



**PAKISTAN  
GOVERNANCE  
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## Gender & Women Empowerment

### Women & Laws

#### **Ombudsperson Receives Applications but Lacks Staff**

Established on December 22 to implement Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2010, the office of ombudsperson started functioning since 13 January 2011 and is receiving applications from harassment victims but lacks staff for which they have moved a summary from Ministry of Women Development (MoWD) asking for 16 supporting staff. She said that the office will also require two legal advisors to deal with the applications. The Ombudsperson's office is yet to be authorized to call both parties and conduct independent investigation of the cases for the want of being non operational.

The harassment act makes it mandatory for the management of the organizations to adopt the code of conduct and form a three-member inquiry committee to deal with the complaints of sexual harassment. In case the perpetrator is too senior or is the owner of the business himself and the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the committee or feels that the committee cannot do justice, he or she can go to an ombudsperson. Victims can also directly file their complaint at the ombudsperson.

Out of the cases received, some have already been dealt by the department but the complainant are not satisfied with the judgment of the committee whereas some applications were directly submitted to the ombudsperson office. Lack of staff hinders them to be operational the summary for approval is with the additional secretary finance. Meanwhile, through a covering letter, the office is informing complainants that it has initiated the processing of applications. The office of ombudsperson is temporarily located in the MoWD. Once the proper functioning will starts the ombudsperson can conduct investigation on its own or it can involve any sister department if needed. The ombudsperson office will need assistance from the Ministry for initial few months and once the staff is provided, it will function independently.

[The News – February 07, 2011]

[Dawn – February 12, 2011]

#### **Sexual Harassment Legislation Must Be Implemented: NCSW**

The speakers in the fourth meeting of the Implementation Watch Committee of the National Commission on Status of Women (NCSW) urged the true implementation of anti-sexual harassment legislation in all the universities of the country. In the meeting, they urged the relevant departments to ensure the implementation of anti-sexual harassment legislation and appreciated the Higher Education Commission for its efforts to institutionalize mechanisms in the universities to combat sexual harassment.

The Commission has been working on a draft policy for several months under a task force chaired by Karakoram University Vice Chancellor, Najma Najam, while a policy was finalized in the light of the recent legislation and sent to all the universities to comply with. NCSW Implementation Watch Committee Chairperson, Dr Fouzia Saeed, said that now the provinces have to appoint an ombudsperson under the law for the working women in each province. Dr Fouzia also reported that the rules of the legislation of 'The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010' have been approved. Punjab Women and Development Department Head, Sajjad Sipra, assured the committee that the department was institutionalising the code of conduct and also conducting trainings to sensitize the people.

One of the speakers, Maliha Husain, while reporting on the level of implementation through regulatory bodies, said that most of the bodies have notified the organizations working under them, however, a reminder needed to be sent out for more speedy compliance. Administration and Establishment Division Joint Secretary, Rukhsana Rehman, said that information about the law needed to be circulated time and

again for internalization of the mechanism. It was also decided in the meeting to focus on the health and education ministries to help setup the mechanisms to deal with sexual harassment at the provincial level.

[Daily Times – February 24, 2011]

## Women's Empowerment Initiatives

### PM Directs Officials to Ensure NCSW Autonomy

Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani has instructed the related officials to ensure implementation of amendments, which grant autonomous status to the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) before International Women's Day falling on March 8. He issued these directives after his meeting with the NCSW Chairperson Anis Haroon on February 10. Since 2003, the NCSW had been trying to institute amendments in the NCSW Ordinance in order to make it an autonomous body so that the commission can perform its responsibilities as per its mandate and as is the case for such commissions around the world, which has been held up by bureaucratic hurdles. The Commission presented its annual report to the prime minister along with the highlights of its recommendations that included the case of recent elections held in Shangla, Kohistan, where women were prevented from casting their votes.

According to media reports, under an agreement between all contesting parties, women were barred from casting their votes. There were 14 polling stations specifically designated for women, but according to Election Commission officials, not a single vote was cast there. The delegates demanded that the election results should be immediately declared null and void. They also urged the government to challenge the decision of the Federal Shariat Court in the Supreme Court. They said that the recent judgment by the Federal Shariat Court sought to undo the positive aspects of the Women's Protection Act 2006. The FSC declared section 11, 25 and 28 of the Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendments) Act 2006 as violation of the constitution because these provisions annul the overriding effect of the Hudood Ordinances of 1979.

[The News – February 11, 2011]

### USAID Provides \$1.8m for Female War Affectees in KP

For rehabilitation and re-settlement of female affectees of war zone areas in Kyber Pakhtunkhwa particularly Swat valley, under 'United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Entrepreneur' project in collaboration with Provincial Restoration, Rehabilitation and Settlement Authority (PARSA), US Agency spent \$1.8 million through three local NGOs, provided 7,200 conflict affected families with livelihoods package. The people from villages like Tarkhani all over the Swat Valley have been provided with the tools they needed to reclaim their livelihoods like seeds and fertilizers for farmers and sewing machines for tailors and seamstresses.

[Daily Times – February 23, 2011]

## National Women's Day

### National Women's Day – Thirty Years On , Their Cause Becomes Dearer

Members of the Women Action Forum gathered at the Nomad art gallery to commemorate February 12, 1983, when their peaceful demonstration in Lahore against the Law of Evidence had been baton-charged, propelling widespread condemnation and giving birth to National Women's Day. The Founder-Director of Nomad, Nageen Hyat remembering the emotions that day commented on the absurdity of interference by religious groups into a person's private life. Art work by 11 female artists, titled "Pakistani Aurat Kay Naam", was being displayed.

WAF was formed in September 1981 during a time of silence and fear. It was General Ziaul Haq's regime, the press was muzzled, women's participation in sports and arts was suppressed and discussions ranged from whether women should even be allowed to drive a car or pass in front of a mosque during prayer times. When two people, Fahmida and Allah Bukhs, were sentenced to death by stoning under the Hudood Ordinance, WAF galvanized into action, helping the two win their case in court. But now, the participants felt, the environment was even more challenging with the legacy of Zia entrenched among people.

"It is scarier today," said Nasreen Azhar, founding member of WAF. "Previously, we were opposed to the state, but now, the people themselves have become radicalized." The discussion inevitably turned to the blasphemy law and emotions noticeably ran high. One person criticised the political expediency of the ruling party. Another decried the mindset of people. Arifa Mazhar from Sungi shared a survey she undertook in sector F-10 of Islamabad soon after Salmaan Taseer's assassination, in which 8 out of 12 people, ranging from shopkeepers to educated young boys and girls, supported the cause which led to his murder. "There is confusion and misinterpretation of Islam," Mazhar said. "Often, to be on the safe side, many young people choose not to have an opinion at all."

This silence, the participants said, was a political statement that harmed the cause of progressive elements even more. Indu Mitha, renowned classical dancer and social activist who had participated in the 1983 protest, shared her memory of that moment, her voice laced with a sense of disappointment as if an opportunity had been lost. "Now, you see women in every field, you see them interacting with everyone with a lot more exposure. But, have we really come forward?" She added woefully, "It's for you to work out. It's my time to go."

[The Express Tribune – February 13, 2011]

### **National Women's Day – Government Urged to Take Steps for Reducing Gender Gap**

Civil society has called upon the government to take special measures for reducing gender gaps as are revealed in national and international reports, particularly in the area of education and health sectors. In a statement issued on the occasion of National Women's Day, the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) has urged the legislators and policy-makers to allocate more resources and further vow the commitment to address gender disparities in key human development areas to pursue national women's development agenda. Other key points of the statement are as following:

- The statement mentions that the literacy rate of women in the country is 42 per cent and only 52 per cent of girls complete primary level education. Similarly 25 per cent girls reach the secondary level whereas only 4.2 per cent are enrolled for higher level education.
- It says that primary enrolment rate for female in Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa and Baluchistan is 41 per cent and 32 per cent respectively despite government special initiatives to meet the Midterm and Millennium Development targets for 100 per cent primary enrolment till 2015.
- It says that health indicators show that for 100 boys, only 88 girls are immunised. Infant mortality rate under five years is 94 per 1,000, which is highest if compared with other regional countries.
- Women access to professional health services is 35 per cent and maternal mortality figures of 276 in 100,000 live births explicitly marks that women are denied to health rights. Gender related indicators are expected to further deteriorate by recent flood and poverty being arousing out of war against terrorism and internal displacement in conflict areas.

- It points out that dismal state of women attributes to many factors mainly poor governance, less expenditure, negligence to women problems and gender inequalities persistent in our society. “Women vulnerability further induces violence against them and restricts their social well being and participation in better economic activities. As 71 per cent women are engaged in informal economy of country without recognition on national scenario and decent monetary incentives.
- It says that Pakistan’s position is relatively weak in contrast to other regional countries on account of public spending in health and education sectors that have resulted into lower performance on gender based indicators in these sectors. Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives recommends government to integrate gender equity perspective in health and education policies and to formulate national standards to reduce gender imbalance in policies and resource allocation.

