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Daily Focus, 26 May 2022

The idea of marches: PTI takes to the street with its 'Azadi March'

The crackdown on the PTI's long march reveals the government's apprehensions

Abigail Miriam Fernandez



Image Source: Dawn

On 25 May, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan, along with other party workers made their way into Islamabad and marched towards D-Chowk pushing aside containers and confronting tear gas shelling.

Imran Khan while addressing the protesters at Islamabad's 9th Avenue and gave a six-day deadline to the government for announcing elections and dissolving assemblies, warning that he would return to the federal capital with the "entire nation" otherwise. He said, "I had decided that I will sit here until the government dissolves assemblies and announces elections, but of what I have seen in the past 24 hours, they (govt) are taking the nation towards anarchy." Meanwhile, the Supreme Court dismissed a petition filed by the government seeking a contempt proceedings against Imran Khan for "violating" the apex court's orders with regard to the party's Azadi March.

Before entering Islamabad Imran Khan said, "This nation does not accept this imported government." He called on the people to come out for what he termed as a "jihad" for "true freedom." Further, he called the incumbent government a "group of thieves,"

claiming that they were the most corrupt people in the country and said that they were afraid of the masses which was why they had placed containers. Additionally, he said that the main demands for the march to the capital were the immediate dissolution of the National Assembly and a date for the next general election. Previously, PTI's Central Secretary General Asad Umar announced that "history will be made" through the 'Azadi March.'

Meanwhile, as the PTI took to the streets there was a heavy crackdown on the marches. A day before the march, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah announced that the federal cabinet had decided it would not allow the PTI to hold its long march to the capital. He stated that the government has decided not to allow the PTI to spread "chaos and disorder" in the guise of the march., adding, "They will be stopped so they cannot propagate their misleading agenda." Following this announcement, the government launched a crackdown and rounded up over 1,000 PTI leaders and workers to curb the march. On the day of the march, PTI workers and police clashed in Lahore after the demonstrators managed to push their way through the containers deployed at Batti Chowk by the government to stop the protesters from reaching Islamabad. The police used tear gas following this incident. Additionally, the government authorised the deployment of the army in the Red Zone to "protect important government buildings."

PTI's turn for a long march
Since coming to power in 2018, the then PTI government witnessed several

demonstrations against it. The culmination of these marches was seen in the Pakistan Democratic Movement launched in 2020 by the opposition against the PTI government. The opposition rallies both in the streets and in parliament to oust Imran Khan and his government, the success of which was witnessed in April, with the passing of the no-confidence motion. However, since then the PTI has pushed the “foreign-funded conspiracy” narrative as a reason for his removal and promised to fight against the incumbent government. Thus, it is once again Imran Khan and the PTI’s turn to take to the streets. As pointed out in an opinion in Dawn, just before Imran Khan’s removal from office his popularity graph seemed to have plummeted to a new low. However, following the vote of no-confidence, the situation changed dramatically with his narrative resonating with large sections of the population that held deep-rooted anti-American sentiments.

The government’s crackdown

Until two months ago, the government was in the place of the current place of the PTI, but unlike during the PTI rule, the government has launched a serious crackdown on not only the PTI’s march but also its leaders and party workers. This unprecedented crackdown has resulted in the march taking on a slight violent turn as seen with the clashes with the police. However, the crackdown comes as a surprise because until 23 May the government decided to let Imran Khan’s long march on Islamabad go ahead, only to take a complete U-turn on the matter after a meeting attended by the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Nawaz Sharif. Following this, the PML-N decided that an early election would not be ‘dictated’ by Imran Khan and authorised Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah to ‘deal’ with the PTI marchers. The government’s change of plans reveals the government’s apprehensions about the PTI and its

desperation to reassert itself as it resorts to using force. Additionally, the government seems to be looking toward the security establishment to help it address the situation.

The idea of marches in Pakistan

Long marches and sit-ins in the federal capital have been in vogue for decades in Pakistan. The idea of a long march has been picked up not only by politicians but also by civilians who march for various causes. However, long march used by political parties has become a frequent phenomenon in the country. Until 2014, the most famous marches were led by Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif. Following this, the PTI sent a precedent after holding the longest dharna while the Faizabad Interchange, a spot for the Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan’s venue of choice for its protests.

Keeping to the traditions, all major political parties in the last couple of months have used these long marches to achieve their agenda. In a short span of two months, Pakistani has witnessed long marches spearheaded by veterans in the field and beginners. However, the idea of marches and their ability to move beyond the festivities and sloganeering is something that is yet to be seen.

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Daily Focus, 25 May 2022

Erosion of Pakistani Rupee: Three causes and multiple consequences

The economy being perceived at ‘nazuk mod’ indicates moment is apt for external financing to keep above the threshold of bailout and look within

Ankit Singh



Image Source: Dawn

On 23 May, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) announced an increase in the key policy rate by 150 basis points to 13.75 per cent aimed at containing the rising inflation and mitigating the risks to external stability. This is the second consecutive time, MPC has raised the key policy rate, marking the net increase in the policy rate by 400 basis points in less than two months. The outcome expected is that lending domestic currency will become expensive and the economy will cool down the scarcity of dollars in the country could be dealt with and eroding the value of the Pakistani rupee (PKR) can be stopped, if not improved. PKR was pegged at around 116 in January 2018 and has

increased by almost 72 per cent in just four years. What explains this gradual erosion of PKR against USD in a relatively shorter time? What will be the impacts of such devaluation with regard to macroeconomics in Pakistan?

Causes behind the persistent erosion of PKR Pakistan is a consumptions-based economy, it imports essential commodities for the manufacturing industry like plastic, machinery, steel, chemicals and even farm products.

First, post-pandemic recovery. People were more affine to consume due to the savings bubble developed during the pandemic and fiscal deficit reaching as high as nine per cent of the GDP. The trade deficit widened by 68 per cent, and imports skyrocket to USD 72 billion from 55 billion during the pandemic year. While the domestic currency, PKR was relatively less attractive and demand for PKR declined further in investing and guaranteeing for consumption and financing.

