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Pakistan at 75: The rise and rise of the military

PAKISTAN IN BRIEF

Politics | Internal | Economy | External | Provinces | Judiciary



Daily Focus, 22 August 2022

Pakistan at 75: The rise and rise of the military

Rana Banerji



Image Source: Dawn

The Pakistan Army came into existence in August, 1947 as 'the largely muslim rump of the British Indian Army',^[i] saddled from the outset with the paradox of coping with a great insecurity of existence, yet emerging as the only professional institution of state, which could be relied upon to not only sustain the symbols of Islam which led to the creation of the State but also help fulfill the goal of political and social development of its people.

Partition, and the bloodshed that ensued, bequeathed to Pakistan an incomplete state apparatus, a disproportionate refugee crisis and a fraction of the resources needed to manage the enormous challenges the nascent state faced.^[ii] The army arrogated to itself the responsibility to defend the ideology of Pakistan, and protect its sovereignty and very existence. Embracing Islamic ideological underpinnings - of *Imam* (belief), *taqwa* (fear of Allah), and *jihad-fisabilillah* (fight in cause of Allah), it remains pledged to 'Fighting to the end'.

Six general characteristics of strategic culture were embraced: ^[iii]

Firsts, opposition to Indian hegemony: stemming partly from history, also arising from troubled relations over Kashmir;

Second, primacy of defence requirements: Pakistan now spends close to USD 7.5 bn (PRs 1.53 trillion) every year ranking it 19th in terms of military expenditure alone. Its Army is over 6,50,000 strong – the Defence Budget, with debt servicing and concealed expenditure under different heads, amounts to 60 per cent of its GDP; The Army has also ventured into the private sector, to perpetuate economic benefits for its retired personnel;^[iv]

Third, nuclear deterrence: Pakistan acquired nuclear capability in 1974 (formally acknowledged in 1987). Claimed to be India-specific initially, it has moved from a position of minimum credible deterrence to full spectrum deterrence, committing itself to second strike capability and parity with India through pursuit of land, air and naval nuclear capacity (nuclear triad); Pakistan rejects 'no first use' and professes intention to deploy 'tactical nuclear weapons' in response to Indian offensives; The Military has complete control over nuclear policy;

Fourth, acceptance, but not over-reliance on outside assistance: Pakistan has consistently sought and received foreign supplies of modern weapons hardware and military training.

Fifth, stability on Western border- quest for 'strategic depth' for conventional and nuclear assets: this objective, excluding Indian influence from Afghanistan, was achieved with the Taliban's takeover last year;

Sixth, identification with conservative Islamic causes: the emphasis on Muslim nationalism or 'Islam' as the guiding or

rallying force for institutions of State and governance;

The Military's Orbat

The Army has nine Corps and a Strategic Forces Command, which oversees deployment of nuclear capable missiles. The two-attack corps are located at Mangla and Multan. The Defensive corps (against India) are based at Rawalpindi (X Corps, also has an attack role in the Northern Areas) Gujranwala, Lahore and Bahawalpur. The Western border is looked after by the XI Corps at Peshawar and the XII Corps at Quetta. V Corps, Karachi serves as reserve. In recent times, Pakistan Army has set up Area Commands on the pattern of the Indian Army- Northern (Rawalpindi), Central (Lahore) and Southern Commands (Quetta).

COIN

Pakistan Army's initial experience of fighting militancy, mainly in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), (but later also in Swat of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and against the Pakistani Taliban, inside Punjab), from 2003-04 was disconcerting, against insurgents who had all modern weapons except tanks and airplanes. This forced doctrinal changes in Army training institutions like the Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul and the Command and Staff College, Quetta. Pakistan Army soldiers and officers were told to re-learn basic counter insurgency operations (COIN), to cope with threats emanating not only from the traditional arch- enemy (India) but also from the indoctrinated jihadi ideologue within.

Since then, the Army has followed a policy of limited offensives with sufficient force to 'clear, hold and build' in FATA and Swat – superior equipment received from the US - AH- 64 Cobra helicopters and precision-guided munitions for air to surface attacks helped achieve these objectives under

operations 'Zarb e Azb' (June 2014- Feb 2017) and 'Radd-ul-Fasaad' (Feb 2017-present).

Continued reliance on asymmetric option of 'Non- State actors' against India

Addressing print & electronic media editors in a closed-door session at GHQ in March, 2018, Gen Bajwa talked of a 'De-weaponised' Pakistan where only the State is authorised to use force for 'jihad'; without differentiation between 'good' or 'bad' terrorists, they would be 'mainstreamed' into politics. However, there has been no discernible let up in the abetment of trans-border violence by Lashkar e Taiba and Jaish e Mohammed terrorists, especially in Jammu & Kashmir.

