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## Gezi Park Incident in Pakistani Media

### Introduction:

Gezi Park incident points to the wide spread Turkish protests in 2013. The protests were initially started to oppose the urban development programme for the Istanbul's TaksimGezi Park. The peaceful protests were subjected to harsh statements and Police force which resulted in a much more outrageous interaction between people and Turkish government causing death of at least 5 and injuring thousands. By comparing different newspapers, this report intends to outline how the Pakistani media reported and appreciated those protests and incidents happening in Turkey in 2013.

Pakistani press is free from any direct governmental influences hence, in general, Pakistani media covered most of the incidents and reported them without any bias. It showed the view point of both the protestors and the government. Though the media reported it clearly and expressed the true gravity of the matter, it did not highlight these events. Most of these news was not shown on the cover pages. As it has been mentioned in the previous reports, Pakistan sees Turkey as a close friend and appreciates its help in financial and cultural relationships. Hence Pakistani media tends to highlight the Turkish events which are related to our bilateral relationship.

### *Turkey unrest goes on despite end to park protest* [Dawn News]

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**“ISTANBUL: Riot police cordoned off streets, set up roadblocks and fired tear gas and water cannon to prevent anti-government protesters from converging on Istanbul's central Taksim Square on Sunday, unbowed even as Turkey's prime minister addressed hundreds of thousands of supporters a few kilometres away.”**

This news reported in detail the incidents of the Gezi Park. The police used the force to disperse the protestors even after 18 peaceful days of the main incident while police also broke up demonstrations in the capital, Ankara, and the southern city of Adana. *“Five people, including a policeman, have died and more than 5,000 have been injured, according to a Turkish rights group.”* The report highlighted that it was the first time that Prime Minister Erdogan in his 10-year tenure has faced such an open or broad expression of discontent by the people of Turkey.



### *Young, urban women: The face of Turkey's protest movement* [Express TRIBUNE]

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**“ISTANBUL: They are young, urban and well-educated, and for the past week they have been sleeping in an Istanbul park: meet the women on the frontline of Turkey's mass anti-government protests.”**

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This report describes the protestors and expresses their opinion. This news was surprising to the Pakistani people that such unconventional group of people was out there protesting against the government.

*“We are the women Erdogan would like to see staying at home,” said actress Sevil Algan, 37, referring to Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan who protesters say is forcing his conservative values on the mainly Muslim but staunchly secular nation.*

It reports that many of the women happily admitted they were accidental activists who never would have guessed two weeks ago that they would be pitching a tent in the epicentre of nationwide civil unrest.



The report shows that these young Turks, many of them students, lawyers, teachers and office workers, easily accounted for half of the thousands of demonstrators in Gezi Park and nearby Taksim Square.

The report outlines the innocence of the protestors and the peaceful nature of the opposition by saying *“They spend hours under the park’s sycamore trees debating their cause, take part in all-night singing and dancing sessions and, when necessary, stand shoulder to shoulder with football fans on guard against police action outside the park’s police-free zone.”*

### ***Turkey police tear gas protesters in Istanbul, Ankara*** [Express TRIBUNE]

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**ISTANBUL: Turkish police fired tear gas at protesters who marched on Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s offices in Istanbul and Ankara on Sunday in a third day of clashes sparked by anger at his government.**

This report describes in detail about the forced actions of Police on protestors. *White fumes filled the air as riot cops fired gas and lashed stone-throwing protestors with water-cannons in the two cities, the latest in a string of nationwide clashes that have left scores injured.* Most newspapers including this one have shown the viewpoint of people by quoting many testimonials from the protestors. *“Dictator, resign!” yelled the crowds in Ankara. “We will resist until we win”.* The report also tells about the damage done *(Guler said 58 civilians and 115 security officers had been injured over several days of recent protests, although rights groups have put the number of injured in the hundreds. Authorities say almost 100 police vehicles, 94 shops and dozens of cars have been damaged. Guler estimated the cost at more than 20 million liras (\$10 million) during the recent protests.*