Second, the extended fund facility signed with IMF in which the government

committed to making SBP sovereign and making the exchange rate partially free. Henceforth, USD-PKR parity inclined to the perception of the market participants in the nation. The growth stimulus lacking in the country due to constrained fiscal space and circular debt financing limits the scope of new entrants to the economy. Hence, lack of scope in increasing the marginal efficiency of capital in the country gave more space to dollar-denominated investments and the PKR slope of decreasing has become steeper. Basically, a ground report from the formal market-led growth indicates that PKR is not attractive enough anymore, if left to stakeholders in the market, looking for returns daily. The political crises on top of all of this have further reduced the confidence of the market in terms of reliability and accountability. However, Pakistan has another economy, which is more directly linked to the growth patterns in the country, the informal economy. Third, the informal economy in Pakistan and its contribution to PKR erosion against USD. As per the collectorate of customs in Pakistan, since the takeover by the Taliban in Afghanistan, USD two million were smuggled daily to Afghanistan from Pakistan due to embargoes placed upon the new government by the US. The dollar which could have ended in the stock market found a more profitable opportunity and hence massive dollar flight took place from Pakistan after the regime change and further weakened the PKR.

Consequences of the persistent erosion of PKR

The direct impacts are lower productivity, expensive imports, inflation and reduced purchasing power. Is Pakistan poised for stagnant growth again? Will this help the country move from an intensive consumption basis to a savings basis? There is a decision paralysis which hunts the leadership and common masses, who on the one hand were content with informal and lucrative credit networks. At the same time,

equally, there is a desperate need for social and economic betterment.

Considering the rate of 200 as the new normal, the nation is gearing for compatible new monetary realities, be it expensive government liabilities or expensive debt servicing. The inflation is going to linger on as subsidies are going to continue, one way or other and there is going to be a nudge to change the economic behaviour of the classes in Pakistan. There will be a larger tendency to save to afford expensive products and services in the economy. The rebasing of the economy to the year 2016 also confirms to Pakistan adjusting to the decadal reality of globalization, whereby the sources of financing the deficits are changing from west backed lenders to regional financing mechanisms.

The persistent inflation will definitely further erode the value of the domestic currency; however, it will create a scope for intensifying the export-based production and may lay the floor plan for increasing the productivity and competitiveness of Pakistan as imports become unaffordable. It will be an impetus for diversification of manufacturing and services conveniently imported in current times. The self-reliance on basic and critical needs from within might seem painful in the short run but for the nation to become the next South Korea of South Asia, a monetary contraction had to be a pass-through. The nation might need to face this if it wants to retain its political leverage and economic competitiveness in the conundrum of world order transition. Definitely, for Pakistan, China could be an import destination with a saved cost on transportation but exporting to manufacturing intensive China faces a lot of hurdles due to better capital efficiency in China.

This mandates for any exporting country like Pakistan to increase its marginal efficiency of capital to find a space in the import profile of China. However, there are risks of not performing up to the tasks and the situation might deteriorate further.

Pakistan is not facing an economic crisis at the moment, rather it is facing a decision paralysis in the intricate network of elites who have to take on the lead to accommodate the internal resurgence of the economy along with circular debt financing for the nation to grow and prosper.

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PAKISTAN IN BRIEF

POLITICS

NA witnesses' volleys of personal assault over PTI rally

On 24 May, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, countered pleas by Dr. Fehmida Mirza to have a big heart to let PTI march and handle the march in more humanitarian manner. His allegation started by identifying the Dr Fehmida with her husband and how their differences enabled her a ticket from PTI. On the claims of an effort for armed invasion, he said: "One should have no misconception. If there will be an armed invasion on the city, which is a symbol of the federation, and if there will be an invasion on Pakistan's security and federation, then it will be dealt with full force." (Amir Wasim, "[GDA, PML-N trade barbs in NA over handling of long march.](#)" *Dawn*, 25 May 2022)

INTERNAL

PM announces targeted relief worth USD 160 million for 14 million families

On 27 May, during his televised address to the nation, PM Shehbaz Sharif announced the relief package for 14 million poor families, comprising 85 million people, would be given Rs2000 per family and stated that the prices of petroleum products were increased with heavy heart for the interest of the economy and country. The premier said that PKR 2000 per family would get additional to the BISP and it would continue even in the next fiscal year. He further stated that the government also directed Utility Stores Corporation to set the price of 10kg sack of flour at PKR 400. (Zaheer Abbasi, "[PM takes step to 'insulate' the poor from price hike.](#)" *Business Recorder*, 28 May 2022)

Maryam requests SC to stay from the political imbroglio

On 27 May, PML-N vice-president Maryam Nawaz Sharif expressed in her tweet that the

SC would have to be cautious and stay away from this political battle; otherwise, the impression of [its] partiality would strengthen, which would be harmful to the judiciary as an institution. Quoting the Urdu proverb 'khisiani billi khamba noche' (meaning an embarrassed person tends to vent his feelings by quarrelling), she said 'the embarrassed cat has a pole to scratch' but this 'semi-insane person' lacked even this facility. ("[Maryam urges SC to stay away from ongoing political tussle.](#)" *Dawn*, 28 May 2022)

Senate passes NAB and Election Amendment

On 28 May, Senate Chairman allowed the presentation of two highly-controversial bills—The Elections (Amendment) Bill 2022 and The National Accountability (Second Amendment) Bill 2022, without referring them to the relevant committees, leading to their passage by majority vote in the upper house of Parliament. The Elections (Amendment) Bill 2022 seeks reversal of the introduction of electronic voting machines (EVMs) and voting rights to overseas Pakistanis through internet voting (i-voting) in the next general elections. The National Accountability (Second Amendment) Bill 2022 mainly seeks to clip the key powers of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in probing mega corruption cases. (Sardar Sikandar Shaheen, "[NAB, electoral bills sail through Senate as well.](#)" *Business Recorder*, 28 May 2022)

Government caves in to IMF, drops petrol bomb

On 26 May, the finance minister announced that government gave a go ahead to increase petroleum products' prices by PKR 30 per litre. He expressed the hope that now reaching an understanding on staff-level agreement with the IMF would be easier as constructive discussion are being held with the Fund on revival of the EFF. The minister acknowledged that it would contribute to inflation to some extent but the government

had no other choice as it has already provided Rs56 per litre subsidy on diesel and also to reduce pressure on Rupee. (Zahir Abbasi and Wasim Iqbal, "[POL products' prices hiked by Rs30 per litre.](#)" *Business Recorder*, 27 May 2022)