Weapon holdings

Most of Pakistan's modern military equipment comes from USA and China. In later years Pakistan received missiles and nuclear weapon components from China and North Korea; It has major armaments manufacture facilities at the Pakistan Ordnance Factories, Wah the Heavy Industries Complex, at Taxila as well as other nuclear component units which have come up at Sanjwal, Fatehjung, and near Lahore. State of art Air Force facilities exist at Kamra and Sargodha.

Civil Military imbalance

The Pakistan military has disrupted the democratic process in Pakistan repeatedly in the past, both through direct martial law governance and indirect or 'hybrid' control, exercising a veto from behind the scenes, especially on security and nuclear policies. It tried to sustain this 'carefully curated halfway house between democracy and dictatorship', curbing avenues of dissent and opposition, 'using its rivalry with India to legitimize its political and economic power and to place itself above reproach', to keep 'running the country from behind the

thinnest façade of civilian rule.^[v] Academics and sections of liberal intelligentsia within Pakistan credulously watched two sets of relationships emerging: (a) between military governments and the civil bureaucracy; and (b) between political regimes and the civil bureaucracy, which suffered from 'trust deficit at both ends'.^[vi]

The recent fracas between ousted Prime Minister, Imran Khan and sitting Army Chief, Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, which ruptured over the transfer of the Director General, Inter Services Intelligence, Lt. Gen Faiz Hameed in October, 2021 has seen the troubled relationship descend to unforeseen depths, with a favoured flunkey of Khan calling for internal revolt within the Army.

The nature of this crisis seemed fundamentally different from apparently similar ones in the past when political parties used to vie with, even conspire against, one another for favours of the Establishment.^[vii] This process now presaged 'a historic role reversal', where the Army's failures in imposing different hybrid models were being questioned by discerning critics in civil society.

The future of Pakistan's 'hybrid' constructs

Despite flaws in its 'hybrid' experiments, the Army leadership continues to act well beyond its limit, in violation of constitutional norms, if necessary interfering in elections. Recent disclosures by Justice (ret'd) Shaukat Siddiqui, who was eased out from the Islamabad High Court in 2018, show how the Army has not hesitated to fire its salvos from shoulders of a supine judiciary. In fact, in his case and later, now in some cases affecting the political fortunes of deposed Prime Minister Imran Khan, even the Judiciary has used the Army's shoulders in reverse, to put its leadership under pressure. Imran has got away with all

manner of accusations against the so called "neutrals". However, the allegations voiced by his lieutenant Shahbaz Gill, calling for mutiny within Army's ranks could prove to be the proverbial last straw. The Army will now think seriously once again, how to dump their own protégé and reverse his populist narrative, if only to maintain its iron grip over power. Though current Army Chief, Gen Bajwa and former DG, ISI, Lt. Gen Faiz Hameed may have become controversial, there is no evidence of any change in the Army's mind set, to let go of various instrumentalities, to influence political developments, albeit indirectly. In overall terms, the Army continues to hold civilian politicians in contempt. It does not like its own Generals who kowtow to civilian political leaders.

The question which looms before Pakistan's civil society is how long it will remain prepared to cynically bear up with current practices of governance under such 'hybrid' constructs? Any change in this security ridden narrative, and a redressal of the civil-military imbalance will have to come as a movement within Pakistan, it cannot be imposed from outside.^[viii] I do not see this change happening any time soon.

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PAKISTAN IN BRIEF

INTERNAL

Government decides to deploy the army in all provinces amid flooding

On 27 August, Dawn reported that the government has decided to deploy the army in all provinces to help the civilian authorities in rescue operations in the calamity-hit areas. According to Dawn, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah stated that the Punjab government had requisitioned the army's deployment in Dera Ghazi Khan, while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa wanted the army's assistance in Dera Ismail Khan. Meanwhile, Balochistan sought the deployment of the personnel in Nasirabad, Jhal Magsi, Sohbatpur, Jafarabad and Lasbela districts while Sindh also sought the military's help in the flood-hit districts. ("[Army called in as KP faces flood threat](#)," Dawn, 27 August 2022)

