

Documents

January-May 2018

I. Foreign Policy

A. AFGHANISTAN

1. Joint press release issued at the meeting of high level Afghan and Pakistan delegations in Kabul

A high level Pakistani delegation comprising of senior civilian and military officials led by Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Ms. Tehmina Janjua visited Kabul today to hold discussion with their Afghan counterparts led by Deputy Foreign Minister Hekmat Khalil Karzai on Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS) - a joint action plan for cooperation in the areas of counter-terrorism and reduction of violence, peace and reconciliation, refugees repatriation and joint economic development.

The meeting was held in a cordial environment and both delegations made some progress on the APAPPS. There are still important areas to be discussed and agreed upon, and both sides remain committed to continue their discussions to reach an agreement on the APAPPS.

The next meeting will take place on February 9th and 10th 2018 in Islamabad.

Islamabad, 03 February 2018.

2. Joint press release on the 4th Afghanistan Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS) meeting held in Islamabad

The 4th meeting of Afghanistan Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS) was held in Islamabad today at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The delegations were led by Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Hekmat Khalil Karzai and Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Ms. Tehmina Janjua.

In pursuance of the seven principles agreed in the meeting between Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi during his visit to Kabul on 6 April 2018, the two sides finalized the Afghanistan Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS). This operationalizes the six working groups envisaged under APAPPS.

APAPPS provides a framework to strengthen mutual trust and deepen interaction in all spheres of bilateral engagements. It is also a mechanism for finding solutions to bilateral areas of concern.

Both sides agreed that effective and full implementation of APAPPS would contribute towards the common objectives of eliminating terrorism and achieving peace, stability, prosperity and development of the people of the two countries.

Islamabad, 14 May 2018. Source: www.mofa.gov.pk

B. IRAN

Foreign Office's press release issued after US' decision to withdraw from JCPOA

Pakistan believes that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) represents a very good example of a negotiated settlement of complex issues, through dialogue and diplomacy. We had welcomed the JCPOA when it was concluded and hope that all parties will find a way for its continuation, especially when the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has repeatedly verified Iran's compliance.

We have noted the willingness of the parties to the Agreement to work together on upholding their respective commitments as stipulated in the JCPOA, despite US decision to withdraw from it.

Pakistan believes that International Treaties and Agreements concluded through painstaking negotiations are sacrosanct. Arbitrarily rescinding such agreements will undermine confidence in the value of dialogue and diplomacy in the conduct of international relations and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

Islamabad, 09 May 2018. Source: www.mofa.gov.pk

C. KASHMIR

1. Foreign Office's press release issued after *shahadat* of innocent Kashmiris by Indian use of force in IoK

Pakistan condemns brutal use of force by India in IoK, resulting in Shahadat of more than 11 innocent Kashmiris

Pakistan condemns the brutal and indiscriminate use of force by the Indian occupation forces that has resulted in the martyrdom of at least eleven young innocent Kashmiris in different incidents in Shopian and Anantnag in Indian Occupied Kashmir (IoK) today.

There are also reports of continuing brutal crackdown, especially the use of pellet guns on protestors, including youth and children and the suspension

of internet services, in an attempt to subjugate and further repress the innocent Kashmiris.

This mindless killing spree exposes, yet again, the ugly, inhuman face of the state-terrorism that India has been perpetrating against the Kashmiris for decades. We have repeatedly pointed out that the Kashmiri youth is being deliberately and systematically targeted with a view to breaking the will of the Kashmiri people. However, such cowardly actions of the occupying forces only serve to fortify the resolve of the Kashmiri people.

The brave and resilient people of the Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir have demonstrated, again and again, that no amount of repression including incarcerations, torture and extrajudicial killings could deter them from pursuing the inalienable right to self-determination. Nor could any amount of Indian propaganda to paint the legitimate and indigenous Kashmiri struggle as "terrorism" succeed in misleading the world.

Pakistan expresses its full solidarity with the people of Jammu & Kashmir. We urge the international community to take cognisance of the gross and systematic violations of fundamental human rights, including the most basic human right to life, taking place in IoK and use its influence with India to bring an end to the shameful culture of impunity that has been fostered there for several decades.

Pakistan also calls upon the world community to play its rightful role in promoting a just and lasting solution of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

Islamabad, 1 April 2018.

2. Foreign Office's press release on a resolution adopted on Kashmir by the cabinet

Resolution adopted by the Cabinet on 2 April 2018.

A special meeting of the Federal Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi was held today to review the current situation arising from the recent Indian brutalities and killings in Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir. It adopted the following resolution:

The Federal Cabinet strongly condemned the brutal and in discriminatory use of force by the Indian occupation forces that resulted in the martyrdom of more than 20 innocent Kashmiris in Shopian and Anantnag in the Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir.

The Federal Cabinet emphatically condemned the suspension of communication services, especially the internet in the valley, and underscored that such reprehensible Indian attempts aimed at silencing the voice of the Kashmiris from reaching the international community would never succeed.

The Federal Cabinet paid a rich tribute to the brave and resilient people of Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir who have been continuously demonstrating against the brutal repression, incarceration, torture and extra judicial killing perpetrated by the illegal occupation Indian forces.

The Federal Cabinet emphatically condemned the draconian laws, including POTA, TADA, PSA and AFSPA imposed by India in Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir. It further stressed that the deteriorating situation in IoK and the Indian escalation at the Working Boundary and the LoC is a flashpoint and a threat to regional peace and tranquility.

Expressing solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir the Federal Cabinet urged the international community to take cognizance of the gross and systematic human rights violations of the Kashmiris in IOK and requested the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission to send Fact Finding missions to the Indian occupied Jammu & Kashmir.

The Cabinet also reiterated the Prime Minister's request to the UN Secretary General to appoint a Special Envoy for Jammu and Kashmir with a mandate flowing from the unimplemented UN Security Council resolutions.

The Federal Cabinet also decided to send special envoys of the Prime Minister, including the President of Azad Jammu Kashmir, to selected capitals to highlight the deteriorating situation in IoK.

The Federal Cabinet declared that 6 April 2018 be observed as Kashmir Solidarity Day in support of our Kashmiris brothers and sisters against Indian brutalities. Some Cabinet members would participate in the Joint Session of the AJK Legislative Assembly on 4 April 2018.

Islamabad, 02 April 2018.

3. Message by the President of Pakistan on the 'Kashmir Solidarity Day'

The Government and the people of Pakistan reaffirm their continued and resolute moral, diplomatic and political support to the oppressed people of Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir in their valiant struggle for the fundamental right to self-determination.

The recent mindless killing spree carried out by the Indian security forces that took away lives of more than 20 Kashmiri youth and injured in excess of 200 unarmed protestors are a testament to the atrocities being perpetrated against the innocent Kashmiris. In their historic struggle, the courageous and determined people of IOK have rendered unparalleled sacrifices. Indian state terrorism has failed to deter the people of IoK from their struggle for freedom from Indian oppression.

Pakistan calls upon the international community to be cognizant of its responsibilities in the matter and urge India to facilitate the visit of independent Fact Finding teams of OHCHR and IPHRC to look into the gross human rights

violations in IoK being perpetrated by Indian occupation forces and to fulfill its obligations under UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir.

Islamabad, 06 April 2018.

4. Foreign Office's report rejecting Indian protest against Gilgit-Baltistan Order 2018 and its claim over Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir

The Government of Pakistan categorically rejects India's protest against the Gilgit-Baltistan Order 2018 and its claim over the Indian occupied State of Jammu & Kashmir as an 'integral part' of India. Everything from history to law to morality to the situation on the ground belies India's spurious claim.