[The News – February 14, 2011]

## Articles & Books on Gender

### Taxation and Women

Advocating a fair taxation system for socially disadvantaged women, a civil society activist and writer asks the state to provide relief to them. Speaking at the launching of her latest book on Taxation and Women at the South Asia Free Media Association’s (SAFMA) Media Centre on February 07, Dr Rakhshinda Parveen highlighted some of the agonies of women and asked the government to provide the much-needed relief in the taxation system to single and disabled women. Dr Parveen in the book’s introduction writes that the genesis of poverty, injustice, stigma, and gender-based violence are not deliberated here but they may ooze while I take readers along on my journey of weaving a dream. The 146-page book **‘A Tax Break for Economic Freedom? The case of Divorced Mothers, Divorced, Disabled and Never Married Pakistani Women — a Civic Entrepreneur’s Perspective’** was published in July 2010. She said that the purpose of her work was to inspire policy-makers to adopt a rational taxation system for divorced, disabled and unmarried women. She said that the empowerment of women would strengthen Pakistan’s economy and reduce poverty.

[The Express Tribune – February 08, 2011]

## HR Watch

### Women & HR

#### **8,000 Cases of Violence Against Women Reported in 2010**

A total of 8,000 incidents of violence against women were reported across the country in 2010, the '3rd Annual Statistics of Violence Against Women' report revealed on February 24. National Coordinator, Aurat Foundation, Rabea Hadi in a press conference here said that summary of the VAW report for 2010 presents a grim picture of the overall state of affairs regarding violence against women in the country.

#### **Out of a total 8,000 incidents, as many as 5,492 cases of violence were reported from the Punjab, 1,652 from Sindh; 650 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 79 from Balochistan and 127 from Islamabad.**

The report was based on the reported cases in a majority of newspapers of the country and no FIR was registered in a large number of incidents. Of the total incidents, 2,236 women were abducted; 1,436 women murdered and 557 killed in the name of 'honour killing', 928 women raped; 633 women committed suicide; 32 women made victim of acid attacks and 38 women the target of stove burning, the report said.

According to the statistics, in the year 2009, 13 per cent increase in the violence against women incidents was seen over the proceeding year in 2008, but the data analysis of 2010 reflects a decrease of 6 per cent over the proceeding year 2009. The decrease in figures is due to the fact that the recent natural catastrophe in the country not only damaged the main infrastructure of most of the flood-affected districts but also led to the loss of valuable official, judicial and crime records.

[The News – February 25, 2011]

#### **Violence against Women: 8,433 Cases Registered in Punjab in Two Years**

The Senate was informed on February 02 that over the past two years 8,433 cases of violence against women were registered in Punjab and a total of 11,798 all over the country. Minister of State for Interior Tasneem Qureshi said that 1,656 cases were registered in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 680 in Sindh, 333 in Balochistan, 362 in Azad Kashmir, 272 in Islamabad and 62 in Gilgit-Baltistan since January 2009. He said the quarters concerned had been directed to act firmly against gender-based violence and district police officers, superintendents of police and station house officers had been asked to take preventive measures. Mr Qureshi said proper investigation was carried out in such cases and the accused were arrested under Section 173 of the Criminal Procedure Code. He said special attention should be given to prosecute the cases for timely conclusion of trial.

[Dawn – February 03, 2011]

#### **MoHR Refers 1056 Cases of HR Violations to Provincial Department**

Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR) has referred 1056 cases of Human Rights (HR) violations to the provincial departments and their field offices for the redressal of grievances of victims during 2009 to 2010.

According to the data available with this scribe, among these cases seven were referred to Chief Minister's Secretariat Complain Cell, 16 to home department, 53 to Inspector General Police Punjab, 52 to Inspector General Prison, 237 to Capital City Police Officer, 418 to District Police Offices, 298 to Regional Police Officers and 27 to other departments.

As per mandate of the ministry, an official of the ministry said, one important function of the ministry is to coordinate with local human rights Non Government Organizations and facilitate them by developing strong linkages and synergising the efforts for pushing forward a national human rights agenda with consensus. In this regard, the ministry official informed, donors agencies such as United Nations

Development Program (UNDP) and United Nations Children Education's Fund (UNICEF) have been taken on board and the three small projects were initiated with their assistance.

The first project was 'Strengthening Human Rights System and Mechanism in Pakistan' (SHRSMP) which aimed to strengthen existed human rights mechanism. The project was executed with the assistance of United Nations Development Program to initiate pilot activities leading to the finalization of framework to support human rights institutions, systems and processes in the country. 'It supported capacity development, civic education and coordination, emphasizing inclusion engagement of relevant partners and stake holders to project human rights in line with Pakistan's national and international HR commitments' he said. Another project 'Human Rights-Based Protection of Children by Armed Conflict' with the objective of protecting children from violence, abuse, exploitation and other violation of child rights was also started. The project, launched with the help of United Nations Children Education's Fund was aimed to produce and manage the knowledge on the situation of children in conflict areas and to build capacity of the government and NGO partners on Child Rights, the Ministry of Human Rights official said.

[The News – February 15, 2011]

## Child Rights

### **Child Abuse: 12-Year-Old Dies after Being Beaten by Teacher with Stick**

A recently released post mortem report has proven that 12-year-old Shamim and her younger sister Sonia were severely beaten by their employer and teacher. Shamim died on the way to the Muzaffargarh hospital and doctors confirmed that she had suffered severe head trauma and other injuries. According to police officials, Lat Karan resident Nazar Hussain's daughters Shamim (12) and Sonia (7) worked at the house of a local seminary teacher Pinko Mai. "The woman taught them how to recite the Quran and they also did house hold chores for her to help our family with finances," Hussain told the police. Hussain, who is a daily wage labourer said that his daughters had been working for Musammat Pinko Mai for over three years and lived with her and her daughters in their house. Hussain said that he received a call from Pinko Mai afternoon telling him to come and collect his daughter. "They told me that Shamim had fainted and that I should come and take her. When I spoke to Sonia she was too scared to say anything so I headed for their house," Hussain said. He told the police that he went to the house only to find it locked. When I broke in Sonia was lying in a corner and they had propped Shamim on a chair but she wasn't moving and she was unconscious. Hussain said that Pinko Mai, her daughters Gogi and Rosie and her brother Fajid were all missing and they had locked up the house. "Both my daughters were injured. Sonia wasn't severely hurt but she had been beaten also," he said. Neighbours took the girls to the local DHQ hospital but doctors said that Shamim was dead on arrival. "The girl's skull had been split open and she probably died instantly," said DHQ Dr Naeem, adding that the other child, Sonia, had been given a tetanus injection for her injuries but was not in serious condition. "We have released the other child after an examination," he said. Sonia (7) later told the police that Pinko Mai had accused the girls of stealing her clothes. "We kept saying that we didn't do it but she started beating us with a stick," the girl told police officials. Sonia said that her older sister received a blow to the head and passed out in front of her. "I don't remember what happened after that and the woman escaped," she said. Muzaffargarh Police has registered a case against Mussamat Pinko, her brother Fajid and her daughters Gogi and Rosie.

[The Express Tribune – February 13, 2011]

### **Plan to Set-Up Child Rights Steering Committee**

To monitor the situation of child rights and ensure accountability of provincial agencies, the Children's Complaint Office (CCO) in Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat plans to establish Child Rights Steering Committee (CRSC) at provincial level. Head CCO Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi said that establishing these committees would be the one of the top most priorities of the CCO in the year 2011. "These committees will be the replica of Child Rights Steering Committee (CRSC) already working under Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat at federal level," he said. The CRSC at the federal level is responsible to asses Pakistan's progress on National Plan of Action (NPA) for Children and is headed by Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman).

It comprises senior officials from federal agencies responsible for child protection and executive directors of civil society organisations (CSOs) working on the child rights.

In 1990, Pakistan ratified the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), committing itself to protecting children's rights in Pakistan and holding itself accountable for this commitment before the international community. Under Article 44 of the UNCRC, it is obligatory upon ratifying states to submit periodic reports after every five years. Pakistan submitted its third and fourth report to the committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in December 2008. The report was reviewed by the CRC in its fifty-second session on September 28, 2009 and a report of its concluding observations on Pakistan's report was shared with Pakistan. The CRC regretfully noted that many of its concerns and recommendations made upon Pakistan's second periodic report had not been sufficiently implemented or implemented at all. The CRC stressed that Pakistan take necessary measures on harmonising laws with convention, improve coordination at the national and the local level and establish a monitoring mechanism. It also called upon the government to allocate resources for children, collect data and coordinate with the non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The CRC also expressed concern over the violation of children's rights that continue to occur such as violence against children, insufficient access to health and education and unnecessary detention of children in prison.

The preliminary research conducted by the Children's Complaint Office (CCO) established under Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat as a dedicated mechanism for receiving and resolving complaints from and about children, against mal administration in any federal agency and help Pakistan implement the UNCRC, indicates that a major factor that has contributed to the ineffective implementation of UNCRC and NPA was lack of coordination between the public sector agencies.

Keeping in mind all this background, the CCO decided to form the committee with two specific objectives i.e. to monitor Pakistan's compliance with UNCRC and review the progress made on NPA. More specifically, the organisations and departments in the committee will highlight child protection issues and possible measures to protect them and will look into matters relating to children in need of special care and protection. The body examines and observes the process and execution of laws governing the child welfare system and conduct a comprehensive review of all domestic legislation to ensure compliance with CRC and its provisions. It investigates non-implementation of laws for protection and development of children and recommends measures for their effective implementation.

The committee also works on raising awareness on child rights and promotes awareness of the safeguard available for protection of these rights through publications, media, seminar and other available means.

At provincial level, these committees will be formed under Children's Complaint Office (CCO) in the provincial ombudsman secretariat. "The Children's Complaint Office has already been established in all four provinces and AJK whereas the talks are underway to establish the CCO office in Fata," said Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi.