UN to release USD 160 million Flash Appeal for Pakistan

On 27 August, Dawn reported that the UN has decided to launch a USD 160 million Flash Appeal to help millions of people affected by monsoon rains in Pakistan. Foreign Office spokesman Asim Iftikhar said: "A UN Flash Appeal is going to be launched on Tuesday 30 August simultaneously from Geneva and Islamabad." Further, he claimed that the UN flash appeal was very significant, and it would trigger the international community's response as well as bilateral assistance from other countries. (Baqir Sajjad Syed, "[UN plans \\$160m Flash Appeal](#)," Dawn, 27 August 2022)

Search warrant for Imran's house sought

On 27 August, Dawn reported that Islamabad police have asked the high command to issue a search warrant for Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's Banigala residence in connection with the case against Dr Shahbaz Gill, while a satellite phone and a weapon recovered from the apartment allotted to Mr

Gill at Parliament Lodges have been sent for forensic examination. Also, the police have made a list of PTI leaders who were at the house on 8 August and the media persons who had contacted the leaders. The list was prepared through geofencing and call data records of the people present there. (Munawer Azeem, "[Search warrant for Imran's house sought](#)," Dawn, 27 August 2022)

Pakistan declares 'national emergency' amid rain-induced floods

On 25 August, the government declared a 'national emergency' amid the rain-induced floods which killed 937 people and left at least 30 million without shelter, terming the monsoon rains a "climate-induced humanitarian crisis of epic proportions." Further, according to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Sindh reported the highest number of deaths as 306 people lost their lives due to floods and rain-related incidents while Balochistan reported 234 deaths whereas Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab recorded 185 and 165 deaths, respectively.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Office (PMO) announced that the international organisations and financial institutions announced an immediate assistance of more than USD 500 million to mitigate the damages caused by the monsoon rains.

Further, UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) allocated USD three million to UN agencies and partners in Pakistan to respond to floods. Additionally, the All-Pakistan Chinese Enterprises' Association announcing a donation of PKR 15 million to the PM's Flood Relief Fund. (Zaki Abbas, "[Pakistan declares emergency in the face of calamitous floods](#)," Dawn, 26 August 2022; Syed Irfan Raza, "[Donors pledge \\$500m for flood relief efforts](#)," Dawn, 26 August 2022; Amin Ahmed, "[UN announces \\$3m to its agencies, partners](#)," Dawn, 26 August 2022)

Imran Khan granted interim pre-arrest bail in two cases

On 24 August, Imran Khan an Anti-Terrorism Court (ACT) in Islamabad granted Imran Khan an interim pre-arrest bail in two cases registered against him in connection with a PTI rally held on 20 August. The ATC judge granted Imran Khan an interim bail till 1 September against a surety of PKR 100,000. Further, an additional sessions judge granted him interim bail until 7 September in the case pertaining to the alleged violation of Section 144 against a surety of PKR 5,000. Previously, Imran Khan was booked in a terrorism case for his remarks about a female judge and violation Section 144 (ban on public gatherings exceeding four persons) in Islamabad on the day of the rally. (Tahir Naseer, "[Former PM Imran granted interim bails in terrorism, Section 144 cases](#)," *Dawn*, 26 August 2022)

Imran Khan blames 'neutrals' for the ongoing crackdown on the PTI

On 21 August, Imran Khan while addressing a political gathering at Rawalpindi's Liaquat Bagh alleged that the 'neutrals' in reference to the military establishment, were responsible for the ongoing crackdown on the PTI. He said, "On May 25, when the police used violence against us, I was told by insiders that the police were ordered from above, which means that neutrals pressurised them to give PTI workers a thrashing," Mr Khan said and questioned whether the "neutrals were really neutral." Further, on the ECP he claimed, "The chief election commission[er] is giving every decision against us ... I got information from the inside that he [the CEC] was not doing anything on his own but there was pressure from above."

Further, he claimed that the PTI was the "biggest party at the federal level" and any attempts to break the party would hurt the country, adding, "Political parties are the glue that keeps the country together."

Following this, Imran Khan was booked under Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act (punishment for acts of terrorism) regarding his comments at his Islamabad rally. Later on, 22 August, the PTI issued a warning stating that Imran Khan would be a "red line", as reports of Imran Khan's imminent arrest made the rounds. Meanwhile, Imran Khan moved the Islamabad High Court seeking pre-arrest bail.