The entire state of Jammu & Kashmir is a "disputed" territory. Its disputed status is enshrined in the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, which stipulate that the final status of Jammu & Kashmir will be determined through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite administered by the United Nations. These resolutions, pledging the right to self-determination to the people of Kashmir, were accepted by India, Pakistan and the international community.

Instead of making frivolous protests and issuing legally untenable and uncalled for statements, India should take steps to vacate its illegal occupation and create the conditions for faithful implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions, so that this longstanding dispute between India and Pakistan is peacefully resolved in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

India's statement regarding human rights is another classic example of Indian hypocrisy. India is engaged in gross and systematic violations of human rights on IOK, extensively documented by Kashmiri, Indian and international human rights organizations. The baseless Indian propaganda about Gilgit-Baltistan can neither cover up the atrocities being perpetrated by the Indian security forces against the innocent, unarmed Kashmiris in IOK, nor can it succeed in diverting the attention of the international community from the deplorable situation in Indian occupied Kashmir.

As a responsible member of the international community, Pakistan has always taken steps consistent with UN Security Council resolutions on Jammu & Kashmir dispute. The latest measure is no exception, as its aim is to further empower the people of Gilgit and Baltistan. We will continue to abide by the UN Security Council resolutions until this dispute is finally resolved through peaceful means.

Islamabad, 27 May 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

D. RUSSIA**1. Foreign Office's report on meetings of Special Secretary, Ms. Tasnim Aslam, in Moscow**

Special Secretary of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan Ms. Tasnim Aslam met with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Igor Morgulov in Moscow on 31 January 2018. Pakistan's Ambassador to the Russian Federation Mr. Khalilullah Qazi and Ambassador Zamir Kabulov, Special Representative of the Russian President on Afghanistan also attended the meeting.

Bilateral and regional issues were discussed during the meeting. The focus of discussion was on Afghanistan.

Both sides expressed satisfaction at the positive trajectory of bilateral relations and reiterated their resolve to further deepen cooperation between Pakistan and Russia in the fields of Trade, Energy, Defence, Education and other fields of mutual interest.

Special Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister held in-depth discussions on the prevailing situation in Afghanistan and its implications for Afghanistan, Pakistan and the region. They reiterated that there was no military solution to the Afghan problem and the negotiated settlement through an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process was the only viable option for lasting peace in Afghanistan.

The Special Secretary informed the Deputy Foreign Minister about the measures taken by Pakistan for border management with Afghanistan and Pakistan's continued commitment to combating terrorism despite having rendered enormous sacrifices and borne human and material losses. The Special Secretary also highlighted the need for repatriation of more than 3 million Afghan refugees who have been availing Pakistan's hospitality now for more than four decades.

The Russian side appreciated Pakistan's commitment to fighting terrorism and expressed willingness to further strengthen cooperation and support Pakistan's efforts to fight terrorism.

Earlier, Special Secretary held a meeting with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Oleg Syromolotov. Both sides discussed issues relating to the forthcoming meeting of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), to be held in Paris on 18-23 February 2018. The Special Secretary informed the Deputy Foreign Minister about the measures taken by Pakistan to implement its international obligations and intentions of some FATF Member States to use the forum for their political ends.

Islamabad, 01 February 2018.

2. Foreign Office's report on Foreign Minister, Khawaja Asif's bilateral consultations with Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov

Foreign Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, who is on an official visit to the Russian Federation, held bilateral consultations with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov today. They held in-depth discussion on the entire spectrum of bilateral relations, important regional and international issues, situation in the Middle East and cooperation between the two countries in the UN and SCO.

Special Secretary (UN&EC/SCO) Ms. Tasnim Aslam, Ambassador of Pakistan to the Russian Federation Mr. Qazi M. Khalilullah, Additional Secretary (Europe) Mr. Zaheer Janjua, Special Representative of the Russian President on Afghanistan Mr. Zamir Kabulov and Spokesperson of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ms. Maria Zakharova were also present in the meeting.

The two Ministers emphasized the importance of strengthening bilateral engagement and diversifying cooperation in various fields. This is evident by the continued high-level interactions between the two countries, including meetings between the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the President of the Russian Federation in Ufa in July 2015 and Astana in June 2017, and Prime Ministers of the two countries in Sochi last November. The two Foreign Ministers expressed satisfaction at the increasing bilateral cooperation and agreed to further intensify efforts to deepen cooperation in all areas of mutual interest, including trade, energy, defence, education, science & technology and people to people contacts.

The two sides agreed to further build on enhancing coordination at multilateral fora. They underscored that Pakistan's membership of the SCO had provided additional opportunities for deepening cooperation between the two countries.

The two Foreign Ministers expressed desire to further expand bilateral trade and agreed to work together under the framework of the Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation.

Foreign Minister Lavrov emphasized the significance of cooperation in the field of energy, including realization of the North-South gas pipeline project. Russian experts are ready to participate in modernization of Pakistan's energy sector.

The Foreign Ministers discussed the prevailing situation in Afghanistan and its implications for the region. They reiterated that there was no military solution to the Afghan conflict and a negotiated settlement through an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process was the only viable option for lasting peace in Afghanistan. They agreed to closely coordinate in all Afghanistan-related processes for a regional solution of the Afghan conflict.

There was also unanimity of views that unchecked proliferation of Da'esh in Afghanistan, particularly along borders of neighbouring countries, was a threat to peace in the entire region.

Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif briefed his Russian counterpart on Pakistan's vision of a peaceful neighborhood. He underlined that Pakistan believed in resolution of disputes through peaceful dialogue.

The Russian Foreign Minister deeply appreciated Pakistan's efforts and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism. He conveyed Russia's continued support for enhancing Pakistan's counter-terrorism capabilities.

Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif underscored that Pakistan was, in principle, opposed to sanctions against any country, including Russia, especially when these were politically motivated.

The two Foreign Ministers agreed to continue to consult with each other on a regular basis.

Islamabad, 20 February 2018.

3. Foreign Office's press release on Russian President, Vladimir Putin's re-election

President Mamnoon Hussain and Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi convey their heartiest felicitations to President Vladimir Putin on his re-election in the Presidential Election held on 18 March 2018.

Pakistan and Russia enjoy close, friendly and cooperative relations. Our relations are characterized by mutual trust and convergence of views on important international and regional issues. The leadership of Pakistan looks forward to working closely with the leadership of the Russian Federation to further strengthen cooperation in all fields of mutual interest.

Islamabad, 20 March 2018.

4. Foreign Office's report on the 7th meeting of the Russia Pakistan Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism

The 7th Meeting of the Pakistan Russia Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism was held today in Islamabad at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Pakistan side was led by Mr. Ahmad Farooq, Director General, Counter Terrorism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while the Russian side was led by Mr. Ilya ROGACHEV, Director Department for New Challenges of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Both delegations included officials from relevant departments dealing with counter-terrorism.

The two sides discussed a wide ranging agenda covering the counter-terrorism situation at the regional and global level, actions taken by both countries to tackle the menace of terrorism as well as bilateral cooperation on the issue. There was broad agreement on the fact that terrorism was a common global threat which required cooperative efforts of the international community for effectively eradicating it.

The Pakistan side briefed the Russian delegation about the major successes it had achieved in the fight against terrorism through kinetic actions as well as implementation of the National Action Plan on counter-terrorism. This had resulted in significantly improving the security situation in Pakistan. The Russian side highly appreciated Pakistan's contribution to the global fight against terrorism.

