Diq case. (“[Questions raised over Reko Diq deal](#),” *Dawn*, 8 August 2022)

ECONOMY

Government to introduce mini-budget before IMF board meeting

On 18 August, during a press conference Finance Minister Miftah Ismail announced new revenue measures of PKR 50 billion (USD 250 million) and lifted ban on all non-essential, or luxury, imports to meet yet another lateral demand of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He added that tax relief measures for real estate, capital markets, banks and so on had been postponed for now. On the issue of expensive luxury imports he said: “With my limited resources, I will prioritise flour, wheat, cotton and edible oil instead of iPhones and cars. We will remove the bans but impose prohibitive duties in the form of regulatory duties, customs duties and sales tax, so their import does not materialize.” He said the government had also complied with power tariff adjustments and would ensure that all subsidies are funded in the

budget, Pakistan has pledged to generate PKR 153 billion (765 million) of primary surplus between revenues and expenditures excluding debt servicing. The finance minister said the government would now promulgate an ordinance over the next few days to charge variable taxes to traders. Mr Ismail said the government had removed sales tax on power subsidy paid out of budget. (Khaleeq Kiani, “[Mini-budget to render luxury imports ‘out of reach’](#),” *Dawn*, 19 August 2022)

Jameel Ahmad appointed as SBP governor

On 18 August, President Dr Arif Alvi has approved the appointment of Jameel Ahmad as the new governor of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). He will serve a five-year term, the finance ministry said in a statement. The SBP governor is a co-signatory of the Letter of Intent that is a prerequisite for clinching a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). (“[Jameel Ahmad appointed as SBP governor](#),” *The Express Tribune*, 19 August 2022)

Separately, on 18 August, data shared by SBP indicated that Foreign exchange reserves held by the SBP witnessed an uptick of USD 67 million to USD 7.897 billion during the week ended on Aug 12. Holdings of the banks were USD 5.716 billion while the country’s total reserves were USD 13.613 billion. (“[SBP reserves up by \\$67m](#),” *Dawn*, 19 August 2022)

Government reaffirms its intent to sustain monetary and fiscal stability in its LOI to IMF

On 17 August, IMF Country Representatives Esther Perez Ruiz announced that the Fund’s Executive Board meeting for Pakistan’s combined seventh and eighth reviews under the EFF has been scheduled for 29 August. On 15 August, Pakistan had dispatched its Letter of Intent (LOI) to IMF. The LOI had mentioned commitment by government to introduce monthly PDL increases of PKR10/litre for petrol and PKR 5/litre for

diesel on 1 September 2022, followed by increases of PKR 5 per month for both fuels until the PDL reaches PKR 50. Also, the government will phase out Ehsas Ration Riyat Programme during the fiscal year. The government would remain committed market determined exchange rate. State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) interventions will remain guided by market conditions and the objective of rebuilding reserve buffers to bring reserves up to a more prudent level of at least 2.2 months of import coverage by end-FY23 notwithstanding the difficult external environment. Moreover, the government would upgrade the Debt Management Office (DMO) which will be responsible for designing and implementing debt management strategy in line with World Bank and IMF. (Khaleeq Kiani, "[Govt commits more taxes as IMF board meets on 29th](#)," *Dawn*, 18 August 2022)

Government to borrow over USD 34 dollars over the next two months

On 18 August, The Express Tribune reported that in order to repay the maturing old debt of financial institutions, government has planned to borrow PKR 6.78 trillion from commercial banks over a period of two months – August and September 2022, mainly to repay previous loans and to finance its budget deficit, that is 93 per cent of USD 34 billion. Current net debt (domestic and foreign) stands at USD 300 billion, equaling to 89 per cent of the size of the economy. A big chunk of new debt is utilised to repay the old one and pay interest cost on the total debt. Besides, it is partially used to finance infrastructure development projects like roads and dams and the defence budget. According to the State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) auction calendar for T-bills and PIBs, the government will raise USD 26 billion through sale of three-month to 12-month T-bills in August and September 2022. The government is due to repay USD 28.65 billion to commercial banks at the maturity of their investment in T-bills during the two months of August and September 2022.