Wont take dictation from PTI: PM

On 26 May, while addressing national assembly during his speech, PM Shehbaz Sharif, ruled out the notion of receiving "dictation" from PTI Chairman Imran Khan, stressed that the National Assembly would make the decision regarding the date of the next general elections. The prime minister said: "Holding talks is the ultimate weapon of politicians. Our doors are opened for talks. I can form a committee for this purpose." His address came after government had passed Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2022 and NAB (Amendment), 2022. According to NAB (amendment) Bill, 2022, there are some important points: NAB deputy chairman to become acting chairman following top official's retirement. Process to appoint new chairman to begin two months prior to incumbent's retirement and completed in 40 days. Federal and provincial tax matters removed from NAB's purview. Regulatory bodies' decisions removed from NAB's purview. Judges to be appointed in accountability courts for a three-year period; cases to be decided within a year. NAB bound to ensure availability of evidence prior to arrest. Up to five-year imprisonment for filing false reference. (Naveed Butt, "[PM rejects Imran's 'immediate' election demand.](#)" *Business Recorder*, 27 May 2022)

Imran Khan gives six days ultimatum for declaring date of general elections

On 26 May, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman, gave a six-day ultimatum to the coalition government to dissolve the assemblies and announce fresh elections or else he would be back in the capital to throw them out with 'a sea of people' from all over the country. The PTI chairman said that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and other

political parties staged a march during his government but they did not create any hurdle or fired teargas at their workers. According to various sources, minimum 3 police officers were martyred in line of service during Azadi March of PTI in various parts of Punjab. (Fazalsher and Zulfiqar Ahmed, "[PTI chairman issues 6-day ultimatum after disbanding march.](#)" *Business Recorder*, 27 May 2022)

NA passes Election (Amendment) Bill 2022

On 26 May, the National Assembly of Pakistan passed an amendment to remove the use of electronic voting machines (EVMs) in general elections as well as disallowing overseas Pakistanis from voting. The law passing is an effort to revive the Elections Act, 2017 in the shape prior to those amendments, which would ensure free, fair, and transparent elections explained Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar. The amendment falls short of denying vote to overseas Pakistanis and use of EVM for general elections as the discretion is left to Election Commission to conduct pilot studies on the above provisions and prescribe the same to the parliament which would then legislate on the issues. (Fahad Chaudhry, "[NA approves bill to deprive overseas Pakistanis from voting, stop use of EVMs in general election.](#)" *Dawn*, 26 May 2022)

Pakistan reports fourth polio cases

On 25 May, Federal Minister for Health Abdul Qadir Patel reported that another polio case was reported in the country, making it the fourth polio case in one month. The victim is a 13-month-old boy who has been paralysed by wild poliovirus in the in Mir Ali area of North Waziristan tribal district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Federal Minister for Health Abdul Qadir Patel said, "Another child in North Waziristan has been paralysed by wild poliovirus. This 13-month-old child will live with disabilities for the rest of his life because of a virus that is entirely preventable. This is a collective loss for

Pakistan,” adding, “Over 99 per cent of the world is now polio-free. Our children also deserve a life free from this incurable disease.” (Ikram Junaidi, “[Pakistan reports fourth polio case in one month](#),” *Dawn*, 25 May 2022)

Sindh not getting 46 per cent and Balochistan not getting 84pc of Indus water share

On 25 May, the National Assembly’s Standing Committee on Water Resources was informed that Sindh was being deprived of 46 per cent of its water share in Punjab (between Taunsa and Guddu barrages) and Balochistan was losing almost 84pc of its share in Sindh. MNA Khalid Magsi, who headed a subcommittee appointed by the NA standing committee, reported after a field visit and measurement monitoring that trust deficit among the provinces was the most critical issue at present when it came to measurement of water discharges at different stations, particularly Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur barrages. (Khaleeq Kiani, “[Sindh deprived of 46pc, Balochistan 84pc of water share](#),” *Dawn*, 26 May 2022)

Police clash with PTI workers; Supreme Court directs Islamabad chief commissioner to provide alternative for march

On 25 May, police and PTI workers clashed in Lahore after the demonstrators managed to push their way through the containers deployed at Batti Chowk by the government to stop the protesters from reaching Islamabad. The police used tear gas following this incident. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court asked the Islamabad chief commissioner to provide an alternate site to the PTI to hold its Azadi March. (Haseeb Bhatti, “[SC directs Islamabad chief commissioner to provide alternate site to PTI for Azadi March by 2:30pm](#),” *Dawn*, 24 May 2022; “[Police clash with PTI workers in Lahore, detain 12 members](#),” *The Express Tribune*, 24 May 2022)

Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights terms detention of Shireen Mazari as an act of political victimisation

On 24 May, the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights unanimously observed the detention of Shireen Mazari as an act of political victimisation. Meanwhile, Shireen Mazari termed the corruption case against her “political victimisation.” She stated that she was not informed about the charges nor was she asked to provide a clarification and that her name only surfaced during the investigation process. She said, “They dragged me from the car, put me in a white Vigo and headed towards the motorway,” adding, “It is a case of kidnapping and disappearance. The officials also seized my phone and wallet.” (“[Senate body terms Shireen Mazari’s arrest political victimisation](#),” *Dawn*, 24 May 2022; “[Shireen terms corruption case ‘political victimisation’](#),” *Dawn*, 24 May 2022)

Water shortage in Indus rises to 40 per cent

On 24 May, Indus River System Authority spokesperson confirmed to The News International that water deficit had swelled up to 40 per cent from 27 per cent claimed earlier. Water level at Tarbela dam reached dead level on 23 May, the water stored in Mangla Dam and Chashma Barrage has also plunged to just 0.191 MAF. A day before, the water level in Mangla and Chashma was at 0.221 MAF. IRSA spokesman said, “In Indus River, water flows have further tumbled to 66,300 cusecs, which were at 68,900 cusecs a day before mainly because of reduction in temperature in Skardu to 21 degree centigrade from 29 degree centigrade. In the first 10-15 days of the current month of May, water flows in Indus improved but now a major dip in water flows has appeared which may last for 10-12 days.” Punjab and Sindh were being supplied water with 40 per cent shortage, Punjab is being given 73,000 cusecs whereas Sindh 74,000 cusecs. Balochistan is getting water supplies of 13,000 cusecs and KPK 3,000 cusecs. (Khalid Mustafa,