Both sides expressed grave concern over the rising threat posed by Da'esh. While major successes had been achieved in the fight against Da'esh in Syria and Iraq, the returning Da'esh fighters from the conflict zones to countries of origin or third countries constituted a major security threat to various parts of the world, including this region. It was important for countries of the region to cooperate to counter this threat.

The two sides reaffirmed the commitment for promoting bilateral cooperation for countering terrorism. They also agreed to cooperate at the United Nations and other international fora for combating terrorism.

The discussions were held in a cordial and frank manner and there was commonality of views on all issues. It was agreed that the next meeting of the JWG would be held in Moscow in 2019.

Islamabad, 21 March 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

E. SYRIA

Foreign office's press release on use of chemical weapons in Syria

We are following the situation in Syria with grave concern. We call on all sides to refrain from actions inconsistent with the UN Charter.

Pakistan condemns the use of chemical weapons anywhere by anyone. It is important to establish facts through urgent and transparent investigations by the OPCW. We call upon all parties to strive for an agreement within the OPCW framework and extend full support to the Organization.

At this time our thoughts are with the people of Syria who have suffered as a result of ongoing turmoil in that country. We hope that all parties will work to find an urgent solution to end the suffering of the Syrian people.

Islamabad, 14 April 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

F. TURKMENISTAN

Foreign Office's report on Prime Minister, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi's visit to Turkmenistan and Afghanistan to participate in the link-up ceremonies of TAPI gas pipeline project, lines of power transmission and fiber optic communication

At a joint invitation from Turkmenistan and Afghanistan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi undertook a 2-day visit to Turkmenistan and

Afghanistan, to participate in the link-up ceremonies of TAPI pipeline and associated projects. The ceremonies were also attended by President of Afghanistan Mr. Ashraf Ghani.

The Prime Minister held a tete-a-tete meeting with the President of Turkmenistan followed by delegation-level talks. Both leaders highlighted the importance of TAPI gas pipeline and held fruitful discussions on subjects of mutual concern, including regional connectivity. On 23rd February, the Prime Minister attended a Handicrafts Exhibition in Serhetabat, along with leaders of other member countries, representing arts and culture of the four states.

In his statement at the inaugural ceremony in Turkmenistan, the Prime Minister reaffirmed TAPI's significance as not just a gas transit initiative connecting Central Asia with South Asia but a multi-modal project that would lead to greater regional and economic collaboration. He further emphasized Pakistan's commitment to the early completion of TAPI.

Later, he proceeded to Herat, Afghanistan where he was received by the Afghan President. During the inaugural ceremony of the Afghan side of the Pipeline project, the Prime Minister reiterated Pakistan's commitment to lasting peace and security in Afghanistan and stressed the potential of Afghanistan in becoming a regional hub of energy connectivity.

The visit is reflective of the Pakistan's vision to eradicate energy deficiency in Pakistan as part of Pakistan's National Energy Policy and transform it into a regional industrial hub. For the realization of this goal, the Prime Minister is focusing on high-powered regional energy and connectivity projects that will not only augment Pakistan's power supply but will forge better relations with neighboring and brotherly countries.

Islamabad

26 February 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

G. YEMEN

Foreign Office press release condemning Houthi militia's missile attacks

The Government of Pakistan condemns multiple missile attacks on Jazan and Riyadh by Houthi militia. The successful interception of the missiles by the Saudi forces prevented loss of innocent lives and is commendable.

Pakistan reiterates its solidarity with Saudi leadership and people and stands by Saudi Arabia against any threats to its territorial integrity and threats against Harmain Sharifain.

Islamabad, 11 May 2018. *Source:* www.mofa.gov.pk

II: Economy

Excerpts from Pakistan *Economic Survey 2017-18*: Chapter 9 – Public Debt

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9.1 Introduction

Developing prudent and sound debt management strategy is paramount especially when debt flows are being channeled to pursue accelerated development goals. Over long term horizon, efforts are geared towards increasing the country's economic footprint in-line with macro-economic objectives which eventually provide support towards debt re-payment capacity through modernized infrastructure. Given the current paradigm, Pakistan has to maintain a delicate balance – it needs to borrow in order to facilitate its development process while ensuring that debt level is prudently managed keeping in view the country's repayment capacity.

Pakistan's public debt dynamics witnessed various positive developments during the ongoing fiscal year, some of them are highlighted below:

- Government continued to adhere to the targets set forth in Medium Term Debt Management Strategy (MTDS) to ensure public debt sustainability;
- Weighted average interest rate on the domestic debt portfolio has reduced further while cost of external loans contracted by the government are mostly concessional as well as dominated by long term funding;
- Government successfully raised US\$ 2.5 billion in December 2017 through a 5-year Sukuk and 10-year conventional bond with the latter issued at the lowest rate for a Pakistan bond;
- In order to facilitate the investors, Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has launched a non-financial version of mobile application called “Qoumi Bachat Digital” which enable customers to view their profits, investments in the certificates and accounts, receive notifications on transactions, transaction history and also save prize bond numbers to be searched in the Prize Bond draws. CDNS is also in the process of launching a financial version of the mobile application along with the Card Management System and Mobile Wallet for investors.

9.2 Public Debt

Total public debt is defined as debt of the government (including Federal Government and Provincial Governments) serviced out of consolidated fund and debts owed to the International Monetary Fund. Total Debt of the Government is public debt less accumulated deposits of the Federal and Provincial Governments with the banking system. Public debt has two main components,

namely domestic debt (incurred principally to finance fiscal deficit) and external debt (raised primarily to finance development expenditures).

Total public debt stood at Rs.22,820 billion at end December 2017 while Total Debt of the Government was Rs.20,878 billion. Total public debt recorded an increase of Rs.1,413 billion during first six months of current fiscal year. The bifurcation of this increase is explained below:

- Domestic debt registered an increase of Rs 582 billion while government borrowing for financing of fiscal deficit from domestic sources was Rs 412 billion, indicating an increase in government credit balances with the banking system during the period under review; and
- Increase in external debt contributed Rs 830 billion to the public debt while government borrowing for financing of fiscal deficit from external sources was Rs 384 billion. Therefore, the increase in external debt signifies both borrowings for financing of fiscal deficit as well as revaluation losses due to Pak Rupee depreciation against US Dollar as well as appreciation of other currencies against US Dollar. It is worth noting that depreciation increases the rupee value of external debt, but does not add much to foreign currency liability of the country i.e. any negative revaluation impact is spread over many years depending on the life of any given loan, therefore, immediate cash flow impact is limited.

The trend in total public debt since 1971 is depicted in Box-I.

Box-I: Trend in Public Debt

Table-9.1: Year Wise Public Debt Position

Year	Domestic Debt	External Debt	Public Debt	Year	Domestic Debt	External Debt	Public Debt	Year	Domestic Debt	External Debt	Public Debt
(Rs. Billion)											
1971	14	16	30	1987	248	209	458	2003	1,895	1,800	3,694
1972	17	38	55	1988	290	233	523	2004	2,028	1,839	3,866
1973	20	40	60	1989	333	300	634	2005	2,178	2,034	4,211
1974	19	44	62	1990	381	330	711	2006	2,322	2,038	4,359
1975	23	48	70	1991	448	377	825	2007	2,601	2,201	4,802
1976	28	57	85	1992	532	437	969	2008	3,275	2,852	6,126
1977	34	63	97	1993	617	519	1,135	2009	3,860	3,871	7,731
1978	41	71	112	1994	716	624	1,340	2010	4,654	4,352	9,006
1979	52	77	130	1995	809	688	1,497	2011	6,017	4,750	10,767
1980	60	86	146	1996	920	784	1,704	2012	7,638	5,057	12,695
1981	58	87	145	1997	1,056	939	1,995	2013	9,522	4,797	14,318
1982	81	107	189	1998	1,199	1,193	2,392	2014	10,920	5,071	15,991
1983	104	123	227	1999	1,389	1,557	2,946	2015	12,199	5,182	17,381
1984	125	132	257	2000	1,645	1,527	3,172	2016	13,627	6,051	19,678
1985	153	156	309	2001	1,799	1,885	3,684	2017	14,855	6,552	21,407
1986	203	187	390	2002	1,775	1,862	3,636	2018 Dec.	15,437	7,382	22,820

Comprehensive public debt analysis may fall short of full disclosure without review of government's contingent liabilities. These liabilities originate out of guarantees issued on behalf of Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) and by their contingent nature, do not form part of country's overall debt. Therefore, to ensure utmost fiscal transparency, information regarding these contingent liabilities remains an essential component of public disclosure. During first half of current fiscal year, the government issued fresh/rollover guarantees aggregating to Rs 66 billion or 0.2 percent of GDP. The outstanding stock of government guarantees at end December 2017 was Rs 1,004 billion.