[The News – February 15, 2011]

## Blasphemy Law & Minorities Rights

### BLASPHEMY CASES – JAN–FEB 2011

Year	Source	Name	Accused of	No. Of Persons affected	Death
Feb 2011 issue	Newslines	Tehmina Durrani, ex-wife of Mustafa Khar and writer	Tehreek-Tahafuz-e-Tableegh-e-Islam accused her of committing blasphemy by writing a book long ago. <a href="http://www.newslinemagazine.com/2011/02/murder-they-wrote-banners-by-religious-groups-">http://www.newslinemagazine.com/2011/02/murder-they-wrote-banners-by-religious-groups-</a>	1	

			<a href="#">incite-violence/</a>		
27 Feb 11: Karachi	Express Tribune	Idrees Khan, Mentally Challenged	Allegedly setting leaves of the holy book on fire. Imam of a mosque suggested them to bury the leaves of the Holy Quran after setting them on fire.	1	
26 Feb 11: Multan	Dawn	Shahnawaz, activist of a banned outfit	Sent a blasphemous message using his friend's mobile phone to implicate his friend into a blasphemy case.	1	
26 Feb 11: Multan	Dawn	Muhammad Javed	His friend sent a blasphemous message using his mobile phone.	1	
24 Feb 11: Faisalabad	Pakistanchristianpost	Agnes Bibi	accused of blasphemy following a dispute over land	1	
21 Feb 11: Bhakkar, Multan	Dawn	Tanveer	disrespected the images of holy places and the footprint of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh).	1	
12 Feb 11: D.G. Khan	Dawn	35 Blasphemy cases in 2010 in D.G. Khan district alone.	Most of the cases are against Muslims. 13 in Muzaffargarh, 11 in Layyah, 8 in Rajanpur, and 3 in D.G. Khan		
09 feb 11: Multan	Dawn	Noor Khan being charged by his own brother for blasphemy	raising the slogans of 'Sada-i-Madina' when Maulvi Idrees and Noor Khan attacked them and uttered "blasphemous" words about the sacred personalities.	1	
7 feb 11: Rawalpindi	Dawn	Rival Muslim Sects blaming each other of committing blasphemy	Blasphemy - registration of a case against a Muslim sect under the blasphemy and anti-terrorism laws after a clash with their rival sect that resulted in death of two persons and injuring one.	3	3
07 feb 11: Okara	Dawn	Muslim	Blasphemy - Tying a shoe to a flag bearing a holy symbol	1	
3 Feb 11: Jalalpur Peerwala	Dawn	Muslim	Having a wooden slab hanging around his neck inscribed with blasphemous remarks against Sihaba	1	
31 Jan 11: Mansehra		Shahnawaz + 1	allegedly stolen copies of the holy Quran and buried them in the courtyard	2	
30 Jan 11: Karachi	Dawn	Syed Samiullah, 17 year old	made blasphemous remarks in answer sheets of physics and Islamic studies.	1	
26 Jan 11: Lahore	Website	Zahira	Accused of blasphemy by sister-in-law	1	
12-Jan-11	AFP	Mohammad Shafi (Imam of a mosque) & his son, Mohammad Aslam	Arrested in April last year for removing a poster advertising an Islamic event which allegedly contained Koranic verses	2	0
8 Jan 11: Lahore	Daily Times	Amjad, (mentally challenged), M. Nazir, & M. Iqbal	Desecration of the Holy Quran.	3	
7 Jan 11: Bahawalpur	Dawn	Muhammad Ishaq, practicing black magic	Burning of holy Quran for a black magic	1	
4 Jan 11: Islamabad		Salman Taseer, Governor	Blasphemy	1	1
Total				23	4

### **Awan advises against amending Blasphemy Law, pardoning Aasia**

Law Minister Babar Awan on February 07 strongly advised the prime minister to neither amend the blasphemy law nor pardon Aasia Bibi, arguing that the said law containing death penalty for a blasphemer, as interpreted by the Federal Shariat Court, is in consonance with the injunctions of Islam as laid down in Holy Quran and the Sunnah of Holy Prophet (SAW). In a detailed reference, reportedly sent to the prime minister on February 07, the minister also asked for the rejection of Sherry Rehman's bill seeking amendment in the blasphemy law. He also dispelled the impression that the blasphemy law targets a particular class of society, quoted precedents of several other countries where blasphemy laws do exist, and strongly recommended to the PM that the death penalty for blasphemy provided in section

295C of the PPC 1860 is well in accordance with the injunctions of Islam as laid down in the Holy Quran and Sunnah of Holy Prophet (SAW) and NEED NOT BE CHANGED OR AMENDED.

[The News – February 08, 2011]

### **Monitoring the Manifestoes –Political Commitments to Minorities**

In the third of a seven-part series, The Express Tribune looks at the promises political parties made to minorities in their manifestos.

#### **ADMINISTRATION**

**PPP:** Minorities will be given administrative control of their places of worship and a person belonging to a minority group will be made head of the Evacuee Trust Property Board.

**STATUS:** Control is retained by the Evacuee Trust Property Board, which is headed by the PPP's Syed Asif Hashmi. According to the ministry, an independent commission which will deal with the sale, transfer and issuance of no-objection certificates for Christian properties, has been constituted on PM Gilani's orders.

#### **ADDRESSING COMPLAINTS**

**PPP:** An independent permanent National Commission for Religious Minorities will be instituted, with the powers of tribunals which can entertain complaints and provide redress on urgent basis.

**PML-N:** A commission shall be set up to look into complaints of religious discrimination.

**STATUS:** The National Commission for Minorities is headed by the Federal Minister for Minorities Shahbaz Bhatti (who was assassinated after the publication of this article on March 2, 2011 in Islamabad). No independent commission for complaints has been set up.

#### **EMPLOYMENT**

**PPP:** To uplift and empower minorities, a job quota for minorities in the services of Pakistan, including the operational services like army, police, intelligence agencies, judiciary and foreign affairs will be allocated.

**MQM:** To provide representation to minorities at least five per cent reserve seats be year marked for them in legislative bodies.

**STATUS:** The government allocated a quota of five per cent of all federal jobs for minorities in 2009, which was also implemented by the Punjab and Sindh governments.

#### **EQUALITY AND SECURITY**

**MQM:** Religion should not obstruct the exercise of the inherent right of a citizen of Pakistan to participate in any matter; socio-economic and/or political. The religious minorities would be treated as equal citizens of Pakistan and be given state protection for their lives, property and freedom to practice their religion freely.

**PML-N:** Minorities shall be integrated in the mainstream of national development through active participation at different levels.

**ANP:** No discrimination of any kind based on race, creed or gender. Every citizen of Pakistan shall have equal rights in the political, economic and social fields. The essence of security will be guaranteed among the religious and ethnic minorities.

**JUI-F:** Minorities will be entitled to the religious freedom, citizens' rights and right to justice that have been prescribed by Islam.

**STATUS:** In the past three years, minorities have faced the brunt of targeted attacks and discrimination. Key incidents include the Gojra riots targeting Christians (July 2009), attacks on Ahmedi places of worship (May 2010), discrimination in providing flood relief to Ahmedis (August 2010), kidnappings of Hindus in Balochistan (December 2010) and threats against the Sikh community in Orakzai Agency (2008).

#### **DISCRIMINATORY LAWS**

**PPP:** The statutes that discriminate against religious minorities, and are sources of communal disharmony, will be reviewed.

**MQM:** All discriminatory laws against women and religious minorities would be repealed.

**ANP:** Every citizen shall have the right to hold any public office and all discriminatory laws shall be repealed.

**STATUS:** While human rights activists say the laws about Ahmedis and blasphemy offences are discriminatory, political parties have not moved to amend them. The Council of Islamic Ideology reviewed and suggested amendments in the blasphemy laws. A private member bill proposing amendments in the laws was submitted in the National Assembly by MNA Sherry Rehman and disavowed by the PPP, while the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa provincial assembly passed a resolution asking the federal government to not amend or repeal the blasphemy laws.

Punjab Governor Salmaan Taseer was assassinated on January 4 by Malik Mumtaz Hussain Qadri, an Elite Force guard. Qadri said he killed Taseer for his opposition to the blasphemy law. Religious-political parties have actively campaigned to prevent any amendment in the blasphemy laws. Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani has repeatedly declared that the government will not amend the laws.

[The Express tribune – February 23, 2011]

### **Conflict Watch**

#### **282 Violent Incidents Recorded in Three Months**

The last quarter of 2010 claimed 3648 lives in Pakistan, Afghanistan and India in incidents of anti-state militancy. Over one thousand among these casualties were innocent civilians. The report says that a total of 1186 people were killed in Pakistan during the period and more than one thousand others wounded out of which, 314 were the victims of 52 drone attacks, which constitutes over one fourth (26.48 %) of the total casualties in armed conflicts in Pakistan. The CMC, an Islamabad based independent research center, in its quarterly report has compared the anti-state militancy reports of Pakistan, Afghanistan and India after collecting data from mainstream national and international media. The centre has mentioned that during the period at least 1139 incidents of anti-state violence were reported in the three countries killing at least 3648 and injuring 2429 peoples. Out of these 1139 incidents, 522 were reported in Afghanistan, 335 in India and 282 in Pakistan. The report says that it shows that in Afghanistan every suicide attack killed only two persons while in Pakistan every suicide attack killed 22 persons. December was the deadliest for the people of Pakistan when 484 people were killed in 109 incidents of anti-state violence in the country.