[“Water shortage in Indus rises to 40pc.”](#) *The News International*, 25 May 2022)

PTI claims “history will be made” with the march

On 24 May, PTI’s Central Secretary General Asad Umar stated that the “history will be made” on 25 May. He said, “After an impressive show, Pakistan’s decisions will never be made behind closed doors again, neither will ill-gotten money be used nor foreign powers take decisions for the country.” Similarly, Shah Mehmood Qureshi said, “It is a decisive moment for the whole nation as we have to decide whether we want to become an independent nation or repeat the history of 75 years. The last time the nation got united was in 1974 and made a decision. Now, once again the whole nation needs to come out of their houses.” ([“PTI expects to ‘create history’ with march,”](#) *Dawn*, 24 May 2022)

Meanwhile, 500 containers have been given to police along with extra security personnel from provinces to deal with marchers. Additionally, police officials stated that two plans had been made under the direction of the government: either to allow the PTI marchers to enter the capital or intercept them at the entry points. (Munawer Azeem, [“Islamabad likely to be cut off from rest of country ahead of PTI’s march,”](#) *Dawn*, 24 May 2022)

Meanwhile, police raided a number of PTI leaders' homes. During the raids, one constable was killed during a raid by a police team at a residence in Model Town C-Block. ([“Police raid PTI leaders' homes ahead of Islamabad long march,”](#) *Dawn*, 24 May 2022; [“Constable killed during raid at PTI leader's home in Model Town,”](#) *The Express Tribune*, 24 May 2022)

Government denies PTI’s demand for snap polls

On 25 May, The Express Tribune reported that the government has rejected the PTI’s demand for early elections and decided to

take tough measures to stabilise the economy and improve governance. Further, they decided that the current setup will complete its tenure till August 2023 and the general elections would be held at the stipulated time next year. ([“Govt rejects PTI's demand for snap polls, decides to complete tenure,”](#) *Dawn*, 24 May 2022)

Donald Lu should be sacked for “bad manners and sheer arrogance,” says Imran Khan

On 23 May, Imran Khan during an interview with CNN’s Becky Anderson stated that US diplomat Donald Lu should be sacked for “bad manners and sheer arrogance.” He claimed, “On March 7... US undersecretary of state responsible for South Asia tells our ambassador in an official meeting [with] note takers on both sides that unless you get rid of your prime minister Pakistan will suffer consequences,” adding, “This guy should be sacked for bad manners and sheer arrogance. Imagine, telling an ambassador country of 220 million people that you get rid of your prime minister.” ([“Donald Lu should be sacked for 'bad manners and sheer arrogance', Imran says in CNN interview,”](#) *The Express Tribune*, 24 May 2022)

NA session held amid lack of quorum

On 23 May, Raja Pervaiz Ashraf chaired the session of the national assembly (NA) which raised a plethora of issues facing the country ranging from forest fire to water scarcity, from electricity load-shedding to the arrest for former human rights minister Dr Shireen Mazari. The house passed the Pakistan Global Institute Bill 2021. The Election Amendment Ordinance 2022 was also tabled during the session. In addition, a bill to establish a forensic science agency was also introduced in the National Assembly. (Saqib Virk, [“Sindh’s water being stolen, minister tells NA,”](#) *Dawn*, 24 May 2022)

Parvez Elahi survives a no-confidence motion; PML-N submits resubmits another no-confidence motion

On 22 May, Punjab Assembly Speaker Parvez Elahi survive a no-confidence motion after he managed to get it disposed of even before the mover could enter the house. The PML-N's lawmakers claimed that they were delayed because they were not being allowed to enter the assembly premises. However, the PTI lawmakers denied these claims stating that they were not involved in any efforts to stop the PML-N lawmakers. Meanwhile, the chair announced that the "the motion is declined" and adjourned the house proceedings till 6 June. Following this, the PML-N resubmit another no-trust motion against him. ("[PML-N tricked as no-trust against Elahi scuttled](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 23 May 2022)

March against the "imported government" to begin on 25 May, says Imran Khan

On 22 May, Imran Khan announced that the PTI's march against the "imported government" to Islamabad will start on 25 May. He stated that the main demands of the march were the immediate dissolution of the assemblies and announcing a date for the next general election. He said, "If the nation brings the current government back to power then I will accept it. However, no other country would be allowed to impose them on us." Further, he said that the army had remained true to its word of staying "neutral." ("[PTI marchers to descend on capital on May 25](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 23 May 2022)

PTI's long march has no significance, says Maulana Fazlur Rehman

On 22 May, Maulana Fazlur Rehman stated that the PTI's "Azadi March" on Islamabad has no significance and that people would not support such agitations. He said, "They (supporters of PTI) will come to Islamabad only for wasting time and I request media not to give importance to the march." Further, he claimed that the march would

bring the PTI's politics to an end, stating that such 'negative' activities were in no one's interest. ("[PTI march on Islamabad has no significance: Fazlur Rehman](#)," *Dawn*, 23 May 2022)

Imran Niazi wants to initiate a civil war in the country, says PM Shehbaz Sharif
On 23 May, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif claimed that Imran Khan wants a civil war in the country. He said, "Imran Niazi wants to initiate a civil war in the country. But he is mistaken. The nation will never forgive him [for the sin] and will hold him by the collar." ("[Imran out to start civil war: PM Shehbaz](#)," *Dawn*, 23 May 2022)

PROVINCES

Balochistan: Only 132 women contesting LG elections

On 28 May, Business Recorder reported that out of 16,195 candidates, there were only 132 women who would try their luck for local government election to be conducted in the province on 29 May. 5,226 polling stations have been set up, out of which, 2,000 have been declared as "highly sensitive" and 1,917 as "sensitive" by the authorities. The number of registered voters in the 32 districts is 3,552,398, the data suggested. (Sardar Sikandar Shaheen, "[Only 132 women contesting LG elections in Balochistan](#)," *Business Recorder*, 28 May 2022)