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9.5 Servicing of Public Debt

Public debt servicing was recorded at Rs 980 billion during first half of current fiscal year against the annual budgeted estimate of Rs 1,689 billion. Public debt servicing consumed nearly 41 percent of total revenues during first half of current fiscal year, remaining at the same level recorded during the corresponding period last year.

Table-9.6: Public Debt Servicing (Rs. in billion)

	Budgeted	Actual	Percent of Revenue	Percent of Current Expenditure
Repayment of External Debt	326.4	228.2	9.6	9.0
Total External Principal Repayment (A)	326.4	228.2	9.6	9.0
Servicing of External Debt	132.0	73.5	3.1	2.9
Servicing of Domestic Debt	1,231.0	678.0	28.4	26.6
Total Interest Servicing (B)	1,363.0	751.4	31.5	29.5
Total Servicing of Public Debt (A+B)	1,689.4	979.7	41.1	38.5
*: July-December				

Source: Ministry of Finance, Budget Wing and Debt Policy Coordination Office Staff Calculations

Domestic interest payments constituted around 69 percent of total debt servicing due to higher volume of domestic debt in total public debt portfolio. Domestic interest payments were recorded at Rs 678 billion during first half of the current fiscal year primarily driven by payments made against Pakistan Investment Bonds (Rs 229 billion), National Savings Schemes (Rs 169 billion), Market Treasury Bills (Rs 151 billion) and Market Related Treasury Bills (Rs 87 billion).

9.6 Domestic Debt

Pakistan's domestic debt comprises permanent debt (medium and long-term), floating debt (short-term) and unfunded debt (primarily made up of various

instruments available under National Savings Schemes). During first half of the current fiscal year, composition of domestic debt continued to witness change⁴s as most of the domestic borrowing was mobilized from short-term sources while net retirement was witnessed in medium to long term debt. Accordingly, share of floating debt in total domestic debt increased to 49 percent at end December 2017 compared with 44 percent at the end of last fiscal year, while share of permanent debt in total domestic debt reduced to 33 percent at end December 2017 compared with 37 percent at the end of last fiscal year.

9.6.1 Outstanding Domestic Debt

Gross domestic debt was recorded at Rs 15,437 billion while net domestic debt remained at Rs 13,496 billion at end December 2017. Gross domestic debt registered an increase of Rs 582 billion during first half of current fiscal year while government borrowing from domestic sources for financing of fiscal deficit was Rs 412 billion during the said period. This differential is mainly attributed to increase in government credit balances with the banking system.

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9.7 External Debt and Liabilities

Pakistan's External Debt and Liabilities (EDL) include all foreign currency debt contracted by the public and private sector as well as foreign exchange liabilities of SBP. Out of EDL, external public debt is defined as debt which is serviced out of consolidated fund and owed to the International Monetary Fund.

EDL stock stood at US\$ 88.9 billion at end December 2017 out of which external public debt was US\$ 66.9 billion. External public debt increased by US\$ 4.4 billion during first half of the current fiscal year. In addition to net external inflows, translational losses on account of depreciation of US Dollar against other international currencies contributed towards increase in external public debt during the said period.

Encouragingly, within external public debt, the largest component is multilateral and bilateral debt, constituting around 81 percent. The loans from multilateral and bilateral development partners are primarily aimed at removing structural bottlenecks from Pakistan's economy. These concessional and long term loans are primarily utilized towards implementing structural reforms in areas of energy, taxation, doing business, trade facilitation, education and promotion of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Such concessional lending programs are instrumental in enhancing Pakistan's potential output by promoting efficiency and productivity. These development loans are, thus, simultaneously adding to the debt repayment capacity of the country.

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Gross external loan disbursements recorded at US \$5,692 million during first half of the current fiscal year, registered an increase of 44 percent compared

with corresponding period of last year. The details of gross external inflows from main creditors during first half of 2017-18 are as follows:

- Disbursements from multilateral and bilateral development partners were US\$ 2,028 million. Within multilateral loans, inflows were largely for the purpose of energy and infrastructure projects while inflows from bilateral loans were mainly received from China against CPEC projects.
- Government raised US\$ 2,500 million in December 2017 through a 5-year sukuk and 10-year conventional bond;
- Remaining funds were mobilized from commercial banks aimed at diversifying avenues for future funding needs.

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9.7.1 External Debt Servicing

External public debt servicing went up by 48 percent to settle at US\$ 6,440 million during 2016-17 compared with US\$ 4,340 million during the preceding fiscal year. The higher repayments against multilateral loans, Eurobonds, Paris Club Countries and commercial loans mainly led to this increase. In addition, the government repaid Safe China Deposits amounting US\$ 500 million.

Table-9.12: External Public Debt Servicing

Year	Principle	Interest	Amount Rolled Over	Total
	(US Dollar in million)			
2012-13	4,794.6	800.4	500.0	6,095.1
2013-14	5,220.0	774.6	1,000.0	6,994.5
2014-15	3,500.3	974.5	1,000.0	5,474.8
2015-16	3,213.1	1,126.7	1,248.3	5,588.1
2016-17	5,126.7	1,313.2	500.0	6,939.9
2017-18*	2,082.5	782.6	-	2,865.1
* July-December, 2017				

During first half of the current fiscal year, servicing of external public debt was recorded at US\$ 2,865 million. Segregation of this aggregate number shows repayment of US\$ 2,083 million towards maturing external public debt stock while interest payments were US\$ 783 million. The main components of debt servicing were repayment against multilateral and bilateral loans which amounted to US\$ 1,069 million during the period.

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A country can achieve external debt sustainability if it can meet its current and future external debt service obligations, without debt rescheduling or accumulation of arrears and without compromising growth. External public debt

repayment obligations of Pakistan are not more than an average of US\$ 5.5 billion per annum until 2023. Keeping in view the track record of the country, the repayments should not raise any concern as Pakistan has successfully met higher repayment obligation even with much lower volume of foreign exchange reserves. Furthermore, external inflows are expected to be sufficient to meet these repayment obligations. Government is cognizant of developing trends in balance of payments and has taken several remedial measures to keep current account deficit within manageable limits.

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2. Pakistan Economic Survey 2017-18: Annexure III

Poverty

Over the last decade, Pakistan's poverty headcount has witnessed a persistent decline both at national and regional levels. Percentage of people living below poverty line has declined from 50.4% in 2005-06 to 24.3% in 2015-16. Poverty in both rural and urban areas has also been on the declining trend with poverty headcount of 12.5% in Urban and 30.7% in rural areas in 2015-16. The decline in poverty is more pronounced in urban areas than rural areas.