[The News – February 02, 2011]

## Governance Watch

### Political Governance

#### Federal & Provincial Governments

##### **Shrunked Federal Cabinet**

Prime Minister inducted his new cabinet on Friday of 21 ministers and one minister of State. Five new faces were introduced. Eighteen of the ministers are from the Pakistan People's Party and the remaining four from three coalition partners and a group of FATA parliamentarians. The Prime Minister has described the move as implementation of a provision of the 18th Amendment requiring the cabinet size not to exceed 11 per cent of the total strength of the two houses of parliament.

The foreign affairs portfolio remains vacant — not cited among eight ministries which will remain with the Prime Minister for the time being — although Ms Hina Rabbani Khar, who was minister of state in the previous cabinet, was named minister of state for foreign affairs in the new team. Other important erstwhile ministers omitted from the new team beside Shah Mehmood Qureshi include Raja Pervez Ashraf (Water and Power), Qamar Zaman Kaira (Information and Broadcasting) and Nazar Mohammad Gondal (Food and Agriculture). Most of the PPP ministers retained their previous portfolios.

Those who retained their portfolios are:

- Makhdoom Amin Fahim (Commerce)
- Abdul Hafeez Sheikh (Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs)
- Rehman Malik (Interior)
- Khurshid Ahmed Shah (Religious Affairs)
- Chaudhry Ahmed Mukhtar (Defence)
- Zaheeruddin Babar Awan (Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs)
- Mian Manzoor Ahmed Wattoo (Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs)
- Shahbaz Bhatti (Minorities)
- Ghulam Ahmed Bilour (Railways)

The PPP ministers whose portfolios have been changed are:

- Syed Naveed Qamar (Privatisation instead of Petroleum and Natural Resources)
- Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan (Information and Broadcasting instead of Women Development)
- Ms Samina Khalid Ghurki (Environment instead of Social Welfare and Special Education)
- Makhdoom Shahabuddin (Textile instead of Health which has been devolved to the provinces under the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment)

Besides Senator Rabbani, the new ministers include:

Mir Changez Jamali (Science and Technology)  
Sardar Mohammad Umar Gorage (Postal Services)  
Khuda Bakhsh Rajar (Narcotics Control)  
Eng Shaukatullah (States and Frontier Regions)  
Senator Raza Rabbani Senator Rabbani (Inter Provincial Coordination)

PM has decided to keep with him are Petroleum and Natural Resources, Water and Power, Human Rights, Information Technology and Telecommunication, Defence Production, Overseas Pakistanis, Ports and Shipping, and Housing and Works. Eighteen of these 21 federal ministers were part of the previous cabinet. Seventeen of the ministers belong to the ruling PPP, while one each from the ANP, FATA, BNP-Awami and PML-F. Eight ministers are from Punjab, seven from Sindh, three from Balochistan, two from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and one from FATA. Detailed list of the members of the federal cabinet is available on [www.na.gov.pk](http://www.na.gov.pk)

[Dawn & Pakistan Today – February 12, 2011]

### **PML-N Parts Ways with PPP in Punjab**

Pakistan's opposition leader Nawaz Sharif Friday expelled the nationally ruling Pakistan People's Party from the Punjab provincial government, where it has been in coalition with his own party.

The PML-N Chief Nawaz Sharif said that the decision had been taken after the parliamentary meeting, where senior party leader Ishaq Dar briefed party members on the 45 day deadline and the developments during the period. He added that Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif will soon form a new cabinet. Sharif told a news conference that he made the move because of the central government's "failure" to end corruption and improve the economy. Sharif said that this was a dangerous turn and his party had tried to avoid it. He said that the party had followed the path of reconciliation for the sake of democracy but there was no result.

[The Express Tribune – February 25, 2011]

### **Pir Karam Takes Oath as New GB Governor**

Former deputy chief executive of Gilgit and a veteran politician belonging to Pakistan People's Party, Pir Karam Ali Shah has sworn-in as new Governor of Gilgit Baltistan, report said on February 01. Chief Judge of Appellate Court Gilgit Baltistan Justice Muhammad Nawaz Abbasi administered the oath to the new Governor. Speaker and Deputy Speaker of National Assembly have congratulated Pir Karam Ali for his appointment as a Governor.

[The News – February 02, 2011]

### **Plan for Transfer of Ministries to Provinces Approved**

The Implementation Commission has given approval to finalization of the process for transfer of assets and five ministries to provinces. The in-house meeting of the Implementation Commission was held on January 31 under its chairman Mian Raza Rabbani. The meeting was attended by provincial secretaries of the devolved ministries and senior officials of the Finance Ministry, Cabinet Division and the Establishment Division. According to sources, it was in-house meeting in which senior officials of provincial and federal governments briefed the participants on the process of transfer of ministries to provinces.

The deadline of February 28 has been set for devolution of five ministries — social welfare and special education, education, livestock and dairy development and culture and tourism — to the provinces as per 18th Amendment. Sources said during the in-house meeting, the mechanism for transferring employees of the ministries were also discussed in detail and decided that the procedure of the previous devolution process should be adopted. They said that the government had started the process to implement 18th Amendment and 12 advisers to the Sindh chief minister have been removed from their posts. In the same line, Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani has decided in principle to remove 15 ministers of state out of 18.

[The News – February 02, 2011]

### **CBFC Department another Gray Area in Devolution Plan**

The Implementation Commission is facing a lot of problems in the devolution of some of the subjects to provinces under the 18th Amendment and central board of films censorship (CBFC) department working as an autonomous organ of ministry of culture is one such gray areas. Sources in the ministry of culture

informed The Nation that efforts were underway to keep the central board of films censorship intact as an autonomous department like higher education commission and national volunteers' movement, and it should also be placed under the control of the cabinet division. The abolition of Concurrent List from the constitution following the passage of the 18th Constitutional Amendment led to the devolution of some 44 out of 47 subjects to the provinces and the implementation commission was facilitating the whole exercise but in it was facing a lot of difficulties while dealing with some of the autonomous departments dealing the things at the federal level.

It was the international obligation of some of the allied departments of ministry of health and for that its devolution was deferred for the time being and now it would be placed in the third and final phase of devolution process to be completed by the end of June. The sources in the implementation commission informed The Nation that the difficulties in the devolution process were now surfacing at the execution stage as some of the allied departments of the ministries were having international obligations while the others' devolution was not feasible due to inconvenience and problems associated with their handing over to the provinces. It was due to the impracticability of the devolution of certain departments associated with various ministries that it was decided that some departments like higher education commission and national volunteers movement would not be handed over to the provinces and these should be kept with the cabinet division.

[The Nation – February 08, 2011]

## **Legislative Business**

### **Bills Passed by the National Assembly**

Following Bills were passed by the National Assembly during the month of February:

1. February 1, 2011 – The Privatization Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2010
2. February 2, 2011 – The Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority Act, 2010
3. February 21, 2011 – The National Defence University Act, 2009
4. February 24, 2011 – The Banking Companies (Amendment) Act, 2010
5. February 24, 2011 – The Federal Board of Revenue (Amendment) Act, 2010

### **Private Members Bills Laid**

Following private member bill was introduced during the month of February in National Assembly:

1. February 22, 2011 -- The Civil Servants (Amendment) Act, 2011

Detailed bills are available on the website of National Assembly i.e., [www.na.gov.pk](http://www.na.gov.pk). Brief on some of the news is as under:

### **Privatization Commission Bill 2009 Approved**

The National Assembly on February 01 unanimously adopted the Privatization Commission (Amendment) Bill 2009. Dr Doniya Aziz of the PML-Q said that the bill, which proposes an increase in the number of the members of the Privatization Commission from 16 to 20, would help bring more transparency and accountability in the privatization process. She was of the view that two MNAs and two senators each from the treasury and opposition benches should be incorporated in the commission. PML-Q's MNA Dr Attiya Inayatullah noted that it was the fifth consecutive private members' day with the minister not attending the House proceedings badly affecting the legislation process. The bill, Amendment to the Rule and Procedure of Conduct of Business 2007, moved by MNA Anusha Rehman was referred to the committee concerned.

[Daily Times – February 02, 2011]

### **NA passes FBR, Banking Companies (Amend) Bills 2010**

The National Assembly unanimously passed The Federal Board of Revenue (Amendment) Bill, 2010' and 'The Banking Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2010. Newly inducted in the cabinet, Federal Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination Mian Raza Rabbani moved both the Bills, which were later on unanimously passed by the House without any amendment.

According to "**The Federal Board of Revenue (Amendment) Bill, 2010**" a Policy Board including the representation of public and private sector would be established to provide guidance in matters relating to the vision, mission and values of the board and guidelines in formulating fiscal policy and in achieving goals and targets. Finance Minister would be the Chairman of the Board. While the Board shall consist of members including Minister of Commerce, Minister of Industries, Minister of Textile Industry, Minister of Privatisation, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenues, Chairman National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance and Revenues, Chairman of FBR, one member from the Senate will be nominated by Chairman Senate, one member from the National Assembly to be nominated by Speaker National Assembly and such other members as the Prime Minister shall nominate having necessary qualifications, experience and expertise from amongst sectoral specialists and businessmen on honorary basis. The Bill further says that the Chairman of FBR shall act as Secretary of the Policy Board and at least one meeting of the Board shall be held in each quarter of a financial year. The nominated members other than ex officio members shall be subject to ratification by the Standing Committees on Finance and Revenue of the Senate and National Assembly.