(Salman Siddiqui, "[Govt to borrow Rs6.8tr from banks](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 18 August 2022)

Flow of remittance slows down to a five month low

On 16 August, the Central Bank reported that the flow of remittances sent home by overseas Pakistanis slowed down to a five-month low at USD 2.52 billion in July of the current fiscal year mainly due to the lesser number of working days in the month. Remittances slowed down to USD 2.52 billion in July compared to USD 2.76 billion in June. The inflows decelerated 7.75 per cent compared to the same month of last year, as the extended holidays in the Middle East due to Eid, Hajj, and Umrah seasons during July kept their business centers closed including the money senders. (Salman Siddiqui, "[Remittances dip to 5-month low](#)," *Dawn*, 17 August 2022)

Government set to dispatch letter of intent to IMF

On 16 August, The News International reported that Islamabad has made a fresh request to the Fund staff for making some slight changes in it. Now the mini budget will be unveiled through the promulgation of the Presidential Ordinance to fetch additional taxes. Pakistan has also made a request to the IMF for augmenting the EFF programme by USD one billion, increasing it from the existing USD six billion to USD seven billion and also jacked up the timeframe from September 2022 to June 2023. The signed LoI will be circulated among the board members for reviving the stalled Fund program 15 days prior to holding the IMF's Executive Board meeting on 28 August. (Mehtab Haider, "[Govt to send LoI to IMF today](#)," *The News International*, 16 August 2022)

Net public debt and liabilities increase up to USD 300 billion

On 15 August, the State Bank of Pakistan released year-on-year financial indicators and shows that Pakistan's total debt and

liabilities reached PKR 59.7 trillion by June 30, compared to PKR 47.844 trillion in FY21. The year-on-year growth in debt and liabilities was 24.8 per cent in FY22, compared to a growth of just 7.3 per cent in FY21. The net debt and liabilities now stand at 89.2 per cent of the GDP. Total debt and liability servicing rose to USD 27 billion in FY22 compared to USD 22.84 billion in FY21. Pakistan had to pay USD 15.071 billion as external debt servicing in FY22, compared to USD 13.424 billion in the previous fiscal year. It increased by 21.6 per cent in FY22, compared to 2.5 per cent in FY21. The central government's gross domestic debt (without external debt) was USD 155 billion by June 30, FY22, against USD 131.325 billion by the end of June FY21. The general government's external debt rose to USD 86.134 billion in FY22 compared to USD 82.5 billion in FY21. The bifurcation shows that interest accounted for about 25 per cent of the principal amount of debt. (Shahid Iqbal, "[Pakistan's debt burden up Rs11.8tr in FY22](#)," *Dawn*, 16 August 2022)

Forex reserves to fall near three-year low

On 11 August, data from the central bank showed that SBP foreign currency reserves fell to their lowest level in almost three years at USD 7.83 billion as of 5 August from USD 8.385 billion a week earlier on debt payments. Pakistan's total liquid foreign reserves fell by USD 648 million or 4.6 per cent to USD 13.561 billion and those of commercial banks dropped 1.6 per cent to USD 5.730 billion. The central bank in a statement said that the debt repayments are expected to moderate during the next three weeks of this month as the reduction in the reverse was due to the external debt payments. ("[SBP's forex reserves fall to near 3-year low of \\$7.4bn](#)," *The News International*, 12 August 2022)

New taxation programs worth Rs 15 billion ahead IMF meeting

On 12 August, Dawn reported that the government has decided to introduce new

taxation measures worth Rs15 billion in the next few days as part of the agreement with the IMF to revive a loan program. The new measures are expected to be taken ahead of the IMF board meeting scheduled for 24 August, which among others will approve the release of a USD 1.17 billion tranche for Pakistan as part of the extended fund facility. The IMF board meeting is planned for late August once adequate financing assurances are confirmed, by imposing taxes on the products. (Mubarak Zeb Khan, "[Govt mulls Rs15bn new taxes ahead of IMF meeting](#)," *Dawn*, 12 August 2022)