Targeted poverty reduction programmes like BISP, relative political stability, peace and tranquillity, strong recovery from low GDP growth rate of 1.7% in 2008-09 to 4.5% in 2015-16, continued higher inflows of remittances especially from middle east which are destined to relatively poor families and above all a more inclusive characteristics of economic growth; are some of the important causes that can be attributed to a significant decline in the poverty headcount since 2005-06

[See Table-1].

Table 1: Poverty Incidence

Year	National	Urban	Rural
2005-06	50.4	36.6	57.4
2007-08	44.1	32.7	49.7
2010-11	36.8	26.2	42.1
2011-12	36.3	22.8	43.1
2013-14	29.5	18.2	35.6
2015-16*	24.3	12.5	30.7

Source: Planning Commission: *Committee estimations

Declining trends are shared at national as well as urban and rural areas [See Table 2]. While comparing with 2011-12 largest percentage decline in poverty headcount was observed in year 2013-14 when national poverty headcount was declined by 6.8 percentage points with 6.2 percentage points decline in Urban and 7.5 percentage points in rural areas. Poverty headcount has declined by 5.7 percentage points in urban areas and 4.9 percentage points in rural areas between 2014 and 2016, thereby leading to an overall decline of 5.2 percentage points decline in incidence of national poverty headcount.

Table 2: Change in Poverty Headcount (%age Points)

Year	National	Urban	Rural
2007-08	6.3	3.9	7.7
2010-11	7.3	6.5	7.6
2011-12	0.5	3.4	-1.0
2013-14	6.8	4.6	7.5
2015-16*	5.2	5.7	4.9

Source: Planning Commission: *Committee estimations

The decline in poverty incidence is phenomenal in Pakistan since 2007-08 and normal intersurvey decline is around 7-percentage point with only exception is 2010-11. The intersurvey decline in poverty headcount was insignificant in 2011-12 compared to 2010-11 survey. There can be two possible undertones for this low performance. First, inter-survey period may not be a period sufficient to observe meaningful decline in poverty both at national and regional levels. Two, catastrophic floods of 2010-11 hit a significant blow to rural populace whose income and livelihoods were severely affected by these floods.

Overall, despite floods of 2010 and chronic energy shortages, aggravated security situation and government's limited capacity to mobilize and channelize its own resources exclusively for social welfare and poverty eradication programmes, the declining trend in Poverty headcount in Pakistan is both promising and encouraging. Strong resurgence of economic growth, more provincial autonomy to shape and spearhead their own social welfare and poverty eradication programmes and targeted social safety nets programme of BISP have all been the main drivers of poverty decline in the past.

3. Pakistan Economic Survey 2017-18: Annexure-IV

Impact of War in Afghanistan and Ensuing

Terrorism on Pakistan's Economy

After facing protracted violence for more than a decade, Pakistan has achieved progressive and significant improvement in the country's overall security landscape in recent years. This has been achieved primarily due to comprehensive counter terrorism operation culminating with Zarb-e-Azb and Khyber-I-IV operations and counter-terrorism measure taken by the Government under the framework of the National Action Plan (NAP), and the sacrifices of the security forces. This has resulted in a major decline in the number of terrorist attacks as well as the casualties suffered.

Pakistan's success in countering-terrorism has been acknowledged in the recent Global Terrorism Index Report 2017 published by the Sydney-based Institute for Economics and Peace. According to this report, Pakistan ranked at 5th out of 163 countries with a score of 8.4 out of 10 on the Index, a marked improvement as it ranked 4th in 2007. Pakistan has shown improvement in its global terrorism index ranking with decline in the terrorism incidences and the deaths related to the terrorist activities. This is the third consecutive year that Pakistan has witnessed fewer terrorist attacks and deaths. Moreover, India

ranked at 8th; Turkey ranked at 9th marking its entry into the top 10 countries affected by terrorism, Bangladesh at 21, Saudi Arabia 26, China 31, United States 32, Russia 33, and United Kingdom 35. Along with Pakistan, a positive trend was also noted in Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Syria. These current developments in Pakistan's fight against terrorism are benchmarks for not just regional countries but for the international community as well. While Pakistan is successfully fighting the terrorists on its soil, it also expects the US, NATO and Afghan forces to do the same in Afghanistan.

However, Pakistan continues to be a target of terrorism, including state-sponsored terrorism from its immediate neighbours. The conflict and instability in Afghanistan remained an impediment for regional peace, security, and development. Pakistan, because of its proximity and historical connection faced the most serious consequences of war in Afghanistan ranging from security to socio-economic. Hosting of millions of Afghan refugees not only burdened Pakistan's economy but also put additional stress on its internal security situation. Pakistan continued to face terrorist attacks from terrorist hide-outs in Afghanistan.

The success in counter-terrorism has played a critical role in creating a conducive economic environment whose results have started to appear in terms of growth across various sectors of the economy. As a result of these efforts, the total losses incurred, both fiscal as well as human has declining. During 2016-17, it declined by 15.7 percent over the corresponding period of last year while it further declined during July-February 2017-18 by 62.2 percent which clearly reflects the effectiveness of the Government's efforts to eliminate terrorism and extremism from the country.

In order to assess the impact of the incidents of terrorism on the economy of Pakistan during the past several years, the estimates for FY2017 have been updated and FY2018 have been prepared in consultation with all relevant Ministries / Departments / Provincial Governments / Autonomous bodies etc. Summary of losses during FY 2017 and FY 2018 is presented in Table-1.

Table 1: Summary of losses due to War on Terror (US\$ million)

S.No.	Organization	Year		Total
		2016-17	2017-18*	
1	Compensation of Affectees	90.64	39.25	129.89
2	Physical Infrastructure	272.32	111.61	383.93
3	Foreign Investment	1105.30	129.10	1234.40
4	Privatization	251.19	0.00	251.19
5	Industrial Output	594.300	449.600	1043.90
6	Tax Collection	2483.29	976.38	3459.67
7	Cost of Uncertainty	71.060	14.180	85.24
8	Expenditure Over run	593.72	345.65	939.37
9	Others	7.07	8.66	15.73
	Total Losses	5,468.89	2,074.43	7543.32

Source: MoF, Mo Interior M/o Foreign Affairs Joint Ministerial Group

During the last 17 years, the direct and indirect cost incurred by Pakistan due to incidents of terrorism amounted to US\$ 126.79 billion equivalent to Rs. 10,762.64 billion. Detail is given in Table-2.

Table 2: Summary of Year-wise losses Cost of War (2001-2017)

Years	Billions \$	Billion Rs.	% Change
2001-02	2.67	163.90	-
2002-03	2.75	160.80	3.0
2003-04	2.93	168.80	6.7
2004-05	3.41	202.40	16.3
2005-06	3.99	238.60	16.9
2006-07	4.67	283.20	17.2
2007-08	6.94	434.10	48.6
2008-09	9.18	720.60	32.3
2009-10	13.56	1136.40	47.7
2010-11	23.77	2037.33	75.3
2011-12	11.98	1052.77	-49.6
2012-13	9.97	964.24	-16.8
2013-14	7.70	791.52	-22.8
2014-15	9.24	936.30	20.0
2015-16	6.49	675.76	-29.8
2016-17	5.47	572.60	-15.7
2017-18*	2.07	223.32	-62.2
Total:-	126.79	10,762.64	-

* Estimated on the basis of 8 months data

Source: MoF, Mo Interior M/o Foreign Affairs Joint Ministerial Group.