Pilot study held on urban resilience of informal communities

On 28 May, Business Recorder reported that UNDP Pakistan, in collaboration with the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Karachi, has initiated a pilot study on urban resilience for Karachi's informal communities of Azam Basti and Rehri Goth. The project seeks to strengthen the inclusion and resilience of migrants, displaced people and host communities in informal urban settlements across four dimensions: livelihoods, participatory urban planning and development, social cohesion, and

climate change adaptation. A panel talk was also organized at the event by the implementing partner, Concepts Unlimited, and included Aqsa Javed IBA; Zehra Mehdi K-Electric; and Nadeem Sheikh WWF Pakistan. The panel explored the problems faced by the informal settlements in Karachi and ways in which they can be addressed through community ownership and the active participation of all relevant stakeholders involved. Dr. S Akbar Zaidi, Executive Director, IBA Karachi and Lead Investigator of the UNDP-IBA research study, highlighted the role of data-driven approaches in development studies and policy initiatives and the important role played by academic institutions to achieve the same. (“[Pilot study held on urban resilience of informal communities](#),” *Business Recorder*, 28 May 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Centre should desist from taking any extraordinary step against the provincial government

On 28, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government strongly reacted to the interior minister’s statement regarding ‘legal action’ against Chief Minister Mahmood Khan for leading a procession to Islamabad. “The federal government has the right to impose emergency in a province under Article 232 of the Constitution only when there is serious disturbance or governance crisis,” special assistant to the chief minister on information Barrister Saif told a presser here. The special assistant to the chief minister said Mahmood Khan led the procession as Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution gave the ‘right of freedom and freedom of assembly’ to every citizen. (“[KP warns centre over possible action against chief minister](#),” *Dawn*, 28 May 2022)

Balochistan: CM wont resort to revenge after no confidence motion against him fails

On 26 May, while addressing a press conference after no trust against him failed, CM Bizenjo said: “I will contact those members who brought the no-trust motion

against the government and will ask them to jointly work for the uplift of the province and prosperity of its people.” (Saleem Shahid, “[Balochistan CM Bizenjo says won’t seek revenge over no-trust](#),” *Dawn*, 27 May 2022)

PHC orders restoration of gas supply to cement factory

On 26 May, Peshawar High Court directed the Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) to ensure uninterrupted gas supply to a major cement factory in Lakki Marwat district. The bench was hearing a petition filed by the Lucky Cement Limited against the severing of gas supply to its cement manufacturing plant in Lakki Marwat. Advocate general Shumail Ahmad Butt told a bench consisting of Justice Lal Jan Khattak and Justice Abdul Shakoor that the province produced more natural gas than its need but even then, its industries and other consumers were subjected to gas cuts by the federal government in violation of the Constitution. Lawyer for the SNGPL Yasir Saleem opposed the petitioner’s contentions insisting that the case of the cement manufacturer was different from the textile mills. (“PHC orders restoration of gas supply to cement factory,” *Dawn*, 27 May 2022)

Sindh: Provincial government to request delay in LG polls

On 26 May, spokesperson for the Sindh government and Administrator Murtaza Wahab confirmed to Dawn that the major opposition parties, including the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf, Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan and Grand Democratic Alliance wanted deferment of LG polls till the structure of the local government and powers of the local bodies were reviewed and agreed upon in the new LG law. He said that opposition members were of the view that the reforms in the LG law would become infructuous if the polls were held on the previous law. (Tahir Siquidui, “[PPP, opposition want postponement of LG polls in Sindh](#),” *Dawn*, 27 May 2022)

Balochistan: CM wont resort to revenge after no confidence motion against him fails
 On 26 May, while addressing a press conference after no trust against him failed, CM Bizenjo said: “I will contact those members who brought the no-trust motion against the government and will ask them to jointly work for the uplift of the province and prosperity of its people.” (Saleem Shahid, “[Balochistan CM Bizenjo says won’t seek revenge over no-trust.](#)” *Dawn*, 27 May 2022)

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Balochistan: CM to face no confidence motion today

On 25 May, the no-confidence motion against the Balochistan Chief Minister Abdul Quddus Bizenjo will be tabled in the session of the provincial assembly. Previously, 14 members had submitted no confidence against CM Bizenjo. The Assembly Secretariat had sent a requisition to the caretaker governor for convening the assembly session. In response to the summary, the governor summoned the session. After tabling the no-confidence motion, the next three to seven days will be reserved for debate and voting. (“[No-trust motion against Balochistan CM to be tabled today.](#)” *The News International*, 25 May 2022)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Tribal jigra asks TTP to extend the month-long ceasefire

On 23 May, Qabaili Amn Jirga representatives asked the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan to extend the month-long ceasefire with the government to enable the tribal elders to continue their efforts for restoration of sustainable peace in the country. The tribal leaders said, “Tribal people are peace-loving and want the TTP and our government to play role for an end to the bloodshed in the region,” adding, “We will also go to Afghanistan to hold meetings with the relevant people and seek their support in the process for restoration of unconditional peace.” (“[Jirga asks TTP to extend truce for sustainable peace.](#)” *Dawn*, 24 May 2022)

Half of the posts reserved for religious minorities in government jobs remain vacant, says HRCP report

On 24 May, Dawn reported that a report compiled by the National Commission for

Human Rights (NCHR) with support from the European Union (EU) reveals that nearly half of the posts reserved for religious minorities in government jobs remain vacant and even with the posts that are filled, 80 per cent of non-Muslims are employed to carry out jobs for which they are paid less. (Kalbe Ali, [“80pc non-Muslims employed in low-paid jobs: report,” Dawn, 24 May 2022](#))

Sindh: Information minister complaints against discriminatory water distribution of Indus among provinces

On 22 May, Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon expressed concern over that water shortage in Sindh’s barrages had aggravated to an alarming level, he mentioned that Kotri Barrage was facing 72 per cent water shortage, adding that water supply to industries was now likely to be affected amid a crisis of irrigation and potable water. The information minister said that Indus River System Authority (Irsa) had failed to implement the 1991 Water Accord and added that Irsa had been following the three-tier formula for distribution of water among provinces for many years which was illegal and against its mandate. ([“Water shortage in Sindh has reached alarming level, says Sharjeel Memon,” Dawn, 23 May 2022](#))