Rupee gains Rs 4.9 in Interbank, says FAP

On 11 August, the rupee which has been consistently recovering after falling to a record low last month continued its upward momentum. It gained Rs 4.91 to reach Rs 217 against the dollar in the interbank market, according to FAP. Malik Bostan attributed the rupee's continued recovery to several factors, including the expected release of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) tranche by August 19 to 24 which he said had created confidence among investors and ended the crisis the market was facing. He further said that oil prices had dropped internationally and imports had been reduced due to the government's measures, all of which had positively affected the exchange rate. ("[Rupee continues upward momentum, gains Rs4.9 in interbank](#)," *Dawn*, 11 August 2022)

China contributes 97 per cent of imports from nine regional countries of Pakistan

On 8 August, State Bank of Pakistan released data on trade balance. The country's exports to Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Iran, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives account for a small amount of USD 4.590 billion, just 14.43 per cent of Pakistan's total global exports of USD 31.79 billion in FY22. Whereas, imports from these countries edged up to USD 17.814 billion in FY22 against USD 13.826 billion over the corresponding period last year, an increase of 28.84 per cent. The

bulk of the regional exports share, which accounts for 60.58 per cent, is with China while the remaining is for eight countries. As far as imports, imports from China grew 30.03 per cent to USD 17.296 billion during the period under review against USD 13.301 billion over the last year. The bulk of 97.09 per cent imports is coming from China alone while the remaining imports are from other eight countries. As a result of huge imports, Pakistan's trade deficit with the region expanded during the period under review. (Mubarak Zeb Khan, "[Trade deficit with neighbours widens in FY22](#)," *Dawn*, 9 August 2022)

Pakistan's trade with ASEAN reaches USD 11 billion in 2022

On 7 August, the Chairman ASEAN Committee Islamabad (ACI) Ambassador Nguyen Tien Phong stated that Pakistan's trade with ASEAN had reached approximately USD 11 billion in the fiscal year 2022. Further, the chairman highlighted that the regional comprehensive economic partnership (RCEP) carried huge economic potential, adding that the paradigm shift from geo-politics to geo-economics in Pakistan would enable the country's economy to reach milestones. ("[Pakistan's trade with ASEAN topped \\$11b in 2022](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 8 August 2022)

Pakistan to bridge external financing gap of USD four billion, says SBP

On 7 August, Acting Governor SBP Dr Murtaza Syed stated that Pakistan will soon bridge its external financing gap of USD four billion with the help of friendly countries under the IMF condition in the face of huge pressure on foreign currency reserves. Further, he stated that inflation would persist in a higher range for the next 11 to 12 months, so the central bank was seeking an inflation target in the range of 18-20 per cent on an average for the current fiscal year 2022-23. ("[Pakistan to soon bridge external financing gap of \\$4 billion: SBP](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 8 August 2022)

EXTERAL

COAS meet with US CENTCOM chief

On 18 August, COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa met with Commander of US Central Command (CENTCOM) General Michael E Kurilla at the Pakistan Army General Headquarters (GHQ). According to the ISPR the Centcom commander had a one-on-one meeting with the army chief during which "matters of mutual interest, regional security situation, and stability, defence and security cooperation particularly military to military ties were discussed." Following this, a delegation-level meeting was held during which Pakistan Army's counter-terrorism efforts and contributions toward regional peace and stability were discussed. ("[Gen Bajwa, US Centcom discuss regional security situation, stability in meeting at GHQ](#)," *Dawn*, 19 August 2022)

PM Shehbaz meets with the newly-appointed Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan

On 18 August, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met with newly-appointed Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Neil Hawkins. During the meeting, Hawkins expressed desires to resolve to increase and diversify the existing relations between Australia and Pakistan. He also appreciated Pakistan's role in safe evacuation of their nationals and others from Afghanistan. (Syed Irfan Raza, "[Pakistan wants peaceful ties with India: PM Shehbaz](#)," *Dawn*, 19 August 2022)

