



# PAKISTAN WATCH

No. 75

February 2017

## POLITICAL ISSUES

### BAHRAIN

#### 1. Bahraini delegation meets Pak PM

Islamabad, Tuesday, 3 January 2017

Commander of the National Guard of Bahrain Isa Al-Khalifa called on Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and highlighted the historically strong relations and discussed the scope of improving bilateral economic and trade equation.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/pakistan-considers-bahrain-a-close-friend-trusted-partner-pm/>

*See also: Radio Pakistan, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<http://www.radio.gov.pk/03-Jan-2017/pakistan-considers-bahrain-close-friend-trusted-partner-pm>

### IRAN

#### 2. Pak grieves demise of Iran's ex- President Rafsanjani

Islamabad, Monday, 9 January 2017

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif expressed his condolences over the death of former President of Iran Akbar Rafsanjani, who passed away on 8 January in Tehran at the age of 82 years.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/pm-condoles-death-of-irans-ex-president-rafsanjani/>

#### 3. Iranian Parliamentary delegation visits Pak

Islamabad, Thursday, 26 January 2017

Iranian Parliamentary delegation headed by Allauddin Boroujerdi, Chairman of the National Security and Foreign Policy Commission of Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran, outlined the trajectory of Pak-Iran relations in evolving geo-political environment during their meeting with Pakistani National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/pak-iran-parliamentary-engagement-imperative-for-regional-cohesion-na-speaker/>

### OMAN

#### 4. Pak, Oman to formulate Parliamentary Friendship Group

Islamabad, Thursday, 12 January 2017

Omani delegation led by State Council's Chairman Salim Al-Munthri signed a MoU Chairman of Pakistani Senate Raza Rabbani to enhance their inter-parliamentary linkages and economic cooperation.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/oman-state-council-pakistan-senate-for-formulating-parliamentary-friendship-group/>

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## **PALESTINE**

### **5. Palestinian delegation visits Pak**

**Islamabad, Monday, 30 January 2017**

A 17-member Palestinian delegation led by President Mahmoud Abbas paid a three-day visit and held meetings with Pakistani Prime Minister and other officials, and inaugurated the newly constructed Palestine Embassy Complex in Islamabad.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/palestinian-president-accorded-red-carpet-welcome/>

*See also: The Nation, Lahore*

<http://nation.com.pk/national/31-Jan-2017/palestinian-president-accorded-red-carpet-welcome>

*See also: The Express Tribune, Karachi*

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1312088/red-carpet-welcome-palestinian-president-arrives/>

*See also: Times of Islamabad, Islamabad*

<https://timesofislamabad.com/67286-2/2017/01/31/>

*See also: Dawn, Karachi*

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1311844>

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## **SAUDI ARABIA**

### **6. Def Minister dismisses reports of Raheel Sharif heading Arab Coalition**

**Islamabad, Wednesday, 11 January 2017**

In response to media reports of Pakistan Army Chief Raheel Sharif's appointment as Commander-in-Chief of Saudi-led Arab Coalition Forces, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif clarified that the Army Chief has "not intimated" the parent organization regarding the development and no formal request for NoC has been made.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/no-request-received-for-noc-by-gen-raheel-to-head-arab-coalition-force-asif/>

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*See also: Dawn, Karachi*

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1307771>

### **7. Saudi raises Hajj quota for Pakistani pilgrims**

**Islamabad, Monday, 23 January 2017**

Pakistan's Religious Affairs Minister Sardar Yousaf and Saudi Hajj and Umrah Minister Mohammed Taher Bentin held a meeting in Jeddah to raise the limit of Pakistani Hajj pilgrims in 2017 to 179,210.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/hajj-quota-for-pakistani-pilgrims-increased-arab-news/>

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## **TURKEY**

### **8. Pakistani PM condemns terrorist attack in Istanbul on New year eve**

**Islamabad, Sunday, 1 January 2017**

Pakistani President Mamnoon Hussain strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in the Besiktas district of Istanbul on 31 December and reassured Pakistan's support to Turkey in its fight against terrorism.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/prime-minister-strongly-condemns-istanbul-terror-attack/>

*See also: Business Recorder, Karachi*

<http://www.brecorder.com/2016/12/11/331334/president-strongly-condemns-bomb-blasts-in-turkey-331334/>

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## UAE

### 9. Pak condoles attack on five Emirati diplomats in Afghanistan

Islamabad, Friday, 13 January 2017

Pakistan Prime Minister's advisor on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz and Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Tariq Fatemi criticized the bomb attack in Kandahar which killed five Emirati diplomats and left the Emirati envoy to Afghanistan injured.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/sartaj-fatemi-visit-uae-embassy-to-condole-martyrdom-of-uaes-diplomats-in-afghanistan/>

*See also: Pakistan Observer, Islamabad*

<http://pakobserver.net/sartaj-fatemi-condole-martyrdom-of-uaes-diplomats-in-afghanistan/>