According to Statement of objects and reasons of **The Banking Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2010**, the proposed amendments in Banking Companies Ordinance, 1962 would enable State Bank of Pakistan to change management in banks, impose losses on shareholders by writing down their capital, intervene and take control of banks, appoint administrators to manage banks and restructure banks when symptoms of crises are determined. 'The Banking Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2010 further stated that if the State Bank has determined that a person is holding or is a beneficial owner of 5% or more shares of a banking company without prior approval of the State Bank or a person that acquired shareholding with prior approval of the State Bank subsequently fails to meet the fit-and-proper test as the State Bank may, by an order in writing stating reasons, require such person to reduce, divest or transfer to a fit-and-proper person — his shareholding in the banking company within such reasonable period and in such manner as may be specified in the order. It further added that if person holding five percent or more shares of a banking company is 'or is likely to be detrimental to the interest of the banking company or its depositors, the State Bank may, by an order in writing stating reasons, require such person to divest his shareholding to a fit-and-proper person. State Bank shall exercise the power reasonably, fairly and justly. Certain bill further maintained that if the State Bank is of opinion that any delay would be detrimental to the public interest or the interest of the banking company or its depositors, the State Bank may, at the time of giving the opportunity aforesaid or at any time thereafter and pending the consideration of the representation aforesaid, if any, may make an appropriate interim order, and conduct the proceedings in a reasonably expeditious manner. No order shall be made unless the banking company concerned has been given an opportunity of making a representation to the State Bank and where the State Bank is of the opinion that any delay would be detrimental to the public interest or the interest of the banking company or its depositors, the State Bank may, at the time of giving the opportunity aforesaid or' at any time thereafter and pending the consideration of the representation aforesaid, if any, make an appropriate interim order. State Bank shall provide an opportunity of being heard to the banking company or aggrieved person before making the order and if the State Bank is of the opinion that any delay would be detrimental to the public interest or the interest of the banking company or its depositors, the State Bank may, at the time of giving the opportunity aforesaid or at any time thereafter and pending the consideration of the representation aforesaid, if any, make an appropriate interim order.

[Daily Times – February 25, 2011]

## **ECP & Election Related News**

### **Electoral Rolls: New Lists Illustrate Possible Prior Anomalies**

According to sources within the Election Commission of Pakistan the computerization process of the rolls has revealed several anomalies which cast doubt on the integrity of voter lists used in previous elections. According to the sources, the new electoral rolls will contain over 83 million names. This list is based on the biometric database of every person who currently holds a computerized national identity card (CNIC), maintained by the National Database & Registration Authority (NADRA). A bill currently under consideration in Parliament would make a CNIC the only acceptable form of identification for voting. **The** bill is expected to pass before May 01, when the process of the compilation of the new lists is expected to be completed. At that point, the Election Commission of Pakistan will kick off a door-to-door registration and verification drive to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the lists.

[The Express Tribune – February 07, 2011]

### **Parties Agree to Raise Poll Spending Limits**

The two major political parties of the country, the PPP and PML-N, skipped a consultative meeting convened by the Election Commission on February 22 to discuss key issues, including application of Article 62 of the Constitution that spells out eligibility criteria for lawmakers. In all, 15 political parties had been invited to attend the session, but a representative of JUI-S turned up uninvited. Representatives of all the parties agreed that the limit on election expenditure should be enhanced to Rs5 million from Rs1.5 million for every National Assembly seat and to Rs 3 million from Rs1 million for each provincial assembly seat. A majority of the participants was of the view that security deposit submitted with nomination papers should be increased from Rs4,000 to Rs20,000 for a National Assembly seat and from Rs2,000 to Rs10,000 for a provincial assembly seat. It was also proposed that Rs100,000 should be fixed as security deposit for “non-serious” independent candidates.

The representatives of political parties stressed the need for implementing Article 62 of the Constitution, but observed that the disqualification clause needed to be simplified. The participants also endorsed the proposal for allocation of permanent election symbols to the political parties.

[Dawn – February 23, 2011]

## **Judiciary Updates**

### **JC Defers Appointment of Ad Hoc Judges, Six SHC Additional Judges Get Extension**

The Judicial Commission deferred the issue of appointment of ad hoc judges in the Supreme Court and recommended one-year further extension to six additional judges of the Sindh High Court. The Commission, which met with Chief Justice of Pakistan Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry in the chair, deferred the matter of re-appointment of Former Justice Khalil-ur-Rehman Ramday as an ad hoc judge for further one year and that of Former Justice Rehmat Hussain Jafferri for two years.

The re-appointment issue unlike the previous unanimous decisions, could not be sorted out due to difference of opinion among the members, especially the opposition of Dr Khalid Ranjha, representative of top lawyers' body, Pakistan Bar Council. Earlier, speaking to newsmen, Dr Ranjha had said that both the Pakistan Bar Council and the Supreme Court Bar Association had already opposed ad-hocism in the judiciary.

Justice Khalil-ur-Rehman Ramday retired on February 17 after serving as ad hoc judge for one year while Justice Rehmat Hussain Jafferri had retired last year. On February 14, a full court meeting passed a resolution seeking re-appointment of Justice Ramday and Justice Jafferri, as ad hoc judges under Article 182 of the Constitution for one and two years respectively. The resolution drew flank from the lawyers bodies, including Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) and Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA). SCBA President Asma Jahangir and PBC Vice President Latif Afridi in their meeting with the Chief Justice of Pakistan on Friday, expressed their reservations over the resolution.

The Commission also took up the extension issue of nine additional judges of the Sindh High Court (SHC). It granted one-year extension to only six judges, including Justice Imam Bux Baloch, Justice Nisar Muhammad Sheikh, Justice Muhammad Tasneem, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Salman Hamid and Justice Muhammad Mazhar. However, Justice Abdul Hadi Khoso, Justice Zahid Hamid and Justice Zakir Hussain were not given extension.

[Business Recorder – February 19, 2011]

## Economic Governance

### Facts & Figures on Economy

#### **Debt Policy Statement 2010-11**

Debt Policy Statement 2010-11 issued February 01 warned the government that unless corrective measures on the fiscal and external fronts are adopted and properly implemented, the debt situation of Pakistan may remain vulnerable in the near-term. Thus, implementing structural reforms that boost potential growth is a key to ensure debt sustainability. Debt reduction to sustainable levels cannot be achieved without persistent economic growth. The slowdown in growth is a major consequence of rising debt burden and simultaneously adversely impacts the debt servicing capacity of the economy. The statement mentioned real growth of the public debt increased from 4.9 percent of the GDP in fiscal year 2009 to 5.9 percent of the GDP in fiscal year 2010, against which growth in revenues amounted to 2 percent. Real growth in non-interest expenditures increased from minus 12.1 percent to 13.5 percent and real growth of GDP have been recorded at 4.1 percent in 2010 against 1.2 percent in 2009-10. Public Debt to GDP ratio has increased from 59.9 percent of the GDP in 2009 to 60.60 percent of the GDP in 2010.

The Debt Policy Statement issued by the Debt Management wing of the Ministry of Finance remarks that Pakistan's debt dynamics have witnessed a gradual deterioration since FY2007-08. Increased pressure on government's limited fiscal resources from internal security situation, rehabilitation of IDPs, power and food subsidies to insulate the general masses from rise in international commodities have resulted in increased debt burden. The total public debt stood at Rs 8,894 billion as of end June 2010 or 60.6 percent of GDP, an increase of 16.6 percent over the last fiscal year. Total public debt levels around 3.5 times and debt servicing below 30 percent of government revenue are generally believed to be within the bounds of sustainability. Total public debt in terms of revenues has increased to 4.3 times during 2009-10, as opposed to 4.1 times in the previous fiscal year whereas the debt serving to revenue has declined to 40.4 percent in 2009-10 from 46.6 percent in 2008-09. Pakistan's external debt and debt servicing in terms of foreign exchange earnings stood at 1.46 times and 14.8 percent during 2009-10 compared to 1.48 times and 13.4 percent respectively in 2008-09.

[Daily Times – February 02, 2011]

#### **Current Account Records \$81m Deficit**

The current account deficit stood at \$81 million in the first seven months of the current fiscal year, as compared to a massive deficit of \$3.05 billion during the same period in the previous year, according to data released by the State Bank of Pakistan. The current account deficit during the month of January was recorded at \$62 million. This stands in sharp contrast to the surplus recorded in the month of December, which amounted to \$570 million. "The widening of the deficit is mainly attributable to a slowdown in remittances during the month of January compared with the previous month,". The services account "recorded a helpful gain because of the receipt of money from the Coalition Support Fund in December." The data revealed that the country's exports fell by about three per cent in January, compared with December, however, imports saw a steeper decline of 11 per cent during the same period. Analysts commented that in the previous fiscal year, surging prices of oil and other commodities that were imported caused a vast deficit in the current account. Much of the import growth has been stalled in the current fiscal year due to lower prices as well as subdued demand in the wake of the recent deluge. "On

the other hand, remittances had been increasing by about 20 per cent per month over the last few months and a slowdown on that front can be an irritant to the current account balance,”

[The Express Tribune – February 19, 2011]

### **‘PIA Suffered Rs 32bn Loss due to Rupee Devaluation’**

The National Assembly was informed on February 02 that the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has suffered a Rs 32 billion loss due to the devaluation of the Pakistan rupee against the US dollar in the last two years. To a question, Federal Minister for Defence, Chaudhry Ahmad Mukhtar told the NA that the PIA had suffered a Rs 32 billion loss due to the rupee’s devaluation alone, while other losses of the airline were caused by additional factors. He added that an inquiry had been ordered against those PIA employees who had been receiving double salaries from the organization. The minister said that in order to make the national airline a profit-earning entity, a PIA business plan had been approved by its board of directors. He stated that measures have been suggested for revenue enhancement as well as route rationalization in a way that would ensure optimal utilisation of resources. Mukhtar added that a study had been conducted for laying the groundwork of the PIA business plan and to identify causes for the airline’s losses. To another question, he said that currently PIA was operating on 40 routes to European countries which would increase to 140 after signing an agreement with the Turkish Airlines. Talking about the aircraft Boeing 777, Mukhtar said the aircrafts were not only fuel-efficient but were also suitable for long-distance journeys.