Source: www.finance.gov.pk. *Economic Survey 2017-18*, pp.131-32, 134, 138-39, 145-47, 148 and 245-48.

III: Human Rights

Excerpts from *State of Human Rights in 2017*, Chapter 1: 'Rule of Law'

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Administration of Justice

In 2017, the Supreme Court instituted 7,350 cases, with 1,698 cases filed in December alone. The Court disposed of 1,614 cases in November, and 1,848 cases in December. However, 38,589 cases remain pending. The High Courts of the country entertained 16,283 newly-instituted cases, disposed of 14,509, and

293,947 cases remain pending. The Federal Shariat Court instituted 205 cases, disposed of 294, and 567 remain pending.

Notably, the most important case of the year decided by the Supreme Court held the Prime Minister of the country, Nawaz Sharif, to be disqualified on the basis of not being 'sadiq' or 'ameen' under Articles 62 and 63 of the Constitution.

Moreover, the leader of an opposition party, Imran Khan, was held to be 'sadiq' and 'ameen' whereas another member of the National Assembly, Jahangir Tareen, was held to be dishonest under Article 62 and was also disqualified. These judgments resulted in the perception of a political court whose decisions were having a paramount effect on the composition of the political parties of the day.

Additionally, there were a number of cases of first impression decided by the courts in 2017. In the Orange Line case, the Supreme Court gave the go-ahead for construction of the train. The Peshawar High Court also upheld the executive's decision in the Pakistan Army Amendment Act 2017 to extend the term for military courts for a further two years. It also held that the High Court could only interfere in the decision made by the Military Courts in certain limited circumstances.

The provincial High Courts decided in a number of cases that fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution include the right of minorities to marry and to divorce, the right to have clean drinking water, the right to health, the right to civic amenities, and disability rights, among others. Other human rights cases include one in the Sindh High Court in which it was held that local elections decided with a show of hands rather than a secret ballot violated the Constitution. Moreover, the Lahore High Court restored a provision in the Divorce Act which allowed Christians the right to divorce in cases where there was no adultery but the marriage had broken down.

Interestingly, the implementation of Point 20 of the National Action Plan (NAP) requires reform in the criminal justice system, and this remains one of the most neglected actions, with no distinct progress at either federal or provincial level. Several of the other points in the NAP are interlinked with criminal justice which has a direct impact on their effective implementation. The continuing excessive delays in the trial process and low conviction rates resulted in the extension of the mandate for military courts until 2019.

Much of the delay in reforms could be the direct result of confusion and lack of coordination between federal and provincial authorities. The decentralization of legislative powers under the 18th Constitutional Amendment meant that both Parliament and a provincial assembly could make laws with respect to criminal law, criminal procedure and evidence.

In August, the Interior Minister admitted that the National Counter-Terrorism Authority (Nacta) tasked to implement the National Action Plan (NAP) had not been effective. He stated that law and order was the prime responsibility of the provinces and the interior ministry would improve coordination among the provinces besides monitoring the overall situation.

Universal Periodic Review

The Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers recommended that Pakistan urgently improve the formal justice system in order to discourage recourse to informal 'justice' systems such as *jirgas* and *panchayats*. The UN Convention against Torture (CAT) was concerned about reported discrepancies in the administration of justice, including with respect to the jurisdiction of the Federal Shariat Court.

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) remained concerned that persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, refugees and the scheduled castes (Dalits) had limited access to justice. UNESCO urged Pakistan to continue to investigate the cases of killed journalists. The Working Group on Enforced Disappearances (WGEID) and CAT observed that there was a climate of impunity with regard to enforced disappearances and torture, respectively. The Centre for Economic and Social Rights (CESR) was concerned at the prevalence and magnitude of corruption among high-level officials.

Judiciary – pending cases

The lengthy proceedings of high profile cases saw the backlog of cases increase to 38,589 in the Supreme Court in 2017. The Panama Papers case which led to the disqualification of Nawaz Sharif alone lasted for months. Another petition seeking the disqualification of Imran Khan and Jehangir Tareen of the PTI took almost a year to arrive at a conclusion. According to reports, the increasing number of pending cases was primarily due to there not being sufficient judges to hear the cases.

Two Acts were passed during the year to address this problem. The Cost of Litigation Act 2017 aims to discourage vexatious and false proceedings under the Code of Civil Procedure, and the Alternate Dispute Resolution Act 2017 aims to deplete the massive backlog in cases in the courts by offering ADR as a less expensive and quicker alternative to the courts in solving legal problems. ADR centres were subsequently established in all the lower courts throughout the Punjab.

Early in the year it was reported that a bill was being drafted to establish evening courts in Islamabad, to operate between 5.00pm and 8.00pm, 'for speedy disposal of cases and clearance of backlog.' The district and sessions judge would supervise and monitor the courts, under the overall control of the High Court. At the end of August, the Standing Committee of the Cabinet for Disposal of Legislative Cases (CCLC) approved the Evening Courts Bill 2017.

Accountability

It was an eventful year for the judiciary. The chequered history of attempts to enforce the principle of accountability in Pakistan suggests that this vexed issue will not be completely resolved until it is applied across the board, without exception. To some, the disqualification of Nawaz Sharif and the ongoing court

proceedings against him indicates an affirmation of the rule of law through the apex court. To others, it threatens to destabilise the democratic process.

The recently drafted Bill for the National Accountability Commission (NAC), which is meant to replace the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO) 1999, hit a new snag in its final stages when the Parliamentary Committee on National Accountability Laws failed to reach a consensus at its meeting in November. The debate continued over the applicability of the proposed legislation. Committee members from all parties had previously agreed to the withdrawal of a suggestion that the law should also cover generals and judges.

Military courts

The 21st constitutional amendment in January 2015 allowed military courts to conduct trials of civilian suspects of terrorism offences, with a sunset clause of two years which expired on 6 January 2017. This move was severely criticised at the time by human rights activists and institutions as denying individuals their right to a fair trial under Article 10-A of the Constitution and Article 14 of the ICCPR. Despite this, the Federal Government once again extended the operation of the military courts for another two years through the 23rd constitutional amendment. The extraordinary circumstances and grave and unprecedented threats to the country which the ordinary courts were unable to handle were again cited as reasons and, once again, a promise was made to reform the criminal justice system.

According to media reports and ISPR statements, since their inception in 2015 military courts have awarded 274 convictions including 161 death sentences and 113 other sentences. During that time, 56 convicts had been executed. The record shows that some of those convicts had been missing from 2007-8 and either their habeas corpus petitions were pending in the High Court or their cases were pending in Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances.

In May, the Peshawar High Court in an exceptional judgment set aside the death penalty awarded by the military court in the case of Muhammad Imran. It held that the military court lacked the legal jurisdiction to award the death penalty for the charges made against the convict. It therefore remanded back the case to the military court to either reconsider the degree of punishment awarded or to reframe the charges. This was the first time since the military courts were established for civilian trials that the evidence, charges and other aspects of a judgment made by a military court had been discussed.

During the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review, concern was expressed at the use of military courts to try civilians for terrorism-related offences. The concluding observations of the UN Human Rights Committee on Pakistan's initial report also expressed concern at the extension of the jurisdiction of military courts to consider cases of persons detained under the Actions (in Aid of Civil Power) Regulation (AACPR). It noted with concern the number of civilians, allegedly including children, that had been convicted or sentenced to death in secret proceedings, and that some 90 percent of

convictions were based on confessions. The Committee was further concerned that the military courts had allegedly convicted at least five 'missing persons' whose cases were being investigated by the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances.