ECONOMY

SBP injects funds through open market operation

On 28 May, Business Recorder reported that State Bank of Pakistan has conducted a 63-day OMO (Open Market Operations) by injecting PKR 1.8 trillion (equivalent to USD 9 billion at pegged rate of 2000 PKR per USD) at a rate of 13.84 per cent. SBP also injected PKR 1.4 trillion (equivalent to USD 7 billion at pegged rate of 2000 PKR per USD) in 7-day OMO at 13.78 per cent. Normally, SBP conducts short duration OMO of 7-days, Umair Naseer, at Topline Securities said. This 63-days OMO provides banks liquidity for longer term that stabilizes

rates in the money market. To recall, SBP last injected PKR 425 billion at a rate of 9.91 per cent on Jan 07, 2022 for 63-days. Similarly, it also conducted such 63 day OMO injections on December 17, December 24 and December 31 by injecting PKR 689 billion, PKR 382 billion and PKR 274 billion, respectively. ([“SBP again conducts long-duration OMO,” Business Recorder, 28 May 2022](#))

Tariff hike on table to follow fuel price adjustment

On 27 May, during a press conference, the Minister of State for Petroleum said Pakistan has committed to ending global subsidies that are equally available to the rich and the poor, adding the electricity prices would also be adjusted on the same lines so that the poor remain protected. He said the government’s decision to increase petroleum prices had revived market confidence, and the rupee gained PKR 2 against the dollar and the stock market recovered. On the question of buying cheap Russian oil, he explained that Pakistan’s ambassador in Moscow approached the Russian energy ministry, but did not get a response either on cheaper oil or gas, and further claimed the Russians showed inclination for discussion on infrastructure projects. (Khaleeq Kiani, [“Power tariff hike coming up, minister warns,” Dawn, 28 May 2022](#))

Telecom sector to reach a valuation of USD 3.475 billion

On 28 May, The News International reported on trends in growth of telecom sector’s market size. The telecom sector’s market size is estimated to go up by PKR 51 billion or 8 per cent to PKR 695 billion by the end of fiscal year 2022 against FY 2021, according to the Pakistan Credit Rating Agency. This rise can be associated with the expansion of 3G, 4G and 5G services in Pakistan. In Pakistan, approximately 98 percent of the households own a mobile phone, whereas penetration of mobile services was 88 percent at the end of February 2022 with nearly 192 million

mobile subscriptions. By February 2022, total borrowings of the sector reached PKR 180 billion – 29 per cent higher than PKR 140 billion, which were for the same period last year. Considering the high capital-intensive nature of the sector, a major portion of the sector’s borrowing – 88 per cent is long-term, while the portion of short-term loans is only 6 percent. (Bilal Hussain, “[Telecom sector to show 8pc growth in FY2022](#),” *The News International*, 28 May 2022)

USD 2 billion worth of projects to be financed by ADB after thorough consultations

On 26 May, while speaking at a meeting at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), Deputy Country Director of Asian Development Bank (ADB) said: “ADB supports projects in developing member countries that create economic and development impact, delivered through both public and private sector operations, advisory services, and knowledge support. Strategy 2030 sets the course for ADB’s efforts to respond effectively to Asia and the Pacific’s changing needs.” On the need to find the objectives in financing projects in Pakistan, he asserted that projects related to food security, health, irrigation and education were pivotal in overall economic development in Pakistan. LCCI president in his address stressed that Pakistan needs to ensure macroeconomic stability, fiscal consolidation and consistent improvement in the business environment through better facilitation of private sector and pivotal role of private sector in transformation of the economy. (“[\\$2bn projects for Pakistan in the pipeline: ADB official](#),” *Business Recorder*, 27 May 2022)

Power division and World Bank resume weekly talks regarding PACE 1

On 27 May, Business Recorder reported on resumption of regular talks between Power Division and World Bank to progress on Programme for Affordable Energy (PACE-1). PACE 1 is a policy action around six

reforms, ranging from National Energy Policy (NEP), Transmission System Expansion Plan (TSEP), financial sustainability and the circular debt, the importance of transitioning to renewable energy, in particular solar power, which can help to meet daytime cooling demand and retargeting of subsidies. (Mushtaq Ghumman, “[WB, Power Div to hold weekly talks](#),” *Business Recorder*, 27 May 2022)

Forex reserves down by USD 11 million in a week

On 26 May, according to the weekly foreign exchange reserves report issued by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), the total foreign exchange reserves held by the country stood at USD 16.150 billion as of 20 May, 2022 from USD 16.161 billion as of 13 May, 2022. During the week under review, the SBP reserves decreased by USD 75 million to USD 10.089 billion due to external debt repayment. However, net foreign reserves held by commercial banks rose by USD 63 million to USD 6.061 billion. The government is making efforts to build the foreign exchange reserves and recently, Saudi Arabia has announced to rollover the \$3 billion deposits with Pakistan. (“[Forex reserves down \\$11m](#),” *Business Recorder*, 27 May 2022)

Finance Minister refuses to impose CVT and raise tax on salaried classes

On 27 May, The Tribune Express Reported quoted finance minister Miftah Ismail’s position on not imposing Capital Value Tax (CVT) on the total value of the stock market and to not introduce single rate 30 per cent tax on salaried class who earn in the range of PKR 104,000 to PKR one million. The measures were sought by IMF from FBR (Federal Bureau of Revenue) to increase fiscal target of PKR 6.8 trillion. According to the news report, Pakistani authorities had proposed their own revised tax slabs, which were collecting additional PKR 35 million, one third of IMF’s expectations. According to IMF, the economy is to grow at 5 per cent while inflation will hover at inflation of 11

per cent for the next financial year, this surge will create scope additional PKR 900 billion in the kitty of FBR. (Shahbaz Rana, "[1% CVT on bourse rejected](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 27 May 2022)