[Daily Times – February 03, 2011]

### **Pakistan’s Forex Reserves Rise to Record \$17.38 bln**

The central bank said on February 03 that Pakistan’s foreign exchange reserves rose to a record \$17.38 billion in the week ending Jan. 29, up from \$17.30 billion the previous week. SBP said that reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) rose to \$13.85 billion from \$13.74 billion in the week ending Jan. 29, while those held by commercial banks fell to \$3.53 billion from \$3.56 billion. Analysts said that the rise was due to a rise in remittances from overseas Pakistanis. According to official data, remittances rose 17 percent to \$5.3 billion in the first six months of the fiscal year 2010/11 (July-June). Pakistan’s foreign exchange reserves were boosted last month by more than \$633 million from the US for providing military and logistical support to fight Islamist militancy. In May, Pakistan received \$1.13 billion – the fifth tranche of an \$11 billion International Monetary Fund bailout programme.

[Dawn – February 03, 2011]

### **Remittances Rise 17.7% to \$6.118bn in July-Jan 2010-11**

Remittances sent home by overseas Pakistanis continued to show a rising trend as an amount of \$6,118 million (\$6.118 billion) was received in the first seven months (July-January) of the current fiscal year 2010-11, showing an increase of \$919.92 million or 17.7 percent when compared with \$5,198.08 million received over the same period of the last fiscal year. The inflow of remittances in the July-January, 2011 period from UAE, Saudi Arabia, USA, GCC countries (including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman), UK and EU countries amounted to \$1,437.05 million, \$1,353.40 million, \$1,145.71 million, \$721.47 million, \$669.70 million and \$195.66 million respectively as compared to \$1,180.24 million, \$999.41 million, \$1,061.89 million, \$737.72 million, \$550.35 million and \$157.93 million respectively in the July-January, 2010 period.

Remittances received from Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan and other countries during the first seven months of the current fiscal year amounted to \$594.98 million against \$509.55 million in the same period last year. The monthly average remittances for the July-January 2011 period were \$874.00 million as compared to \$742.58 million during the same corresponding period of the last fiscal year, registering an increase of 17.70 percent.

In January 2011, an amount of \$826.57 million was sent home by overseas Pakistanis, up 23.76 percent or \$158.67 million, when compared with \$667.90 million received in the same month last year. During the last month i.e. January 2011, remittances from Saudi Arabia, UAE, USA, GCC countries (including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman), UK and EU countries amounted to \$209.58 million, \$181.40 million, \$148.03 million, \$95.18 million, \$92.53 million and \$23.56 million respectively as compared to \$153.50 million, \$158.33 million, \$123.49 million, \$95.27 million, \$67.56 million and \$15.14 million in January

2010. Remittances received from Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan and other countries during January 2011 amounted to \$76.29 million compared with \$54.61 million in the same month last year. It may be pointed out that the State Bank, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis had undertaken a joint initiative called 'Pakistan Remittance Initiative (PRI)' with a view to facilitating the flow of remittances through formal channels. This initiative has started to materialise and remittances through formal channels are showing considerable growth.

[Daily Times – February 11, 2011]

### **State of the Economy: SBP Revises Inflation Forecast to 16%**

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) chided the government for excessive budgetary borrowing, particularly from the central bank because it is increasing overall demand and also diluting the effect of the measures to contain inflation, while revising its inflation estimate for the current fiscal year from 13.5-14.5 per cent to between 15 and 16 per cent. The estimate, contained in the central bank's State of the Economy report for the first quarter of the current fiscal, was released on February 02. High government expenses financed through borrowing from the central bank, a proposed reduction in energy subsidies and rising international prices of commodities have been cited as the reasons behind the higher rate of expected inflation. The report highlighted that all indices used for measuring price levels in the economy have registered increases in recent months. Headline consumer price index (CPI) rose to a 17-month high of 15.7 per cent in September, adding that inflation measured by wholesale price index (WPI) and sensitive price index (SPI) also surged during the first four months of FY11. Major contributors to rising inflationary pressures in recent months include supply shortages of many perishable food commodities in the wake of recent floods, higher food and fuel prices and the reduction in energy subsidies.

Growth of gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to remain between two and three per cent in the current fiscal. However this, too, appears largely dependent on the upcoming wheat harvest. The report also highlighted that of the total sown area of 9.7 million hectares, where Kharif crops were planted; 2.4 million hectares had been damaged by heavy rains and floods.

[The Express Tribune – February 03, 2011]

### **PSDP 2011-12 Budget Set at Rs 385 billion**

The size of the Public Sector Development Programme is likely to be set at Rs 385 billion for upcoming fiscal year, 2011-12, with top priority accorded to infrastructure development with an allocation of Rs 205 billion. The Planning Commission had submitted a PSDP brief, 2011-2-14, to the Senate Standing Committee on Finance, in which it had been mentioned that the size of the federal PSDP was to be set at Rs 385 billion, and out of the amount, Rs 205 billion would be utilised for infrastructure development. It has been mentioned that with the improvement in finances, the government would increase the size of PSDP in 2012-13, and would allocate Rs 465 billion for development. Out of which, Rs 260 billion would be allocated for the infrastructure development. Similarly, in the fiscal year 2013-14, PSDP size would further be enhanced to Rs 591 billion and some Rs 339 billion would be utilised for infrastructure development. It is pertinent to mention that in the wake of the last year's devastating floods and the country's critical financial position, the government had decided to bring down the PSDP 2010-11 by 46 per cent to Rs 150 billion from Rs 280 billion. The reduction in the size of the development budget was said to be caused by the frail financial condition of the country, particularly after the floods. Though the country has long been facing financial constraints, the situation had worsened after the recent floods, the sources added. Such a huge reduction in the size of PSDP would badly affect the development process. The development spending of the government has a multiplier effects and a Rs 1 spending generates Rs 4 economic activity. A cut in the development budget would badly affect the ongoing development projects in water and power, transport and communications, health, education and other schemes of national importance, an official at the Planning Commission explained.

[Daily Times – February 23, 2011]

### **FBR Considers More Taxes to Prop-Up Faltering Economy**

As the country continues to slide deeper into economic crisis, top economic managers are contemplating levying more taxes to bridge a burgeoning gap between income and spending, said a top official of the

tax machinery. "The country is in fiscal emergency-like situation...and the government has decided to raise the revenue collection target to Rs1.63 trillion with some new tax measures," said Member Inland Revenue Service of the Federal Board of Revenue.

According to the finance ministry's latest projection, without taking corrective measures the budget deficit by the end of June could slip to eight per cent of the total size of economy or Rs1.37 trillion. Its plan to levy reformed general sales tax, flood surcharge at the rate of 10 per cent of payable tax and double the rate of special excise duty has met with opposition from all quarters. The FBR official admitted that the tax reforms initiated in 2005 were lagging behind targets, thanks to disintegration in FBR and its allied programmes. "Despite spending over Rs6 billion on tax reforms, the key objective of automation could not be achieved. The automation failure is becoming a major bottleneck in broadening the tax base, as there is a gap of one million between active taxpayers and National Tax Number holders, he said. In a country of 180 million, there are less than 3.5 million NTN holders. He also acknowledged that FBR was also facing data authenticity problem, as there was a mismatch between the data collected by Pakistan Revenue Automation Limited – an FBR subsidiary, and through other programmes. Butt said FBR's own data bank would be ready by September end.