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## DEFENCE ISSUES

## BAHRAIN

### 10. Pak Naval Chief visits Bahrain

Islamabad, Sunday, 15 January 2017

Pakistan's Chief of Naval Staff Zakaullah paid a visit to Bahrain to discuss matters relating bilateral security and military cooperation with Commander Royal Bahrain Naval Force and Bahraini military leaders.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/pak-naval-chief-reaches-bahrain/>

<https://www.app.com.pk/cns-meets-bahraini-defence-leaders-commander-us-navcent/>

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## QATAR

### 11. Pakistani Naval Chief visits Qatar

Islamabad, Thursday, 12 January 2017

Chief of the Naval Staff Muhammad Zakaullah met Qatar's Minister of State for Defence Khalid Al Attiyapaid in Doha to discuss matters relating defence collaboration.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/naval-chief-calls-on-qatari-minister-of-state-for-defence/>

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## TURKEY

### 12. Pak, Turkey hold military dialogue

Islamabad, Wednesday, 25 January 2017

Pakistan and Turkey initiated two-day 12<sup>th</sup> round of High Level Military Dialogue Group meeting in Islamabad with Pakistan's Secretary Defence Syed Hassan Shah and Turkey's Deputy Chief of Turkish General Staff Umit Dundar representing their respective countries. Both the sides agreed to work on Comprehensive Bilateral Strategic Framework Agreement.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/pakistan-turkey-military-dialogue-group-meeting-starts/>

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**13. Turkish Deputy Chief of Air Staff visits Pak**

**Islamabad, Thursday, 26 January 2017**

Turkish Deputy Chief of General Staff Umit Dundar met Pakistani Chief of Air Staff, Sohail Aman to deliberate upon potential areas of military and defence cooperation.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/turkish-deputy-chief-of-general-staff-meets-air-chief/>

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**ECONOMIC ISSUES**

**BAHRAIN**

**14. Pak invites Bahraini investment**

**Islamabad, Sunday, 22 January 2017**

Ambassador of Pakistan in Bahrain Javed Malik highlighted the investment environment and invited Bahraini investors to explore Pakistani market, during his interaction with Hamood al Khalifa, a member of Bahrain royal family.

*Source: Daily Times, Lahore*

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/business/22-Jan-17/bahrain-businessmen-keen-to-invest-in-pakistan-javed-malik>

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**MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES**

**EGYPT**

**15. Pak embassy coordinating rescue of sailors stranded in Egypt**

**Islamabad, Monday, 2 January 2017**

Pakistan envoy in Egypt Mushtaq Ali Shah reassured logistical support and rescue assistance to 18 Pakistani sailors stranded onboard MV AKKAZ, the Ship owned by a Kuwaiti company, in the Red Sea, off Port Tawfik in Egypt due to mechanical failure and expiry of technical license.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/embassy-reaffirms-all-out-support-to-pakistani-crew-of-stranded-cargo-ship-in-egypt/>

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**IRAN**

**16. Pakistan grieves over Tehran fire incident**

**Islamabad, Saturday, 21 January 2016**

Pakistan expressed condolences over loss of life and property in the tragic fire accident and collapse of Plasco building in Tehran on 19 January.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/pakistan-offers-condolence-over-fire-accident-in-tehran/>

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**17. Iran grieves Parachinar terrorist attack**

**Islamabad, Tuesday, 24 January 2017**

Iran has expressed deep sorrow over the terrorist incident at a vegetable market in Parachinar city of FATA on 21 January, which resulted in death of 25 people, injuring over 87 citizens.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/iran-expresses-condolences-for-parachinar-terrorists-attack/>

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**SAUDI ARABIA**

**18. Saudi to invest in SWAT expressway**

**Islamabad, Wednesday, 25 January 2017**

Saudi Arabia has agreed to provide financial aid of PKR 3.4 billion for the construction of four-lane, 113 kilometres long Swat Expressway.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/saudi-arabia-to-provide-rs-3-4-bln-for-construction-of-swat-expressway/>

*See also: The Nation, Lahore*

<http://nation.com.pk/national/25-Jan-2017/ksa-to-provide-rs-3-4b-for-construction-of-swat-expressway>

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**TURKEY**

**19. Foundation stone of Recep Erdogan Hospital extension laid by Punjab CM**

**Islamabad, Tuesday, 10 January 2017**

Punjab Chief Minister Shehbaz Sharif laid the foundation stone of extension project of Recep Tayyip Erdogan Government Hospital in Muzaffargarh district of Punjab. Family medicine clinic of the hospital was also inaugurated.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/shehbaz-lays-foundation-stone-of-250-beds/>

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**20. Abducted Pak youth rescued by Turkish authorities**

**Islamabad, Wednesday, 4 January 2016**

Six Pakistani youth, who had been abducted for ransom by Kurdish pirates, were rescued by the Turkish authorities on 4 January, with legal proceedings under way. Additionally, two more Pakistanis were recovered from Avcilarin area of Istanbul on 13 January.

*Source: Associated Press of Pakistan, Islamabad*

<https://www.app.com.pk/6-abducted-pakistani-nationals-rescued-by-turkish-police-in-istanbul/>

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