IMF deal is outdated but Pakistan will keep its word, says Foreign Minister

On 25 May, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari termed the deal outdated and said: "This deal is a pre-Covid deal. It is a pre-Afghanistan fallout deal. It is a pre-Ukrainian crisis deal. It is a pre-inflation deal." Bilawal met US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in New York on May 18, on the sidelines of a UN meeting on food security. On 24 May, State Department Spokesperson Ned Price said: "We have important ties across a number of arenas, including our economic ties. We want to see Pakistan on stable and advantageous economic footing, and we'll continue to work with our Pakistani partners to help achieve that." ("[\\$6bn IMF deal is 'outdated', says Bilawal](#)," *Dawn*, 26 May 2022)

IMF emphasizes on removing fuel and food subsidies for achieving program objectives

On 26 May, IMF released a statement regarding ongoing talks with Pakistan authorities to revive USD 6 billion EFF program and need to address inflation and deficits. The statement read: "In this regard, the further increase in policy rates implemented on May 23 was a welcome step. On the fiscal side, there have been deviations from the policies agreed upon in the last review, partly reflecting the fuel and power subsidies announced by the authorities in February." Islamabad has so far received USD 3 billion, with the programme due to end later this year. Officials are seeking an extension to the programme through to June 2023, as well as the release of the next tranche of USD 1 billion. The PSX and the rupee have both come under pressure over the past week as the government has failed to take decisive economic decisions, most prominent among which is a reversal of fuel subsidies. ("[IMF](#)

[presses Pakistan on 'urgency' of removing fuel, energy subsidies for programme revival](#)," *Dawn*, 26 May 2022)

Rupee slides further, business community complaints about high interest rates

On 24 May, PKR was pegged at 201.41 per USD as the closing price. There is a regular complain from importers that opening a letter of credit (LC) is becoming difficult with the passage of each day. The shortage of dollar while getting higher prices discourages importers. Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FPCCI) President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said: Pakistan's policy rate is comparatively higher than regional countries such as Malaysia at 2pc, China at 3.7pc, India at 4pc, and Bangladesh at 5pc. The country will not be able to compete with the regional countries with high interest and export refinancing rates. We reject the State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) decision to raise interest rate to 13.75pc, as it would not be in favour of domestic businesses and industries." ("[Dollar rises to Rs201.41](#)," *Dawn*, 25 May 2022)

Net foreign loans surges to USD 51.03 billion

On 23 May, the Ministry of Economic Affairs in its monthly report on foreign economic assistance mentioned that it received USD 15.5 billion in foreign loans in the first 10 months of the current fiscal year, nearing the limit of annual target for foreign resource by 92.5 per cent. The data showed that the size of foreign loans had been steadily increasing over the last three and half years; from USD 10.59 billion in FY2018-19 to USD 10.662 billion in FY2019-20 and then reaching USD 14.28 billion in FY2020-21 followed by USD 13.03 billion in the first 10 months of the current fiscal year. There were four major sources of foreign inflows, including USD 4.05 billion from multilateral lenders, followed by USD 3 billion of time deposit from Saudi Arabia, about USD 2.623 billion in commercial loans from private banks and

USD 2.041 billion worth of international bonds. The largest among the bilateral loans came from Saudi Arabia at USD 201 million, followed by China at USD 153 million and USD 64 million from the United States. Total loans from bilateral lenders stood at USD 486 million in 10 months. (Khaleeq Kiani, "[Pakistan borrowed \\$15.5bn in first 10 months of FY22](#)," *Dawn*, 24 May 2022)

Working and surplus capital withdrawn from all federal and provincial departments

On 23 May, the Ministry of Finance notified controllers of all judiciary, legislative and military organisations to surrender surplus funds and working capital to be deposited either as part of the Federal Consolidated Fund (FCF) or Public Account of the Federation (PAF), governed by parliament, the notice explained. Under various notifications, the working balances and investment of surplus funds belonging to PSEs and local and autonomous bodies were permissible to be deposited with any public or private bank for their operations subject to a set of conditions and criteria. The budget deficit for the current year is estimated at USD 35 billion. (Khaleeq Kiani, "[Ministries, provinces told to surrender surplus funds](#)," *Dawn*, 24 May 2022)

Ambiguity around fuel subsidies likely to extend IMF talks with Pakistan

On 23 May, acting governor of State bank of Pakistan (SBP) informed that budget discussions are likely to extend the tenure of discussions between IMF and Pakistan. Another reason being various alternatives being sought to avoid outright reversal of fuel subsidy. The government is expected to withdraw energy subsidies and roll back unfunded subsidies to the oil and power sector. According to reports, Pakistani authorities would make every effort to urge the IMF's review mission that it should lower the cost of the inflation burden that will impact the population, and may ask for a phased-in approach to subsidy reversal,

particularly on petroleum goods. ("[IMF talks may extend beyond 25th: SBP chief](#)," *The News International*, 24 May 2022)

IT sector exports to grow by leaps and bounds, says minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication

On 21 May, while speaking at the inauguration of a National Incubation Centre (NIC), minister discussed that an investment target of PKR 600 million was fixed for the IT sector which had attracted USD 75 million investment in fiscal 2019-20. He added that around 47.4 per cent increase was recorded in IT exports and by June 30, USD 3 billion mark would be touched. That figure would touch USD 5 billion-mark next year, he added. ("[IT exports to touch \\$5bn mark in next fiscal year, says Aminul Haq](#)," *Dawn*, 23 May 2022)

EXTERNAL

Pakistan and France agree to strengthen and diversify bilateral trade

On 25 May, Pakistan Commerce Minister Naveed Qamar in a meeting with France's Minister for Foreign Trade and Attractiveness, Franck Riester agreed to strengthen and diversify bilateral trade and economic ties in the coming years. Additionally, Qamar highlighted that Pakistan's exports to France was dominated by the textile sector, claiming that there was space to diversify trade to other sectors such as agriculture, dairy, clean energy, the digital economy, and startups. (Mubarak Zeb Khan, "[Pakistan, France agree to strengthen trade ties](#)," *Dawn*, 25 May 2022)

FM Bilawal meets with foreign minister of Saudi Arabia

On 25 May, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and met with Saudi Arabia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud. During the meeting, FM Bilawal expressed the Pakistan's desire to deepen the mutual cooperation in all fields, including economy, trade and investment as

well as at multilateral forums. Meanwhile, FM Bilawal also met with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary General Dr Nayef Falah Al-Hajraf. During the meeting they reviewed the status of Pakistan's cooperation with GCC states and the finalisation on the Pakistan-GCC free trade agreement (FTA). ("[Bilawal, Saudi FM discuss ways to enhance bilateral ties](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 25 May 2022)