The PTI has also decided approach the court against the ban imposed by the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra) on Imran Khan's live telecast. (Tahir Naseer, "[Pakistan 'over-financed': SBP acting governor](#)," *Dawn*, 22 August 2022; "[Imran moves IHC for pre-arrest bail in terrorism case](#)," *Dawn*, 22 August 2022; Aamir Yasin, "[PTI chief alleges 'neutrals' behind crackdown on party](#)," *Dawn*, 22 August 2022; "[PTI warns Imran Khan a 'red line' as reports of warrants for his arrest make rounds](#)," *Dawn*, 22 August 2022; Ikram Junaidi, "[PTI to challenge ban on live telecast of Imran's speeches](#)," *Dawn*, 22 August 2022; "[Imran fires 'warning shots' at police and judiciary](#)," *Dawn*, 22 August 2022)

PTI's Woman leader shot dead

On 20 August, PTI local woman leader Nargis Mengal was shot dead by unknown armed men in the capital. Armed men on a motorcycle opened fire at Nargis Mengal near Shaheen Bungalows, killing her on the spot. Hospital officials said that she had several bullet injuries which caused her instant death. (Saleem Shahid, "[PTI's woman leader Nargis Mengal shot dead](#)," *Dawn*, 22 August 2022)

PROVINCES

Punjab: PPP withdraws from NA-118 in PML-N's favour

On 25 August, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) General Secretary Syed Hassan Murtaza declared his party's support for

PML-N's candidate in NA-118, Dr Shizra Mansab Ali, Murtaza said that PPP is sharing the burden of difficult decisions taken by the PML-N government in these difficult times. The decision to withdraw a candidate from NA-118 was taken despite stiff opposition from its local leaders that wanted the party to contest elections and keep its voter base intact. Asked whether the withdrawal of candidature is benefiting the PTI, he said that it is not so because their voters are with them. ("[PPP withdraws from NA-118 in PML-N's favour](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 26 August 2022)

ECONOMY

PTI's provincial government blamed to halt IMG deal progress

On 26 August, the coalition government took exception to PTI's "attempts to jeopardise the IMF loan programme" just days ahead of the Fund's board meeting. Citing non-payment of arrears of around PKR 100 billion by the federal government, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government had refused to implement the IMF loan precondition for the surplus budget. Provincial Finance Minister Taimur Saleem Jhagra countered the blame saying, "Let me remind you of the criticality of the issues. Perhaps most importantly, to resolve the budget allocations for ex-FATA, which, in the absence of an updated NFC Award, are decided at the discretion of the federal government. The existing funds for ex-FATA are also insufficient to meet the monthly salary expenditure of the employees." (Mubarak Zeb Khan, "[Govt slams PTI for 'jeopardising IMF deal'](#)," *Dawn*, 27 August 2022)

SPI continues on weekly trend, breaks all-time record again

On 26 August, a report issued by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics indicated that the prices of 23 essential commodities have increased in just one week ending on 25 August. During the last one week, the

weekly inflation rate in the country increased by 1.83 per cent to reach a record high level of 44.58 per cent. Inflation measured by the Sensitive Price Index has reached the highest level in the history of the country due to an increase in the prices of petroleum products and disruption in the supply of commodities due to floods and heavy rains. ("[Inflation breaks all records, climbs to 44.58%](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 27 August 2022)

Flood-hit farmers to get higher agriculture credit

On 26 August, The State Bank of Pakistan set a little higher Rs1, 800 billion agriculture credit target for 2022-23 in the backdrop of massive damages to agriculture by unprecedented floods caused by historic monsoon rains. The current year is under the immense pressure of devastating flash floods across the country. No official data is available about the loss of crops, livestock, and other related valuables in the agriculture sector, a brokerage house initially estimated a total loss of Rs900billion. The SBP has assigned an annual agriculture credit disbursement target of Rs1.8 trillion to the financial institutions for the current fiscal year to cater to the agriculture credit demand. ("Shahid Iqbal, "[SBP sets higher Rs1.8tr agri credit target to help flood-hit farmers](#)," *Dawn*, 27 August 2022)

