

## Media Tracking Report

15-19 April 2019

### Education in Pakistan

- [CM's School Reforms Roadmap: Report shows gloomy picture of education ranking in S Punjab-in The NEWS](#)

The Chief Minister's School Reforms Roadmap 2nd quarter report 2018/19 presents a gloomy picture of education ranking in south Punjab districts. According to the official statistics, five central and north Punjab districts - Kasur, Okara, Bhakkar, Pakpattan and Attock – are on the top in education ranking while four south and one central Punjab districts - Dera Ghazi, Bahawalnagar, Rajanpur, Muzaffargarh and Nankana Sahib - are at the bottom in education ranking.

### Infrastructure: The political costs and economic benefits of collaborating with China

- [Promoting SEZs: the location factor -in The Express Tribune](#)

How large are the benefits of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and what channels are needed to achieve these benefits? These are the two rudimentary questions underpinning the dogmatic promotion of SEZs worldwide, however the benefits of SEZs and the channels required to achieve them largely depend on the location on which SEZs are established.

- [Pakistan's Economic Woes: The Way Forward -in The Diplomat](#)

Pakistan's economic crisis cannot be resolved overnight. Dwindling foreign exchange reserves, low exports, high inflation, growing fiscal deficit, and current account deficit – are nothing new, and once again, the country finds itself knocking on the doors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for what will be its 22nd loan. While the exact amount of this package has not been determined, Pakistan already owes the IMF billions from previous programmes. Indeed, 30.7 percent of Pakistan's government expenditure is earmarked for debt servicing, which cannot be supported by its decreasing revenues. Already on the Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) grey list, and with the current Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) government enjoying internal institutional consensus on the national agenda, Pakistan must focus its attention on resolving its economic woes before it finds itself on the shores of bankruptcy.

- [Pakistan takes \\$5.6b in foreign loans in nine months- in The Express Tribune](#)

Pakistan's foreign loans in first nine months of the current fiscal year reached \$5.6 billion due to \$2.6 billion worth of commercial lending by China last month, which helped the government keep its foreign currency reserves in double digits. Against an official announcement of receiving \$2.2 billion in commercial loan from China, the country actually extended \$2.54 billion in March alone, highly placed sources in the Ministry of Finance told The Express Tribune. The Chinese government provided the loan through two commercial banks. China Development Bank gave \$2.24 billion in short-term loan while Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) also disbursed \$300 million in March.

- [Beyond bilateral – The queue for CPEC by Ashfaq Hasan Khan-in Central banking](#)

Not just a bilateral agreement between the two countries, the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor can benefit neighbouring countries and the entire region, says Ashfaq Hasan Khan, former finance minister of Pakistan and member of Pakistan's Economic Advisory Council

- Pakistan keen on attending second Belt and Road forum- in [The Express Tribune](#)  
The second “Belt and Road” International Cooperation Forum will be held in Beijing late this month. Pakistan is enthusiastically looking forward to attending the forum. According to Cheng Cheng Xizhong, visiting professor at Southwest University of Political Science and Law and a former defense attache in South Asian countries 22 projects in the first phase of the development of CPEC have basically alleviated the power shortage and greatly improved the infrastructure in Pakistan.
- FDI drops 51.4 percent to \$1.273bln in July-March-in [the NEWS](#)  
Foreign direct investment (FDI) into Pakistan slumped 51.4 percent to \$1.273 billion in the nine months of this fiscal year 2018/19 from \$2.621 billion a year ago, according to the figures published by the central bank.

### **Reducing Pakistan’s public sector: How can we maintain public services and minimize backlash while we make the cuts demanded by the IMF?**

- Pakistan’s economy to weigh on region’s growth: IMF official –in [The DAWN](#)  
At a recent talk on the economic outlook for the Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan, and Pakistan (MENAP) region, Azour argued that global economic headwinds were making policy efforts more urgent and challenging for MENAP. For oil importers in this region, growth is expected to ease to 3.6 per cent this, from 4.2pc in 2018, in part due to weaker global economic environment.  
In a related report, the IMF also sounded alarm on global debt. Noting that global debt had now reached \$164 trillion or 225pc of global GDP, the Fund warned that the world’s public and private sectors were more in debt now than at the 2008 financial crisis, when global debt/GDP peaked at 213pc.
- Pakistan Finance Minister Quits Amid IMF Talks, Khan Reshuffle –in [Bloomberg](#)  
Umar’s decision comes as he led negotiations for what would be Pakistan’s 13th IMF support programme since the late 1980s. Since his appointment after Khan’s election victory last year, the former chief executive officer of Pakistani conglomerate Engro Corp. has been subjected to a campaign of negative media coverage from unnamed government sources. That has fueled prolonged speculation that he would be moved from the finance ministry as the economy continued to falter.
- Senate committee seeks details of IMF package-in [The Express Tribune](#)  
Senate Standing Committee on Finance summoned Finance Minister Asad Umar in its next session for briefing on surge in inflation and conditions laid down by International Monetary Fund for its programme to Pakistan. The committee also called Minister of State for Revenue Hammad Azhar for briefing on implementation of second supplementary finance bill.
- The road to recovery-in [The NEWS](#)  
Clouds are gathering over the present dispensation of government, but they have a silver lining. After thirty years, there is a loosening of the stranglehold on government by ‘boxwallahs’ (“A native

itinerant pedlar... The Boxwala sells cutlery, cheap nick-nacks, and small wares of all kinds, chiefly European,” Hobson-Jobson, The Anglo-Indian Dictionary, 1886). As a result, above the clinking of coin-counting in government, talk of establishing good – even, virtuous – government can be heard again. This is a good omen.

### **Civil Service Reforms in Pakistan**

- PTI: forgotten promises by Huzaima Bukhari and Dr Ikramul Haq-in [The Business Recorder](#)

People of Pakistan in general and businessmen in particular are quite disillusioned with the performance of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) after seeing that prices of items of daily use (food, medicines, petrol, utilities) have skyrocketed in just a few months and business activities have been substantially slowed down leading to drastic cut in economic growth and unemployment. The cost of doing business has increased manifold making industries uncompetitive to produce exportable goods. Agricultural sector is also facing the brunt of wrong policies (heavy taxation of inputs and costly energy) and rural poverty is on increase.