UK and Pakistan sign agreement to return foreign criminals and immigration offenders

On 17 August, UK Home Secretary Priti Patel and Pakistan Interior Secretary Yousaf Naseem Khokhar signed an agreement under which foreign criminals and immigration offenders from the UK can be returned to Pakistan. Patel said, "I'm proud to have signed a new landmark agreement with our Pakistani friends to return foreign criminals and immigration offenders from the UK to Pakistan. This deal shows our #NewPlanForImmigration in action, as we

deliver for the British people,” “I make no apology for removing dangerous foreign criminals and immigration offenders who have no right to remain in the UK. The British public have quite rightly had enough of people abusing our laws and gaming the system so we can't remove them.” Meanwhile, the Pakistani High Commission said, “The agreement renews and updates, in a bilateral context an earlier agreement between Pakistan and the European Community regarding readmission of persons residing without authorisation concluded in Oct 2009. The bilateral agreement was necessitated by the exit of the UK from the European Union.” (Atika Rehman, “[UK inks deal to return 'criminals' to Pakistan](#),” *Dawn*, 18 August 2022)

Immediate aid from the US to Pakistan's disaster relief

On 17 August, The US announced an additional USD one million disaster aid grant to Pakistan after heavy downpours inundated and damaged various parts of the country. Antony Blinken stated that the US stood by Pakistan in times of distress and offered “support to flood victims and would continue to work together to mitigate future impacts of the climate crisis.” According to the US Embassy, US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome issued a declaration of humanitarian need and in response, the USAID would provide USD 100,000 to the affected populations. (“[US to give Pakistan aid for 'immediate disaster relief'](#),” *The Express Tribune*, 18 August 2022)

COAS gets UAE's highest civil award

On 16 August, UAE President Mohammad bin Zayed bestowed his country's highest civil award, “Order of Zayed,” on COAS Gen Qamar Bajwa. King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia, President Xi Jinping of China, former US President George Bush, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, other major global and GCC leaders have received the coveted award. (“[COAS gets UAE's highest civil award](#),” *The News*

International, 17 August 2022)

Pakistan may seek 15-year LNG deal with Qatar

On 17 August, The News International reported that Pakistan may seek a 15-year LNG contract with Qatar on a G2G (government to government) basis — two cargoes in a month with a reopening price clause after 11 years. Pakistan was also likely to offload PIA shares to hand over the management of the national flag carrier either to Qatar or the UAE on a G2G basis. Apart from it, the Islamabad airport was also proposed to be handed over to any of the two countries. In addition, there is a proposal to sell out two RLNG-based power plants, Haveli Bahadur Shah and Balloki. The 1,223 MW Balloki combined-cycle gas-fired power plant has over 61 per cent efficiency. Under the proposal, the buyers will be responsible to provide LNG to both the power plants, but they will have to pay for using the infrastructure of LNG terminals and pipelines. (Kalid Mustafa, “[Pakistan may seek 15-year LNG deal with Qatar](#),” *The News International*, 17 August 2022)

US and Pakistan officials discuss options got COAS visit to Washington

On 16 August, while speaking to diplomatic sources, Dawn reported that the United States and Pakistani officials are considering various options for COAS Gen Qamar Bajwa to visit the United States in late August or early September. Previously, COAS Gen Bajwa urged the US to assist Pakistan in securing an early disbursement of funds from the IMF. Additionally, he spoke with US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman. (Anwar Iqbal, “[US, Pakistan discuss options for Gen Bajwa's visit to DC](#),” *Dawn*, 16 August 2022)

UAE to join hands with Pakistan in setting up Plasma Farming Facilities

On 16 August, Dawn reported that the Ministry of National Health Services in a landmark development discussed the development of the plasma farming facilities