Emergence of "grey market" dries up foreign currency in open market

On 25 August, PKR fell on the fourth consecutive day and closed at PKR 219.14 per USD. The open market quoted the dollar at about PKR 10 higher than the interbank market, currency dealers said, as all foreign currencies were in short supply, including the dollar, Saudi riyal and UAE dirham. Bankers pointed out that when the dollar reached a peak of PKR 239.5 in the interbank market last month, banks were charging in the range of PKR 245 to PKR 248. Bankers also said they were facing pressure to artificially maintain the dollar rate on the lower side. Zafar Paracha,

general secretary of the Exchange Companies Association of Pakistan (ECAP) said, “We were selling \$25 to \$30 million a day in the banks just a couple of weeks ago, but it has now fallen to \$3 to \$4 million.” He blamed “a strong grey market” which was offering a better price and smuggling to Afghanistan as in Kabul, the dollar is selling for an equivalent of about PKR 240, attracting smugglers to make a quick buck. The SBP’s foreign exchange reserves dropped USD 87 million to USD 7.809 billion during the week ended on 19 August, central bank data showed on Thursday. Reserves of commercial banks now stand at USD 5.711 billion, making the country’s total reserves at USD 13.521 billion. (Shahid Iqbal, “[Foreign currencies dry up, rupee continues to fall.](#)” *Dawn*, 26 August 2022)

Improving demand shows oil prices edging up

On 26 August, oil rose as much as the signs of improving fuel demand, although further gains were capped as the market awaited clues from the US Federal Reserve chairman on the outlook for rate hikes. Despite uncertainty over the pace of rate hikes in the United States to tackle soaring inflation, worries about oil demand destruction eased this week, putting the benchmark oil contracts on track for gains of around 3pc for the week. (“[Oil prices edge up on signs of improving demand.](#)” *Dawn*, 26 August 2022)

PTI on a comfortable lead in Karachi by-election

On 21 August, by-election on NA-245 was conducted. According to unofficial results, the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) won the by-election of Karachi’s NA-245 and retained its mandate from the constituency in a major boost to the party a week before the local bodies’ elections in the city giving setback to MQM and TLP. PTI Sindh chapter president Ali Zaidi tweeted: “The result of NA-245 proves that the people of Pakistan are behind Imran Khan. If the imported government makes any foolish

move to arrest Imran Khan, I fear the people of Pakistan would block the whole country.” (Imran Ayub, “[In major boost, PTI wins Karachi by-election.](#)” *Dawn*, 22 August 2022)

IMF board members get staff reports

On 21 August, Pakistan moved closer to clinching a deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as all 24 members of the Fund’s executive board have received copies of a staff report required to complete the process. The board is meeting on 29 August to consider the report on the completion of seventh and eighth reviews of USD 6 billion loan package signed in 2019. The board will also consider to extend the facility till June 2023. A diplomatic source on the question of outcome of current agreement told *Dawn*: “But the present government has taken the sting out of anti-corruption tools, which may encourage corruption. The IMF would prefer to have an arrangement that could curb corruption but was not restrictive.” (Anwar Iqbal, “[IMF board members get staff reports.](#)” *Dawn*, 22 August 2022)

EXTERNAL

Writ petition signed in LHC against handling over control of PIA assets

On 26 August, Lahore High Court was requested to restrain the federal government from striking a “deal” with Qatar allegedly for selling 51 per cent shares of the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), and handing over the administrative control of the national flag carrier and the Islamabad International Airport to the Gulf state. The lawyer explained that PPRA rules would apply to all financial transactions since both the PIA and the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority were federal government entities. He argued that the federal government did not get approval of the parliament before making the impugned deals for the Qatar investments, whereas the PIA has been converted into a public limited company

through PIA Conversion Act 2016, passed by the parliament. ([“LHC moved against ‘deal with Qatar on PIA control’,” Dawn, 27 August 2022](#))

FATF to visit Pakistan for deciding the country to remove from the grey list

On 27 August, The News International reported that the Financial Action Task Force is set to visit Pakistan in the first week of September to assess rules, regulations, and strengthening of institutional mechanisms in order to decide on removing the country from the grey list. The FATF had placed Pakistan on its grey list in June 2018 and despite making many efforts, Islamabad was not removed from the list. Ironically, Pakistan had to implement two different action plans simultaneously and now the country has fully implemented all action plans. The FATF team will scrutinize arrangements placed by the ministries, relevant departments, regulators, and law enforcement agencies to verify whether or not these systems and procedures were sustainable to combat money laundering and terror financing on a permanent basis. ([“FATF team to visit Pakistan next month,” The News International, 27 August 2022](#))

US backs democratic principles in Pakistan, says State Department

On 25 August, the US State Department spokesperson Vedant Patel spoke to the reporters and said that the US backs democratic principles in Pakistan after Imran Khan was charged with terrorism charges. He said, "The United States values our longstanding cooperation with Pakistan and has always viewed a prosperous and democratic Pakistan as critical to US interests." ([“US backs 'democratic' order in Pakistan,” The Express Tribune, 27 August 2022](#))