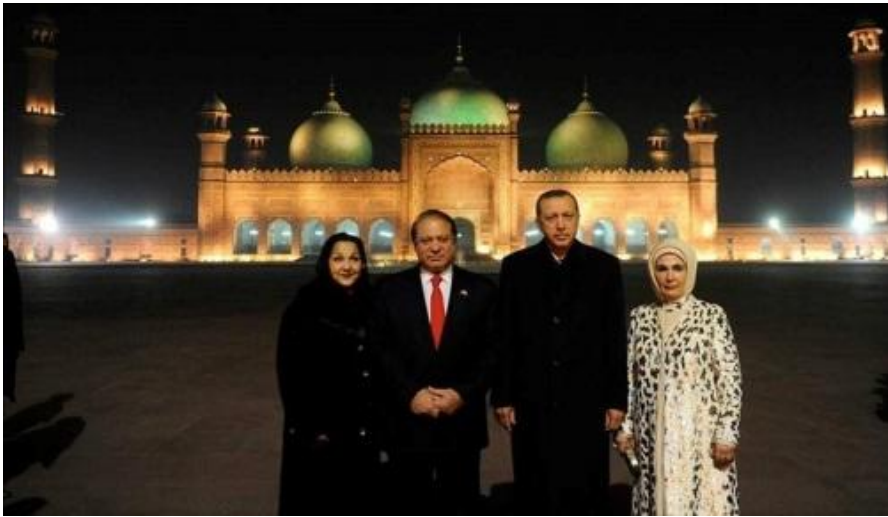
Can Pakistan save Erdogan?

Facing a widening crisis at home, Erdogan goes on a charm offensive in Pakistan. [06-01-14]

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Malik Ayub Sumbal is an award-winning journalist currently based in Islamabad. Despite it was a great deal for Pakistani government and Pakistani people, He wrote this interesting article criticizing the recent Pakistan visit by Turkish prime minister from the perspective of Turkey.



He said, *“The time seemed right to most observers, the place not entirely thought out. Why would the sitting, though troubled, prime minister of a country visit another sitting, but less troubled, premier of another country at a city other than the capital?”*

According to the writer Erdogan's visit to Pakistan was surprising as it came at the background of a political crisis at home (Turkey). This turmoil, or the

corruption scandal as the prosecutors and police call it, had taken a strange turn as Erdogan cabinet members have been arrested on charges of bribery.

Ayub claims that what Erdogan actually plans to get out of the visit is the confidence to have his many allies from the Islamic states on his side, as he faces critical time at home. With that in hand and the additional assurances from his allies in Europe, he can plan on another ten years of rule for his party.

The writer links Erdogan with leaders of currently ruling party in Pakistan by saying, *“The corruption crisis might not be easy for him to get out of, but Sharif can give him a piece of advice on precisely that issue. With the number of corruption charges brought against Sharif and his government for the past couple of decades, it is very possible that Pakistan's chief politician might have a trick up his sleeve to share with the one in trouble.”*

## **Media and its freedom in Pakistan**

### **Introduction:**

Pakistan is a heavily populated country in the South East Asia sharing strategic borders with China, India, Iran and Afghanistan. Pakistan gained its independence in 1947 from British rule. Following independence, Pakistan has seen repeated military conflicts, the loss of East Pakistan in 1971, widespread Islamic fundamentalism and significant military and economic growth, with the second-fastest growing economy amongst the ten most populous countries in the world in 2005 and the twenty-seventh largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity. Pakistan has the seventh largest armed forces in the world and is one of eight declared nuclear weapons states.

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Since its independence, the media has undergone significant changes in the country. The press in Pakistan holds significant power and has suffered much under various political leaders, only to emerge resilient and more committed to freedom of speech. The press's existence is remarkable given the often harsh means used by government officials and military dictators to control it.

Today there are more than 50 newspapers being published today in Pakistan mostly published in Urdu (national language) and English. Despite such a diverse and large print media, at present the major part is being played by the Electronic media. Until 2000, the electronic media news in Pakistan was only limited to a state run television called PTV (Pakistan Television Network). Media was then liberated to the private sector under the government of Musharraf. After that, it has sprung and advanced very rapidly. Today, there are more than 80 channels working in Pakistan with majority being privately run. The media is considered free in the country due to a sharp contrast from its past. But still there are many issues to be addressed regarding freedom of media and its role in Pakistani society. Reporters Sans Frontiers, classifies Pakistan in 'Difficult Conditions' countries for the press.

This initial research intends to highlight some of major issues which would be later put into comparison with the condition of media in other countries especially Turkey.

## Corruption

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Corruption is one of the most talked about things in Pakistan, which can be justified as the country ranks very high in terms of corruption rate in the world. There is wide-spread corruption in Pakistan especially in government sector. Since the liberation of media and private channels, it has played a very important role in exposing the corruption. Following are some prominent examples.