(PFF) with the UAE. A UAE mission, which is on a visit to Pakistan, aims to conduct a feasibility study for the establishment of PFF in Pakistan based on WHO standards as the blood services in the country are mostly provided by hospitals' blood banks with no functional separation of the plasma processes into production and utilization. It was a significant development as Pakistan does not have even a single PFF despite the fact that there are a few hundred thousand patients suffering from an immunodeficiency disorder. After the visit, the team will furnish a feasibility report for the execution of the project, and later on, plasma fractionation establishment shall be considered. (Ikram Junaidi, "[UAE to help Pakistan set up plasma farming facilities](#)," Dawn, 16 August 2022)

US shares Quaid-e-Azam's vision of a Pakistan at peace, says US Ambassador

On 11 August, US Ambassador Donald Blome during his visit to the mausoleum of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah said that the US shares Quaid-e-Azam's vision of a Pakistan at peace with itself and its neighbours, a Pakistan of religious tolerance, economic prosperity and social inclusion. Further, he said, "This year marks 75 years of bilateral relations between the United States and Pakistan. The United States values our long-standing cooperation with Pakistan and has always viewed a strong, prosperous, and democratic Pakistan as critical to the US interests." ("[US values long-term ties with Pakistan: Blome](#)," *The News International*, 12 August 2022)

PM Shehbaz meets with newly-appointed EU Ambassador to Pakistan

On 11 August, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met with the newly-arrived envoy of the European Union to Pakistan, Dr Riina Kionka. During the meeting he expressed hope that the GSP Plus scheme, would continue beyond 2023, stating, "With current GSP Plus scheme mutually beneficial, trading ties between Pakistan and EU should be enhanced. Pakistan will

continue to be part of the arrangement beyond 2023." Further, he said, "Pakistan attaches high importance to its relations with the EU as well as its historically close and cooperative bilateral ties with EU member states." (Syed Irfan Raza, "[PM Shehbaz hopes for GSP Plus status to continue beyond 2023](#)," *Dawn*, 12 August 2022)

COAS Gen Bajwa arrives in UK for official visit

On 10 August, the ISPR said that COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa arrived in the United Kingdom on an official visit. During the visit, the army chief would attend the passing out parade at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, as the chief guest and also meet with the military leadership of the UK. ("[COAS Gen Bajwa arrives in UK](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 11 August 2022)

Army gets appreciation from Bill Gates for Polio drive support

On 8 August, ISPR in a statement said Bill Gates in a conversation with General Bajwa appreciated the Pakistan Army for supporting the national polio drive and ensuring proper reach and coverage of polio campaigns, particularly through the involvement of community leaders. The statement said that matters related to healthcare particularly Pakistan's commitment to comprehensive polio eradication were discussed. COAS appreciated Gates and his foundation's efforts towards this noble cause and assured him of continued full cooperation for polio-free Pakistan. ("[Bill Gates lauds Army for supporting polio drive](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 9 August 2022)

JUDICIARY

LHC dismissed petition for disqualification of PM and ministers

On 18 August, the Lahore High court dismissed as withdrawn a petition filed by PTI seeking the disqualification of Shehbaz Sharif, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and Rana

Sanaullah Khan. Justice Shahid Waheed asked the counsel of the petitioner under what law the respondents could be disqualified. The counsel sought time to prepare his arguments, but the judge turned down the request of the council, reminding him that he first got the petition fixed in summer vacations and was now seeking time for arguments. The counsel sought permission to withdraw the petition, which the judge allowed and dismissed the petition as withdrawn. (Wajih Ahmad Sheikh, "[LHC dismisses petition for ouster of PM Shehbaz, ministers](#)," *Dawn*, 19 August 2022)

CJP asks Sindh govt to explain factors determining constituencies

On 16 August, while hearing a petition, filed by Muttahida Qaumi Movement's (MQM) Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui and others, Chief Justice Bandial observed that the difference in population of some union committees was more than 100%. A three-member bench, headed by the chief justice and including Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Ayesha A Malik, took up the MQM-P leaders' petition against the Sindh government, pertaining to the delimitation of constituencies for the local body elections in the province. He added that everything was not proportionate to the population in Pakistan as the largest province in terms of area had the least population. Justice Malik asked about the basis on which the Sindh government had made the delimitation of constituencies. ("[CJP asks Sindh govt to explain factors determining constituencies](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 17 August 2022)