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Excerpts from HRCP's Report *State of Human Rights in 2017*, Chapter II: Enforcement of Law – jails, presences and disappearances

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Enforced Disappearances

In 2017, the number of enforced disappearances continued to pose a real threat for human rights in Pakistan. A judge of the Islamabad High Court was even heard saying during court proceeding that he would either disappear or be assassinated when he was hearing the sensitive issue of the Faizabad dharna. The autonomy, independence and financial resources needed for the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (COIED) in order to achieve its mandate remained a key challenge for the Pakistani government. In 2017, the Commission failed to initiate criminal proceedings against any of the perpetrators involved in enforced disappearances and the number of pending cases was very high.

According to the Commission, it inherited 136 cases at the time of its inception. Since then it had received 4,608 cases of disappeared people, of which 3,076 cases had been disposed of, and 1,532 cases were still pending, with 867 from the KP province alone. The Commission had traced 2,306 missing persons. The sub judice cases in the High Court(s) and the Supreme Court of Pakistan were not included in this figure. The Commission received 868 cases in 2017, and disposed of 555.

During 2017, Pakistan failed to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance and specifically criminalise enforced disappearances. In September 2017 the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID) presented its report to the thirty-sixth session of the UNHRC. According to that report, the working group transmitted 119 cases of enforced disappearances to the government of Pakistan under urgent action. There were 723 cases of Pakistani citizens who had disappeared pending with the UNWGEID.

In this report, the UNWGEID expressed its concerns regarding the 119 new cases under its urgent action procedure and reiterated the importance of respecting the provisions of the Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance. The UNWGEID asked the Government of Pakistan to implement the recommendations contained in the follow-up report made by the Working Group after its visit to Pakistan in 2012.

Besides the UNWGEID data, the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances received 868 fresh cases during 2017, higher than the previous two years – 649 in 2015, and 728 in 2016. The COIOED disposed of 555 cases during this period whereas in 2015 a total of 524 cases were disposed of. In 2016 the figure was 899.

The Committee against Torture during the review of Pakistan's initial report expressed its concerns at Pakistan's failure to specifically criminalise enforced disappearances as a distinct crime as well as the increasing number of reported disappearances in recent times. The Committee shared its dismay at the reported cases of intimidation, harassment and attacks on HRDs, lawyers and journalists, and the lack of investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators.

At the review of Pakistan's initial report in August 2017, the UN Human Rights Committee raised reservations about the AACPR, the internment centres and the alleged prolonged detentions, with powers conferred on the army without judicial supervision. The Committee also objected to the alleged high number of people held in internment centres under the AACPR as well as the alleged intimidation and discouraging of families from filing cases of enforced disappearances. The Committee asked Pakistan to fulfill its international obligation under ICCPR for ensuring individuals' right to a fair trial and bringing its national laws including AACPR into conformity with the rights protected by ICCPR and UNCAT.

In January, four social media rights activists and bloggers disappeared from Lahore and Islamabad. Ahmed Waqas Goraya, Asim Saeed, Salman Haider and Ahmed Raza Naseer were later released. The bloggers' disappearance and harassment created a climate of fear for the human rights and social media activists in the country. On 7 January, Qamar Abbas, a human rights defender, disappeared in Islamabad when he was travelling from Karachi to Islamabad for work.

In May, four political activists, Raza Jarwar, Ali Ahmed Bughio, Shadi Khan Soomro, and Abdul Aziz Gurgaiz from villages in Badin district, Sindh were abducted by policemen and personnel in black or dark blue uniforms and civilian clothes. There was no information on their whereabouts.

Zeenat Shahzadi, who raised her voice for disappearance victims, was picked up near her house in Lahore in July 2015. She remained missing for more than two years until she was released in October 2017. No information was released about the condition of her health, nor were her perpetrators brought to justice.

In December, a peace activist from Lahore, Raza Mehmood Khan, was abducted. He was working as a member of the Aaghaze - Dosti (Initiation of Friendship) organization and was known for his grassroots activism around the issue of India-Pakistan friendship.

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Excerpts from HRCP's Report *State of Human Rights in 2017*, Chapter IV: Social and Economic Rights – Health

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Health

The state shall secure the well-being of the people, irrespective of sex, caste, creed or race...provide basic necessities of life, such as...medical relief, for all such citizens...as are permanently or temporarily unable to earn their livelihood on account of infirmity, sickness or unemployment...

Constitution of Pakistan

Article 38(a) and (d)

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 25(1)

The state is responsible for the provision of quality and affordable health services to the people but unfortunately it has not been able to fully deliver. There are interventions but these benefit only a few and do not extend across the board. People have to depend on the private sector or quacks and unqualified practitioners if they cannot afford to pay the hefty consultation fees of doctors in the private sector.

After the devolution of health to the provinces, they had to formulate their own health policies, allocate budgets for this sector, and implement public health programmes. While the larger provinces are in a position to better manage their affairs, the smaller ones are struggling to streamline their systems and overcome their capacity issues.

State resources and energies are spent on curative, rather than preventive, healthcare. In the absence of disease screening programmes and functional health facilities in rural areas, ailments are not detected in time. The health of citizens of rural and underdeveloped areas is further compromised because of the absenteeism of doctors and their unwillingness to work there.

As in previous years, the healthcare provision in the country deteriorated during 2017 and failed to address the needs of the poorer sections of society. Many public sector hospitals lacked the required facilities, including free medicines, diagnostic machines in working order, and hospital beds in the required quantity. In November, it was announced that the Punjab government was to privatise laboratories in public hospitals.

The state has not increased the health budget in accordance with the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations – WHO suggests the outlay should be six percent of national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and in Pakistan it has remained at less than one percent.

The ever increasing population is also an excessive burden on the state, and the rate of progress in the health sector is lower than most other countries. The disease pattern is heavily dominated by malnutrition and poor dietary practices.

Public Health

The Prime Minister's National Health Programme claims to help millions of poor people to access quality public health care services. According to the Pakistan Economic Survey 2016-17, these services are available through a network of 1,201 hospitals, 683 rural health centres, 5,518 basic health units, 5,802 dispensaries, and 731 maternity and child health centres. However, these facilities struggle to keep pace

With the ever-increasing population, and the private sector has made inroads, particularly in urban areas.

The survey also claims that the public health activities and facilities have consistently increased, with the doctor population ratio standing at 1:997, dentists 1:10,658, and hospital beds 1:1,584.

Despite the existence of this infrastructure, the key issues the health care delivery suffers from are said to be high population growth, uneven distribution of health professionals in the country, deficient workforce, insufficient funding, and limited access to quality health care services.

Budget

The federal government set aside Rs49 billion for the Health ministry. With the inclusion of the provinces' share of Rs5.7 billion in the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI), the total amount comes to around Rs.54.4 billion. This represents an increase of 80 percent over the previous year's allocation.

The focus was on completion of 18 ongoing and five new projects in the health sector under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP).

Under initiatives announced the previous year, the Prime Minister's programme for new hospitals has been allocated Rs8 billion for the fiscal year. In addition, Phase II of the Prime Minister's National Health Programme is being launched at a total cost of Rs.10 billion, and an allocation of Rs.7 billion. Investments in vertical health programmes including EPI, family planning and primary healthcare and population welfare programmes are being enhanced as compared to the previous year.

The 'Clean Drinking Water for All' initiative has been launched, for which Rs.12.5 billion has been allocated. Furthermore, Rs.30 billion has been proposed for the Prime Minister's SDG programme which would focus on national commitments to improvement in the social indicators.