Qatar to follow a policy of no-cash like Saudi Arabia; UAE offers investment

On 25 August, following the conclusion of the three-day visit of Prime Minister

Shehbaz Sharif to Qatar, a government official told Dawn that Qatar has not offered the immediate provision of USD 2 billion in cash to Pakistan but renewed its interest in buying the two LNG-fired power plants that Islamabad was initially reluctant to sell without a competitive bidding process. A member of the PM’s delegation said that Qatar again showed its interest in investing in LNG-fired Haveli Bahadur Shah and Baloki power plants. Finance Minister Miftah Ismail said: “After the \$3 billion investment commitment by Qatar, there is no funding gap, hence, no immediate requirement for the \$2 billion cash.” The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has asked Pakistan to increase the gross official foreign exchange reserves to USD 16.2 billion by June next year, pointing out a hole of USD 4.5 billion that has to be filled by securing commitments from the bilateral creditors. The king of Saudi Arabia on 25 August also directed to make a USD 1 billion investment in Pakistan after a similar announcement was made by the UAE a few days ago. (Shahbaz Rana, [“Qatar did not offer \\$2b in cash,” The Express Tribune, 26 August 2022](#))

Saudi Arabia announces USD one billion investment in Pakistan

On 25 August, Saudi Press News Agency reported that King Salman bin Abdulaziz has directed the Saudi government to invest USD one billion in Pakistan to confirm Saudi Arabia's "support of the Pakistani economy and the Pakistani people." FM Bilawal via Twitter welcomed the investment commitment. He also said he had briefed Saudi Arabia’s foreign minister on the flood situation in Pakistan. ([“Saudi king directs govt to invest \\$1bn in Pakistan: report,” Dawn, 26 August 2022](#))

Jordanian princess in Pakistan to review nutrition programme

On 21 August, Princess Sarah Zeid of Jordan arrived in Karachi on a week-long visit to Pakistan in her role as a Special Adviser on Maternal and Child Health and

Nutrition of the United Nations' World Food Programme (WFP). She will visit several nutrition projects to see how the government was addressing malnutrition and particularly stunting that affects 12 million or up to two-thirds of children in Pakistan. She will also visit the Benazir Income Support Programme to review the progress of Benazir Nashonuma Programme. (Amin Ahmed, "[Jordanian princess arrives to review nutrition programme](#)," *Dawn*, 22 August 2022)

ON JUDICIARY

LHC decision against the sale of evacuee land to be upheld by the Supreme Court

On 25 August, the Supreme Court ruled that a federal minister did not enjoy any authority under the laws governing the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) to approve sale of evacuee land either in his direction or in relaxation of any provision of the law. Two-judges, a two-judge Supreme Court bench had rejected a plea challenging the order of LHC that declared illegal sale of commercial property belonging to the ETPB in Raja Bazaar worth billions of rupees to a real estate investor. The Bench released judgment regarding the welding of this decision made by LHC. (Nasir Iqbal, "[SC upholds LHC decision the against the sale of evacuee lad](#)," *Dawn*, 26 August 2022)

ON MILITARY

Army speaks of taking a tougher approach against TTP

On 25 August, COAS Gen Qamar Bajwa while speaking at the 250th Corps Commanders Conference said, "Directed formations to maintain operational readiness and efforts to counter, terrorism particularly in KP & Balochistan must continue." The ISPR press release at the conference did not give any details about the emphasis on counter-terrorism operations. Gen Bajwa's assertion about the continuation of the

kinetic operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces comes in the backdrop of growing public resentment about the return of TTP fighters. (Baqir Sajjad Syed, "[Army top brass hints at tougher approach against TP](#)," *Dawn*, 26 August 2022)

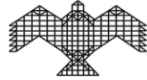
ON SPORTS

Departmental sports to be revived, says PM Sharif

On 25 August, PM Shehbaz Sharif speaking at a cash prize distribution ceremony for nine athletes announced the resumption of departmental sports, bringing to an end the prevailing uncertainty amongst the sports community. A ban on departmental sports was imposed during Imran Khan's tenure as the PM. The decision taken almost three years back had left hundreds of sportsmen jobless and resulted in the closing down of sports sections of major departments. The gold medal winners at the Commonwealth Games, Arshad Nadeem, and Nooh Butt, were given PKR five million each with Inam Butt and Zaman Anwar receiving PKR two million each for silver medals. All five athletes received Rs1 million each for winning bronze. (Abdul Mohi Shah, "[PM announces resumption of departmental sports](#)," *Dawn*, 26 August 2022)



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