[The Express Tribune – February 19, 2011]

### **FBR Wants Flood Tax to be Raised by 50 pc**

Chairman FBR Salman Siddique on February 23 asked parliament to raise the flood surcharge from 10 to 15 percent and generate another Rs26 billion for the national kitty, He also asked them to increase the special excise duty from 1 percent to 2.5 percent from April 1, 2011 to meet the upward revised target of Rs 1,630 billion. The proposed measures, if approved by parliament, can generate revenues to the tune of Rs26 billion in the last quarter (April-June period) that would help stretch the annual FBR's target from Rs1,604 billion to Rs1,630 billion for 2010-11. Chairman FBR Salman Siddique was speaking to the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue, which met with Senator Ahmed Ali in the chair here at the Parliament House on Wednesday. In the aftermath of government's failure to muster political support for its economic reform agenda, the fiscal framework requires additional revenue measures without wasting any time or the fiscal deficit could go beyond expectations and result into fuelling unbridled inflationary pressures. "The fiscal framework requires jacking up the revenue target from Rs1,160 billion to Rs1,630 billion for the current fiscal year and we will propose introducing a legislation into parliament in this regard. These proposed additional revenue measures could yield Rs26 to Rs27 billion in the last three months (April-June) period of the ongoing financial year," the chairman FBR further said. The FBR, he said, collected Rs777.8 billion in July-Jan period so far in 2010-11 against the set target of Rs770 billion. The repayment of refunds/rebates stood at Rs59 billion in the first seven months of the current fiscal against Rs46.5 billion in the same period of the last financial year, showing a growth in refunds payment by 27 percent. On broadening of the tax base, the FBR chief informed the committee that tax authorities would target potential taxpayers who owned houses, foreign bank accounts and vehicles in their own names to bring them within the documented regime with the help of the database of National and Database Registration Authority (NADRA). The data, he said, was obtained on the basis of the Computerized National Identity Card Numbers (CNICs) and the FBR would link up the data with the Nadra database and action would be launched against the potential tax evaders. The FBR has identified over 0.7 million potential tax dodgers based on their profiles available with the NADRA. But Vice President of FPCCI Khalid Tawab rejected the FBR's proposal to further burden those who were already in the tax net. He said he had asked the government to bring those into the tax net who were quite influential but remained outside of the tax net.

[The News – February 24, 2011]

## **Local Governance**

### **PPP, MQM Agree on Magistracy System**

Pakistan People's Party and Muttahida Qaumi Movement have agreed on revival of magistracy system in Sindh province. The two parities reached the consensus in a meeting held at Chief Minister House on February 06. The PPP was represented by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah and provincial ministers Pir Mazharul Haq and Muhammad Ayaz Soomro while Deputy Convener of the MQM

Coordination Committee Dr Farooq Sattar and provincial minister Sardar Ahmed represented MQM. According to the sources, important and decisive dialogue took place between the coalition parties about the revival of the magistrate system. MQM insisted its point of view that the powers should be given in magistrate system to elected representatives and local body officers instead of concentrating them in a single person's hands. The local body officers can effectively use these powers in checking overpricing. The meeting agreed that Syed Sardar Ahmed will prepare a consensus summary in coordination with law minister Muhammad Ayaz Soomro and Secretary Law that will be presented to Chief Minister Sindh who will approve it and send it to the federal government. Syed Sardar Ahmed told journalists that the two parties have reached a consensus on revival of magistrate system under the Sindh Local Bodies Ordinance.

[The Express Tribune, February 07, 2011]

### **Legal Side 'Overlooked': LG Posts Abolition Notified in Haste**

The Punjab finance department has hastily notified abolition of several posts in district governments, besides downgrading those of the DCOs of five big cities, without having amended the Punjab Local Government Ordinance-2001, committing, what legal experts say, a blunder. The department, however, withdrew abolition of three posts late in the afternoon after objections were raised by different official quarters, averting at least the worst legal crisis that could have otherwise been created in the revenue administration's 160-year history. The decision to abolish these posts and downgrade those of the DCOs in big cities was taken by the chief minister on the recommendation of a cabinet sub-committee. But, to implement the decision it was required to amend the Local Government Ordinance because these posts were created under it.

According to a notification issued, the finance department abolished 234 posts in the district government including executive district officers (EDOs) of information technology, literacy, revenue and law and deputy district officers (DDOs) of registration, revenue (staff), coordination (staff), roads and buildings. It downgraded posts of DCOs of five city district governments, including Lahore, from BS-21 to BS-20. The posts are specifically mentioned for BS-21 officers in the Local Government Ordinance-2001. Official sources said since these posts were created under the ordinance, the notification of their abolition by the finance department without introducing amendments to the relevant law created a stir in the circles concerned. According to the sources, many officers contacted the authorities concerned to get the folly corrected. The opinion was noted, but the finance department withdrew the abolition of only three posts of EDOs – IT, revenue and literacy. They said the withdrawal of the notification regarding the abolition of EDO revenue post had averted a legal chaos in revenue administration dating back to around 1849, much earlier than the introduction of the Civil Procedure Code that was promulgated in 1901. The EDO revenue post, under the 2001 ordinance, carries the land revenue appellate authority which was held by the divisional commissioners before the introduction of the local government system. Its abolition without transferring the authority to some other office through legal means would have left those involved in land revenue litigation in the lurch.

Meanwhile, it was learnt the finance department had also downgraded the posts of divisional commissioners of Sargodha, Sahiwal, Bahawalpur and Dera Ghazi Khan. Officials said this did not require any amendment to any law because the post of the present day commissioner was created through an executive order and it had no legal powers, including those of appellate authority in revenue matters. The other abolished posts notified by the finance department include CMIT members (two), P&D member and joint chief economist (one each), secretaries of the abolished tourism, sports, information technology and inter-provincial coordination departments, special secretary to the chief minister, special secretaries of the agriculture marketing, communications and works, health, information, irrigation and housing departments. The list of abolished police posts in the notification include three posts of additional IGs, nine of DIGs, one of SSP (survey) special branch, seven of SSPs and 69 of DSPs. Four posts of consultants and one each of a deputy secretary and section officer in the ombudsman's office are also included in the list.

[Dawn – February 24, 2011]



## Regional Politics & Election Watch

### Pakistan's Foreign Relations

#### US Postpones Bilateral Contacts Until Davis Freed

Diplomatic sources told Dawn The United States has put all bilateral contacts with Pakistan on hold. The apparent reason is not having a full fledged Minister to the Foreign Office but presumably its due to no-headway in releases of Raymond Davis. Sources claim that the US Congress is currently considering budget proposals for the next fiscal year and the diplomatic row could affect \$1.5 billion of annual assistance for Pakistan as well. The controversy could even effect a \$7.5-billion, five-year civilian aid package or official visits or meetings between the sometimes friends, sometimes foes.

[Dawn – February 08, 2011]

#### Pakistan for Broad Ranging Engagement with India

Pakistan attaches importance to a purposeful and broad ranging engagement with India, Foreign Secretary Salman Bashir said during a meeting with Indian External Affairs Minister SM Krishna in the Bhutanese capital Thimpu on February 07. According to a press release, Pakistan is desirous to have friendly, cooperative and mutually beneficial relations. It was imperative to create an environment to achieve prosperity, stability and peace, he said that Pakistan and India assume ownership for ensuring a better future for their people and the region as a whole.

Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani termed the Kashmir dispute as the centre of tensions in South Asia urged India for a “meaningful” dialogue to resolve the issue. The prime minister said in a message that I urge India to enter into a meaningful and result-oriented dialogue with Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir. Separately, Gilani said the sacrifices of the oppressed Kashmiri people will bear fruit and India cannot stop the rising dawn of freedom in Kashmir. India has been striving to suppress the voice of Kashmiris, who have been fighting for their just right to self-determination. The PM was speaking at a dinner hosted in honour of the Kashmiri leaders at the PM House on the occasion of the Kashmir Solidarity Day.

[Daily Times – February 06, 2011]

#### Differences Stall Enforcement of New Afghan Trade Accord

Pakistan has offered to delay the implementation of a new transit trade agreement for at least four months, while politely turning down Afghanistan's demand to withdraw a clause about bank guarantee aimed at curbing smuggling and pilferage of containers in Pakistani markets. The issue of bank guarantee and other matters have held up the implementation of the US-sponsored Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) signed on Oct 28 last year, which was scheduled to become operational on Feb 12. An official told that both sides had agreed to convene the second meeting of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Coordination Authority in six weeks for reaching an agreement on implementation of the treaty. The first meeting failed to yield accord on several issues, especially the Afghan demand for withdrawal of the bank guarantee clause from the treaty. “Bank guarantee is part of the original agreement. It is not possible to change any clause of the agreement at a technical-level meeting,” the official said.

In line with the international practice, it was made mandatory in the new transit law for Afghan importers to deposit a bank guarantee equivalent to duty and taxes on goods with Pakistani authorities. There will also be a guarantee for trucks which will be allowed to drive tax-free across Pakistan up to Wagah border with products for sale there. “The Afghan authorities are not ready for the bank guarantee clause in the new treaty. They want a similar treatment that Afghan importers have been enjoying for the past over 40 years under the treaty of 1965,” the official said, adding that the guarantee could be the only check on pilferage of goods and their sale in domestic market. The delay of the agreement will not have any impact on the Afghan import of goods which will continue under the old law. But Afghan and Pakistani exporters will have to wait till the enforcement of the revised treaty for availing themselves of more facilities, including land routes for selling their products in India and Central Asian markets. According to the minutes of the meeting, Pakistan also raised the issue of fixed tax (rahdhari) charged at entry points by

Afghan authorities on Pakistani goods, besides normal customs duties, payment of 110 per cent of the value of goods as security to the Afghan government for transit to Central Asia and a high import duty on certain products. The Afghan side has no reservations over the tracking and biometric system. Pakistan had done its homework but could not implement the system unilaterally, the official said. Even the instruments of ratification had been exchanged on Jan 12.