National programmes

The federal government has earmarked a budget for 23 new and existing development projects for the health ministry in the fiscal year (FY) 2017-18. Polio remains one of the country's key issues, and the government has allocated

Rs.7.4 billion for the EPI under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). Similarly, Rs7 billion has been set aside for the Prime Minister's National Health Programme (Phase-II).

The National Programme for Family Planning and Primary Healthcare received around Rs.16.4 billion, while the National Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health Programme (MNCH) got around Rs.1.04 billion.

The federal government has also pledged Rs.684 million for the PM's programme to prevent and control malaria. The National Programme for Prevention and Control of Blindness was allocated Rs.247 million, while Rs.124 million was given to the National TB Control programme. The Programme for Prevention and Control of Hepatitis received Rs.684 million.

Funds worth Rs.7 billion have been set aside for the Population Welfare Programme of provinces, while a separate allocation of Rs.273 million was made to the population welfare programme of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Rs.1.187 billion for Gilgit-Baltistan, and Rs79 million for the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

Punjab

The Punjab government allocated Rs263 billion for the health sector in its budget for 2017-18. It announced at the time that several reform initiatives and development projects had been initiated in the province that would help in health service delivery. These included revisiting the legal framework for drug manufacturing followed by a campaign against spurious drugs, revitalising drug laboratories and establishment of a reference laboratory as well as a state-of-the-art supply chain system for provision of drugs to health facilities and patients.

The Punjab health department has two separate components, namely the Specialised Healthcare and Medical Education Department, which was allocated Rs.120 billion, and the Primary and Secondary Healthcare Department for which the allocation was Rs.111 billion, the latter representing a 58.4 percent increase as compared to the Rs.70 billion allocated the previous year.

The proposed budget will be spent on hospitals, healthcare institutes, laboratories, health administration etc. An amount of Rs.20 billion will go to District Headquarter (DHQ) and Tehsil Headquarter (THQ) hospitals and Rs.20.4 billion will be spent on the provision of free medicines to patients. During the discussion on the budget in the House, the Finance Minister said the Basic and Rural Health Centres were being strengthened to ensure the best possible healthcare facilities for people.

The government also announced its intention to expand the Punjab Food Authority at a cost of Rs2 billion and turn it into the Punjab Agriculture, Food and Drug Authority to examine medicine, food and pesticides quality.

Furthermore, the District Health Authorities were allocated Rs.73.5 million, maternal and neonatal care Rs200 million, the Punjab Clean Water Programme Rs.25 billion. There were also allocations for free treatment facilities for deserving patients of kidney and liver diseases who would also get

modern diagnostic and treatment facilities at the Pakistan Kidney and Liver Transplant Institute (PKLI) being constructed at a cost of Rs.20 billion.

Sindh

Sindh's public health sector got a robust budget of Rs.100.32 billion, an increase of 25 percent over the previous year's budget of Rs.79.88 billion. The allocation for the Annual Development Programme for health-related initiatives stands at Rs.15.5 billion for the current fiscal as compared to Rs.14 billion for 2016-17.

The Sindh Immunisation Support Programme has been allocated Rs.8.09 billion with the declared aim of revolutionising the vaccination and inoculation process and making future generations healthier.

The budget for the National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease (NICVD) has been increased from Rs.1.8 billion to Rs.5.8 billion, including Rs.4 billion for NICVD in Karachi. The grant for the Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation (SIUT), Karachi has been increased from Rs.4 billion to Rs.4.5 billion, while the grant for the Indus Hospital, Karachi has been doubled from Rs.500 million to Rs.1 billion.

The allocation for medicine has been increased to Rs.7.9 billion. Some 25,000 new posts will be created at different levels of health management with a budget of Rs.7.7 billion, including Rs.6.5 billion for the Lady Health Worker (LHW) Programme, with the deployment of more than 2,100 LHWs.

An amount of Rs.280 million has been allocated for the automation of the health department, while a hospital waste management programme will be launched in all major hospitals of the province with a budget of Rs.75 million. The total allocation for the 21 ongoing teaching hospital schemes was Rs.2.23 billion during the current fiscal year and Rs.48.34 million for the upgrade of the drug testing laboratory in Karachi.

At the end of the year, it was claimed that a number of the ongoing and new health schemes included in the 2017-18 Annual Development Programme (ADP) were stagnating for lack of funds. For instance, only Rs.444.5 million had been released for the afore-mentioned teaching hospital schemes, with an expenditure of a mere Rs.21.86 million in the fiscal year's first five months, and the funds for the upgrade of the drug testing laboratory had not materialised.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

The Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government's budget for the health sector has been increased to Rs.65.7 billion for 2017-18, up by 19.45 percent from Rs.55 billion last year. During his budget speech, the KP Finance Minister announced that the health sector allocation was 11 percent of the total budget of Rs.603 billion for the fiscal year and demonstrated the priorities of the government.

The KP government claims to have introduced institutional reforms, such as 24/7 health services provision, Sehat Insaf (Health) cards, given autonomy to health teaching institutions, and established an Independent Monitoring Unit (IMU) to ensure quality and sustainability of the reforms initiatives. According to the KP Health Department, actions taken by the IMU in

2017 led to 6,683 salary deductions being made for absence, 1,963 warnings being issued, and 23 terminations. Overall, attendance and punctuality had improved.

The government said it had also focused on strengthening training institutions and announced that the budget of the health department included a grant for provincial health institutions and also a regular grant-in-aid to various Medical Teaching Institutions (MTIs).

The amount for the Sehat Insaf Card scheme went up from Rs.5.5 billion to Rs.6.5 billion. Under this scheme, health services were to be provided for up to 70 percent of the province's population, based on certain criteria. In December, the KP Chief Minister announced that the card would be made available to all people with disabilities in the province.

The government allocated Rs.12 billion for the development of 101 projects. Of these, 75 were ongoing ones while 26 new schemes would be initiated during 2017-18.

The allocation for drugs and medicines in the FY2017-18 was 'alarmingly low' according to the budget brief issued by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Department. The allocation in the FY2017-18 was Rs.913 million as compared to Rs943 million in FY2016-17.

The same budget brief states that decentralisation of health functions to district level was intended to increase efficiency in health service delivery but it was 'greatly undermined as existing level of allocations will hardly be able to meet the financial requirement of existing level of operations'. The main reason, it says, is that 'more than 90% of the budget will be used for payment of salaries'.

Balochistan

The Balochistan government set aside Rs18 billion for the health sector, a five percent increase over the previous year. It claimed that the performance of the health department had been far better than previous years as patients had been provided improved health facilities at their doorsteps. Health service delivery in Balochistan has been a problematic issue for different reasons including absenteeism, the attitude of doctors, and security.

A scheme is apparently underway to provide solar power to all state-run hospitals in the rural areas round-the-clock during the next fiscal year, for which funding is being sought.

During the year, the Balochistan government suspended scores of doctors across the province for being absent and showing negligence in performing their duties. Most of the suspended doctors were posted to remote districts of the province. There has also been a constant threat to polio vaccinators who have suffered injuries and casualties from armed attacks on them.

The presence of close to two million Afghan refugees in the province is also a burden on the health infrastructure of the province and the provincial government is struggling to handle it.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with the collaboration of its implementing partner Society of Collective Interest Orientation (SOCIO-Pakistan) and the Government of Balochistan, completed a 10-month project 'Improving Health & Hygiene Status of Refugees & Host Communities in Quetta'. The main objective of the project was to achieve long-term improvement of the general health of the local population in reducing mortality and morbidity rates associated with water borne and vector diseases.

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Source: State of Human Rights in 2017, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, Lahore, May 2017, pp. 26-32, 65-67 and 223-228.