ARU and FBR officials to face action for Justice Isa's case

On 12 August, The Express Tribune reported that the government has decided to take action against heads and officials of the Asset Recovery Unit and the Federal Board of Revenue for misusing their authority in the Justice Isa case. The cabinet has formed a ministerial committee to fix responsibility on the ARU and the FBR heads and

officials. They exceeded or misused their authority in the case and present its recommendations to it in two weeks. The law and justice minister will be the convener of the body. The members also demanded that Mirza Shahzad Akbar, the then adviser on accountability, as well as the officials of the ARU and FBR, should be held accountable. (Zafar Bhutta, "[Justice Isa case haunts ARU, FBR officials](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 12 August 2022)

ON CPEC

No investment was made by CPEC Authority, says Iqbal

On 18 August, Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal praised China's continued support for Pakistan, saying Beijing had been supporting infrastructure development since Xi Jinping during his visit to Islamabad in 2014 announced investing USD 46 billion under the CPEC. However, he criticized the CPEC authority saying the entity has not been able to attract any investment ever since its inception in 2019 to ensure uninterrupted progress on its projects and coordination among the departments concerned. He further said, "Not a single dollar has been invested" in the CPEC project after the creation of this authority. ("[CPEC body brought no investment](#)," *Dawn*, 19 August 2022)

PM Shehbaz agrees in principle to abolish the CPEC authority

On 17 August, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in principle approves the abolish the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Authority subject to consent by China. Federal Minister for Planning and Development Minister Ahsan Iqbal while confirming the development said, "This is in the interest of CPEC that the authority should be dissolved to ensure fast implementation of its projects." This decision was made with the objective of fast-track the implementation of the CPEC

projects and the planning and development ministry argument that the authority has remained controversial since its inception. Previously, on 16 August, Ahsan Iqbal reviewed the progress of CPEC projects and preparation for the next Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting. (Shahbaz Rana, [“PM gives nod to abolish CPEC Authority,”](#) *The Express Tribune*, 18 August 2022)

Chinese model to be followed for modern economic development

On 18 August, while addressing CPEC green development, a High-Level Dialogue organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute Ahsan Iqbal said Pakistan would follow the Chinese model of economic development as modern economic development is possible only with the continuation of political stability, social solidarity, and economic policies. He further said that in 2013, the government had started work on nine SEZs under CPEC during the previous regime but could not complete them. “If these SEZs were completed, China’s industrial relocation would have taken place in Pakistan today.” He said Pakistan and China were starting work on several green energy projects which would help in improving the environment, adding that most of the solar and wind energy projects would start a new era of sustainable economic development in the country. ([“Pakistan to follow Chinese development model,”](#) *The Express Tribune*, 19 August 2022)

ON MILITARY

Discussion over the appointment of next chief of Pakistan’s Army

On 16 August, Dawn reported that a senior PML-N member has stated that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif could initiate discussions on the appointment by the end of August and finalise the decision by mid-September. According to Dawn, four of the six top Lt-Gens at the time of Gen Bajwa’s retirement will be from the same batch, while a fifth is senior to almost the entire lot. (Baqir Sajjad Syed, [“Who will be the next army chief?”](#) *Dawn*, 16 August 2022)

Lt Gen Faiz Hameed appointed Bahawalpur corps commander: ISPR

On 8 August, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) a press release announced that Lieutenant General Faiz Hameed has been appointed the Bahawalpur corps commander. Previously, he was serving as the Peshawar corps commander after being appointed to the office in October 2021. He had previously served in the ISI as the head of internal security and comes from the army’s Baloch Regiment. His appointment had come at a very crucial time when both external and internal security challenges seemed to be growing. In its press release, the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) named Lt Gen Sardar Hassan Azhar Hayat as the new Peshawar corps commander. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general and appointed as the military secretary in 2020. ([“Lt Gen Faiz Hameed appointed Bahawalpur corps commander: ISPR,”](#) *Dawn*, 9 August 2022)