A trade consultant criticised the technical teams of both sides. "This is a highly modern treaty practised in the European countries backed by a strong electronic system." He questioned the understanding to implement such a sophisticated treaty in one month in a country like Afghanistan which had no infrastructure as a back-up of the system. A trade official said further delay in implementation could send a wrong signal to Afghan importers. The beneficiary would be Iran which had offered more concessions to divert transit trade from Pakistan to its ports, the official added. The Iranian government recently offered a string of facilities to Afghan importers to use the Chabahar port for transit goods, in a bid to divert imports under the transit treaty from Karachi. The distance from Chabahar is almost equal to that from Karachi for Afghan importers. Already, the Iranian government has provided much more facilities than Pakistan to Afghan importers at Bandar Abbas but it is a bit costly for the Afghans because of distance as compared to Karachi. A decline in transit trade through Pakistan would be tantamount to losing billions of rupees in the handling of cargo and employment to locals who transport goods from ports to the border. The levy of infrastructure cess of 0.8 per cent on Afghan transit goods by the Sindh government may also affect the flow of goods. A similar levy introduced by the province a few years ago was withdrawn under pressure from Afghan importers.

[Dawn – February 14, 2011]

## **India's Domestic & Foreign Policies**

### **India in 'Stalemate' with Maoists: Chidambaram**

India's home minister on February 01 said that security forces were locked in a 'stalemate' with Maoist insurgents despite a crackdown in 2010 that killed a record number of people. Home Minister P Chidambaram said at a meeting of state chief ministers in New Delhi that my impression is that there is a kind of stalemate, adding that there have been casualties on both sides. He said that the state governments concerned cannot claim any major advance and nor should we conclude that the Maoists have gained an upper hand. India's left-wing guerrilla movement, which began in 1967, feeds off land disputes, police brutality and corruption and is strongest in the poorest and most deprived areas of India, many of which are rich in natural resources. The Indian government launched a major offensive by police and paramilitary forces in the second half of 2009 which intensified last year to fight what is sometimes referred to by sections of the Indian media as the "red menace". He added that violence peaked in 2010, leaving a record 718 civilians dead, as well as 285 policemen and 171 suspected rebels. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has called the Maoist insurgency India's main internal security threat and has urged the federal and the state governments to increase the number of joint operations to deal with the ultra-leftist rebellion. The rebels are entrenched deep in jungles across a swathe of northern and eastern India.

[Daily Times – February 02, 2011]

### **India Woos Muslim Investors with New Stock Index**

India's stock market has traditionally been dominated by Hindu investors but the country has taken a step towards financial inclusion with the creation of a new index compliant with Islamic law. The Bombay Stock Exchange, Asia's oldest stock market, has launched the Taqwaa Advisory and Shariah Investment Solutions (TASIS) Shariah 50 in an attempt to open stock-trading to more of the country's vast Muslim population. "The intention is to reach out to the Muslim community which has historically been less involved in India's equities," James Shapiro, head of market development at the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), told. "To grow your business, the stock exchange has to be more inclusive. One cannot keep growing on a very thin layer of very rich people trading," added Shapiro, a former New York Stock Exchange head of foreign listings.

Experts have blamed a lack of political will in Hindu-majority India for the failure to promote Islamic finance, despite the country having 170 million Muslims, the world's third-highest number. Stock investment is still nascent in India with just one percent of the 1.2 billion population overall investing in

shares. For Muslims, who are poorer and less educated than Hindus according to official figures, the percentage of investors is much less, estimated at at 0.5 percent of the community. The 50 stocks on the new index have been cleared by a top Mumbai-based Islamic law firm, TESIS, as compliant with the investment rules of the Islamic legal code known as sharia.

Aziz Jadwet, 38, who studied Islamic finance at an institution in Dubai, said he believed many Indian Muslims who were previously hesitant about stock investments would feel more confident about investing using the TESIS index. The Islamic law firm vets listed companies to determine whether they derive benefits from interest or the sale of "sinful" goods and services like alcohol, gambling, tobacco, weapons or pork products, prohibited under Islamic law. But the index still has many heavyweights, including firms like auto giants Bajaj Auto and Maruti Suzuki, generic drugmaker Dr Reddy's Laboratories, software outsourcer Wipro and India's largest private firm Reliance Industries.

"We believe the TESIS index is superior" to many rival indices elsewhere "as stocks screening is more conservative and better tuned to achieving sharia objectives," added Mohammed Hussain Khatkhatay, a TESIS senior advisor. Standard and Poor's and Dow Jones are among companies abroad which run sharia indices. Companies in India have also been chosen based on their financial strength, while each stock has a maximum weight of 8.5 percent in the index which Khatkhatay said should reduce the risk of volatility. Unfortunately, the launch late last year of the TESIS Shariah 50 coincided with a slump in Indian markets. Although the index rose 2.5 percent during its first trading days, it has since fallen sharply to 13 percent below its launch level. Khatkhatay said work was still required to make India's financial sector more inclusive, but changes are under way. "In the past, Islamic finance initiatives were largely by Muslims for Muslims," he said. But "we are now seeing new initiatives not only by Muslims in the areas of mutual funds, insurance and microfinance," he said. TESIS has been flooded with calls from Muslim investors keen to know about the new product, including several from the Middle East, United States and Britain, he added.

[AFP – February 14, 2011]

## Parliamentary Issues in Myanmar

### Myanmar Opens Junta-Dominated Parliament

Myanmar's new junta-dominated parliament opened on January 31 as lawmakers assembled in secrecy following a widely panned election for the country's first legislative session since the late 1980s. No foreign media representatives were allowed to witness the event or even take photographs of the new parliament building where elected and designated lawmakers convened in the military regime's purpose-built capital, Naypyidaw. A Myanmar official told AFP on condition of anonymity, while police manned checkpoints and barricades leading up to the chambers. The timing — almost certainly a product of the regime's penchant for astrology — was just one aspect of the new parliament, peculiar to a nation that has withered under the iron grip of military rule since 1962. Myanmar activists and analysts were divided over whether January 31' opening heralded at least a small step towards positive political change or simply consolidated the power of the military behind a semblance of civilian rule. After a rare election in November marred by the absence of democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi and claims of cheating and intimidation, the junta was set to easily dominate Myanmar's first parliamentary session in two decades.

The party of Myanmar pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi said on February 07 that Western sanctions on the country should remain in place, arguing the embargo affected the military regime and not the broader population. The announcement by the National League for Democracy (NLD), Myanmar's biggest opposition force, will be a blow to both the ruling junta and Western investors keen to tap the isolated country's vast natural resources. Tin Oo, NLD vice-chairman, told Reuters that we came to find that the sanctions affect only the leaders of the ruling regime and their close business associates, not the majority of the people. Suu Kyi, who was released from house arrest on November 13, has long backed sanctions as part of her fight against decades of authoritarian military rule in the former British colony also known as Burma. The sanctions were intended to force the regime to improve its poor human rights record and initiate democratic reforms.

[Daily Times – February 1, 2011]

## Political Crisis in Nepal

### Nepal's New Prime Minister Faces Major Setback

Nepal's newly elected Prime Minister struggled to keep his grip on power as the country's largest political party threatened to withdraw their support. Prime Minister Jhalnath Khanal was elected Prime Minister by parliament after months of failed attempts to choose a leader after the previous government resigned. He won the vote with the support of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). No party has a majority in parliament, and Khanal needs the Maoists' support to continue in power. But a senior leader of the Maoists, Narayankaji Shrestha, said Thursday that negotiations with Khanal had broken down. He said the main issue was that the Maoists' had not been given control of the home ministry as promised. Meanwhile, Khanal named his longtime party colleague Bharat Mohan Adhikari as deputy Prime Minister and Bishnu Poudel and Gangalal Tuladhar as ministers. All three are from Khanal's Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist). Tuladhar and Poudel had not yet been assigned ministries. Maoist leader Shrestha said they had decided not to be part of the planned coalition government that would include members from Khanal's party, Maoists and some smaller parties. Instead, the Maoists said they would continue to support Khanal in parliament for now, and assess the situation in a few days. Khanal's aide Yogesh Bhattarai said they planned to continue negotiations with the Maoists and hoped that an agreement could be reached to bring them into the new government.

[AP – February 10, 2011]

## Middle East & North Africa Protests

### Brief on the Protests

Country: Tunisia

Date Started: December 18, 2010

Types of Protests: Mohamed Bouazizi's self-immolation; Nationwide protest; occupation of public spaces

Outcomes: Ouster of President Ben Ali, Resignation of Prime Minister Ghannouchi, Release of political prisoners

Country: Algeria

Date Started: December 28, 2010

Types of Protests: Self-immolations; major protests; riots; road-blockings

Outcomes: Lifting of 19-year-old state of emergency

Country: Libya

Date Started: Date Started: Date Started: January 13, 2011

Types of Protests: Nationwide protests; armed revolt; occupation of cities

Outcomes: Opposition forces seize control of numerous Libyan cities

Country: Jordan

Date Started: January 14, 2011

Types of Protests: Minor protests and demonstrations

Outcomes: King Abdullah II sacks Prime Minister Rifai and his Cabinet

Country: Oman

Date Started: January 17, 2011

Types of Protests: Major protests

Outcomes: Economic concessions by Sultan Qaboos

Country: Yemen

Date Started: January 18, 2011

Types of Protests: Major protests; riots

Outcomes: President Saleh won't seek another term in 2013, Resignation of MPs from the ruling party

Country: Egypt

Date Started: January 25, 2011

Types of Protests: Self-immolations; nationwide protests; occupation of public spaces

Outcomes: Ouster of President Mubarak, Assumption of power by the Army

Country: Bahrain

Date Started: February 14, 2011

Types of Protests: Major demonstrations; occupation public spaces

Outcomes: Economic concessions by King Hamad, Release of political prisoners, Dismissal of ministers

[The information has been compiled from various sources]

[AFP – February 24, 2011]