Pakistan and Iran agree to increase health cooperation

On 26 May, The Express Tribune reported that Federal Minister for Health Abdul Qadir Patel met with Iran's Minister of Health and Medical Education Dr Bahram Einollahi on the sidelines of the World Health Assembly in Geneva. During the meeting, the two sides decided to enhance consultation and coordination on health, including enhanced cross-border cooperation for infectious diseases control, and exchange of experts for technical assistance on universal health coverage focusing on strengthening public health and primary health care delivery. ("[Pakistan, Iran agree to boost health cooperation](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 25 May 2022)

We are currently finalising extending the USD three billion deposit to Pakistan, says Saudi Minister of Finance

On 25 May, Dawn reported that Saudi Minister of Finance Mohammed al-Jadaan told Reuters that they are finalising the extension of the kingdom's USD three billion deposit to Pakistan. He said, "We are currently finalising extending the \$3bn deposit to Pakistan." ("[Saudi Arabia says finalising extension of \\$3 billion deposit to Pakistan](#)," *Dawn*, 24 May 2022)

US Ambassador Donald Bloom takes in charge of US embassy in Islamabad

On 23 May, according to a press release issued here by the US Embassy, Ambassador Bloom would lead the ongoing efforts by the US mission in Pakistan to promote bilateral relations and work with

the incumbent government for a stable, secure and prosperous future of this country. USA Embassy Islamabad also tweeted on the new charge' d affairs. ("[US ambassador assumes office](#)," *The News International*, 24 May 2022)

FM Bilawal promises to strengthen Sino-Pak cooperation

On 22 May, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari while addressing a press conference during his maiden visit to China said that the Sino-Pak relationship is "based on solidarity, trust, mutual respect and support." He claimed, "The two nations enjoy a unique, unrivaled and time-tested brotherhood." Further, he reiterated Pakistan's commitment to providing safety to Chinese citizens in the country. Bilawal was on a two day visit to China at the invitation of FM Yi. ("[Bilawal assures China of its citizens' security in Pakistan](#)," *The Express Tribune*, 23 May 2022)

USA's report on fall of Afghan government discusses role Afghan soldiers fleeing the field

On 23 May, Dawn reported on report by the office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction which revealed that Afghan soldiers started crossing into Pakistan weeks before Kabul fell to the Taliban in August 2021. The UN refugee agency UNHCR reported early this year that more than 300,000 Afghans had fled to Pakistan between August 2021 and January 2022. But it did not say how many of those were from the military. (Anwar Iqbal, "[Many Afghan soldiers fled to Pakistan after Kabul's fall, says US report](#)," *Dawn*, 23 May 2022)

JUDICIARY

Article 248 of the Constitution does not exempt the indicted ministers from appearing before the court: SC

On 27 May, while hearing the suo moto regarding the apprehension of undermining

the criminal justice system by persons in authority, the five-judge bench chaired by Chief Justice noticed that changes in the ECL (Exit Control List) Rules prima facie seem to be controversial and added that there is an impression that the FIA prosecutor was removed post the ECL rules amendment. Earlier, the court noted that the amendment in the Exit Control List (ECL) was made on 22nd April 2022 and the subjects like misuse of authority, corruption and embezzlement were removed, and the names of those involved in corruption and tax theft of PKR 10 million were from the list. (Terence J Sigamony, "[Ministers not exempt from personal appearance before court: SC](#)," *Business Recorder*, 28 May 2022)

CJP urged to rejig JCP rules Committee On 27 May, Dawn reported on letter dated 20 May by a member of Judicial

Commission of Pakistan (JCP) requesting the Chief Justice to reconstitute JCP rules committee to formulate criterion for the appointment of superior court judges. The letter highlighted the highlighted that seniority principle might be bypassed again and could cause a stir among the member of the bar. The letter stated that the issue of transparency with greater objectivity in in the appointment of judges in superior courts was regularly under discussion. (Nasir Iqbal, "[Chief justice urged to reconstitute JCP committee](#)," *Dawn*, 28 May 2022)

IHC issues notices to AGP regarding Rana Shamim indictment

On 26 May, Islamabad High Court issued pre-admission notices to Jang Group's owner Mir Shakilur Rahman and its senior journalists Ansar Abbasi and Aamir Ghauri on the appeal of former Gilgit-Baltistan chief justice Rana Shamim against his indictment in a contempt of court case. The contempt case stemmed from a report published in The News International last year that highlighted Mr Shamim's affidavit in which he accused former chief justice of Pakistan Saqib Nisar of instructing a high

court judge to keep PML-N leaders Nawaz Sharif and his daughter Maryam Nawaz incarcerated until 2018 general elections. ("[Pre-admission notices issued in ex-GB judge Rana Shamim's case](#)," *Dawn*, 27 May 2022)

SC expresses concern over removal of names from ECL in 'perceived interference' suo motu case

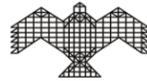
On 27 May, a five-member bench of the Supreme Court expressed concern over the removal of names from the Exit Control List (ECL) and questioned the procedure for doing so as it heard a suo motu case on apprehensions that criminal justice might be undermined by people in positions of authority. CJP Asked: "According to the rules, [those facing cases related to] corruption, terrorism, tax evaders and loan defaulters cannot go abroad. On whose asking did the cabinet amend the rules related to tax evaders and [those suspected of] corruption?" (Haseen Bhatti, "SC expresses concern over removal of names from ECL in 'perceived interference' suo motu case," *Dawn*, 27 May 2022)

IHC directs federal government to come clean on enforced disappearances

On 25 May, while hearing a missing persons case, the court asked the interior secretary to explain as to why proceedings should not be initiated for not being able to protect the liberty of citizens. According to a report prepared by the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances and submitted by the commission's registrar to the IHC, only 3,284 or one-third of 8,463 missing citizens have returned home since March 2011 after their whereabouts were traced. (Malik Asad, "[Govt told to dispel notions about forces in missing persons case](#)," *Dawn*, 26 May 2022)



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