ON FATF

FATF team to arrive in Pakistan for ‘on-site’ visit in September

On 16 August, The Express Tribune reported that a team of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is expected to visit Pakistan in September to conduct “on-site” visit. During the visit the team would verify the steps taken by Pakistan to curb money

laundering and terror financing before it finally exits the watchdog's grey list. (Kamran Yousuf, "[FATF team due next month for 'on-site' visit](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 16 August 2022)

ON GILGIT-BALTISTAN

On Mehdi Shah to be appointed as the Gilgit- Baltistan governor

On 15 August, President Dr. Arif approved the appointment of Syed Mehdi Shah as the Gilgit-Baltistan governor, through a statement, the Presidency said the appointment of Syed Mehdi Shah was made under Section 33(3) of the Gilgit-Baltistan Order 2018 on the advice of the prime minister. As the party finalized the name of Mr. Shah, Prime Minister Sharif sent a summary to President Alvi for the appointment. He was elected as the first chief minister of GB from 2010 to 2014 when the post was created under the GB Self-Governance Order 2009 during the PPP regime. (Jamil Nagri, "[Mehdi Shah appointed GB governor](#)," *Dawn*, 16 August 2022)

ON SPORTS

First Gold bagged by Arshad Nadeem in Commonwealth

On 8 August, Dawn reported Pakistan's first javelin gold by Arshad Nadeem in Birmingham Commonwealth Games. This is Pakistan's first athletics medal at the games since 1966 and the first javelin gold for the country, it was Pakistan's second gold in Birmingham. Arshad's first effort was 86.61 metres. He launched a mark of 90 meters in the penultimate round, becoming only the second Asian to cross the mark after Taiwan's Chao-Tsun Cheng 91.36 meters. He also broke the Games record of 88.75m by South African Marius Corbett that stood since 1998. ("[Arshad Nadeem tears record books to win javelin gold at](#)

[CWG](#)," *Dawn*, 8 August 2022)

ON ENERGY

OGRA suggests to government to initiate gas sector reforms

On 8 August, Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) has asked the government to immediately create a National Gas Transmission Company (NGTC) classified as a "strategic asset" to begin with gas sector reforms and open up the gas market for competition and facilitate bridging a massive demand-supply gap currently facing the country. According to data, supply of natural gas in Pakistan half to that of the demand. In a presentation to government, OGRA discussed challenges to reforms and country's perceived investment risk, overall economic conditions, and zero private sector participation in midstream and downstream. OGRA has highlighted that optimum capacity utilisation of infrastructure was an important element of gas sector reforms and a third party access (TPA) regime was already in place for the gas pipeline network, but "Sui companies' fear of losing customers is a bottleneck." The World Bank (WB) backed gas-sector reforms that envisage the dismantling of two gas utilities; Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Ltd (SNGPL) and Sui Southern Gas Company Ltd (SSGCL), into at least five public-sector companies. There would then be at least five fresh licences that include a transmission operator and four distribution companies, each having provincial boundaries as their sales areas to supply only domestic gas to residential consumers with the approval of the Council of Common Interests (CCI) after provinces reach consensus. (Khaleeq Kiani, "[Govt asked to begin gas reforms, set up transmission firm](#)," *Dawn*, 9 August 2022)

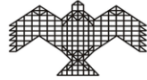
ON INDIA

On Pakistan rejects India's statement on OIC

On 7 August, the Foreign Office rejected India's comments made by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) regarding a statement of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The FO spokesperson said, "No amount of repetition would turn a falsehood into truth. In the interest of justice as well as durable peace and security in South Asia, India must honour its commitment to the Kashmiris and to the world community by faithfully implementing the UNSC resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir dispute." ("[FO rejects New Delhi's 'ludicrous comments' on OIC stance](#)," *Dawn*, 8 August 2022)



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