- The ex-president and registrar of the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council were involved in **fake registration** of doctors.
- The **Pakistan Steel Mills** Rs.26 billion scam.
- Bribery and corruption in **Pakistan International Airlines** which caused losses of \$500 million.
- Embezzlement in **Pakistan Railways** causing massive financial losses.
- **NATO containers' case** where 40 containers heading for ISAF in Afghanistan went missing.
- **Rental power projects** corruption.
- **Ephedrine quota case**, a scandal involving the son of former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani to pressure officials of the Health Ministry to allocate a quota of controlled chemical ephedrine to two different pharmaceutical companies.
- **Malik Riaz's 'Media Gate'** in which the son of Chief Justice of Pakistan Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry is said to have taken money from Malik Riaz to give favourable decisions from the Supreme Court.

### Low level corruption:

Obvious from the above examples, the media does play an important role in exposing some large scale corruption cases but it fails to cover the wide spread corruption in poor areas which actually causes more suffering to the people. Media is generally confined to big cities and prominent people so the rural and poor people's problems are usually ignored.

### Corruption in Media:

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Recently the media itself has been accused and criticised for being corrupt. Many channels blamed others for taking bribe from some political parties in order to enhance and exaggerate their activities and actions. One of the biggest news channels, Geo TV has been criticised for supporting India and intentionally causing damage to Pakistan, judged by its many programmes.

## Religious Intolerance

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In my personal opinion, Religious Intolerance in currently is biggest issue in Pakistan to be addressed. Also it is having probably the most detrimental impacts on current media. The media suffers from the extremist religious groups. If media dares to criticise any action taken by religious sects, it has to face serious consequences. Due to such strong actions against some channels and especially journalists, our media lags behind in eliminating the religious intolerance from the country.

Newspapers, television, and radio are regulated by the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) which occasionally halts broadcasts and closes media outlets. Publication against its rules can bring fines of up to 10 million rupees and license cancellation. The Blasphemy law can bring fines and prison sentences of up to three years, while defiling the Quran requires imprisonment for life, and defaming Muhammad requires a death sentence.

Religious intolerance has claimed many lives of Journalist as elaborated from the following incidents:

- On July 7, the Taliban threw a grenade at the home of Din News television reporter Imran Khan in Bajaur, FATA, injuring eight members of his family.
- On July 22, Sarfraz Wistro, the chief reporter of the Daily Ibrat newspaper, was attacked and beaten unconscious by five men near his home in Hyderabad, Sindh.
- On September 4, Umar Cheema—the senior member of the investigation cell of a leading media group, The News—was abducted and taken to an unknown location, where he was blindfolded and beaten, had his hair shaved off his head, and was hung upside down and tortured.
- On September 14, journalist Misri Khan was killed in Hangu District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, by militants from the TTP. (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan)
- On September 16, journalist Mujeebur Rehman Saddiqui, a Daily Pakistan correspondent, was killed by gunmen in Dargai, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- On November 18, the body of journalist Lala Hameed Baloch, who had been kidnapped in late October, was found along with the body of a second journalist, Hameed Ismail, with gunshot wounds outside of Turbat, Balochistan Province.

The very reason that media has almost no access to the FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) area is religious intolerance. Due to this religious monopoly of extremist sects, general public in those areas suffer terribly from the lack of media as their issues go continuously un-noticed.

Conditions for reporters covering the ongoing conflict in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province remained difficult, as a number of correspondents were detained, threatened, expelled, kidnapped, or otherwise prevented from working, either by Taliban militants and local tribal groups. Journalists' ability to cover military operations in these areas is hampered, as they can gain access only if they agree to become "embedded" with military units, which

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means that any reporting is subject to potential censorship. I'm most interested in comparing this matter with the media of other countries, especially Turkey which is now a secular state. I would like to find some applicable and appropriate solution to this issue in Pakistan.

## Censorship

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It comes as an ironic surprise that a dictator liberated the media and the censorship has been imposed in the regime of recent democratic governments. This is again closely linked with the issue of religious intolerance and the pressure of extremist sects on the government.

Pakistan made global headlines in 2010 for blocking Facebook and other Web sites in response to a contest popularized on the social networking site to draw images of the Prophet Mohammad. In general, Internet filtering in Pakistan remains both inconsistent and intermittent, with filtering primarily targeted at content deemed to be at religious content considered blasphemous. For example, YouTube was blocked in Pakistan following a decision taken by the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority on 22 February 2008 because of a number of "non-Islamic objectionable videos." There have been many petitions to unblock the youtube but they are being continuously rejected due to influence and threats by the religious sects. At the end of 2011 the PTA also officially banned more than 1,000 porn websites in Pakistan on the grounds of being against religion.

By the majority of public, such bans are deemed pointless and rather frustrating but the government is reluctant to solve such issues in order to avoid opposition from religious sects.

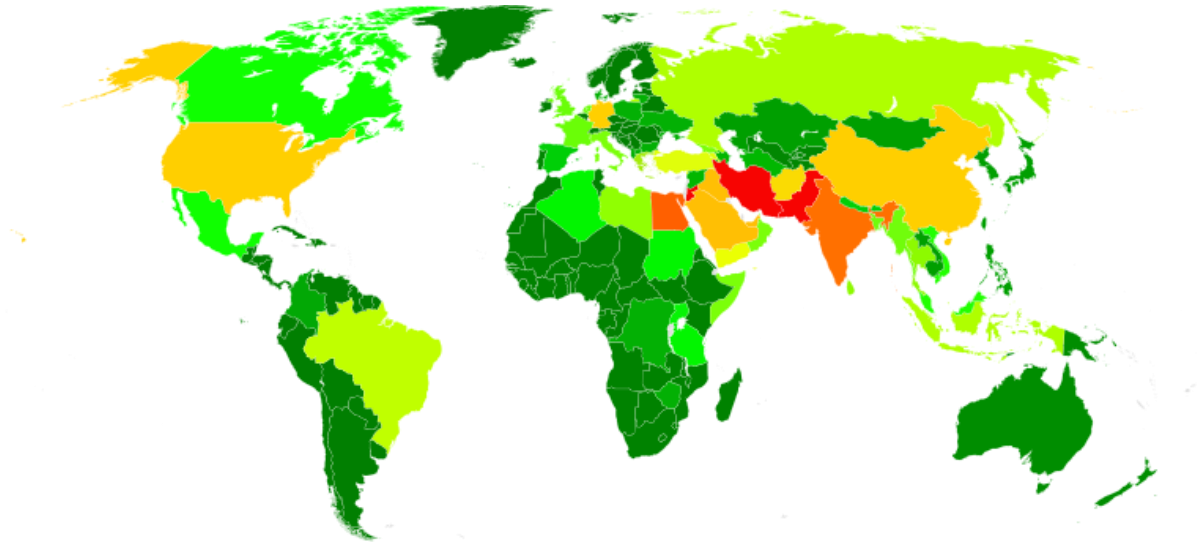
## NSA

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NSA (National Security Agency) is one of the largest intelligence collector agencies in the United States of America. It has been recently criticised in many countries for breaking the privacy laws by using uninformed and unethical methods to collect information.

The 2013 global surveillance disclosure by a former contractor for the United States of America's (USA) National Security Agency (NSA) revealed that the agency has also been tapping the phones and hacking the emails of thousands of Pakistanis. The whistle-blower claimed that the US was intensely spying on Pakistanis' online communication systems, with 13.5 billion pieces of email, phone and fax communications intercepted.

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The map above is a proof how heavily NSA is breaking privacy laws in Pakistan in the name of security.

The media of Pakistan has sadly nothing to say about this. There is hardly any coverage for this issue. Such enormous lack of carelessness has resulted in non-existence of any worry in the Public regarding their privacy.

This reflects that sometimes Media just pays attention to the issues which result in its publicity and fame. They are not actually concerned about the real welfare and issues of the people as obvious from the privacy issue regarding NSA.

## **Media in Pakistan and The Influential Factors**

### **Introduction:**

The press is central to public life in Pakistan because it provides a forum for debating issues of national importance. As the English-language daily *The News* notes, "[The press] has in fact replaced what think tanks and political parties in other countries would do. Columnists engage in major debates and discussions on issues ranging from national security to the social sector." Despite such freedom the media in Pakistan faces some issues regarding its control, especially the government media sources. This report intends to give an introduction to the Pakistani media and the factors which influence its reports.

### **State Media:**

The share of media run solely by the government of Pakistan is very small in the overall picture especially after the boom in private media after 2002. Three channels PTV Home, PTV Global and PTV National are owned by the state run Pakistan Television Corporation. A few Radio news channels are also owned completely by the government.

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### **Dominant Private Media Groups:**

Three main private groups dominate Pakistan: the Jang Group, the Herald Group, and the Nawa-e-Waqt Group.

Jang Publications is the largest media group and holds a virtual monopoly of Urdu readership in Sindh, Rawalpindi-Islamabad federal territory, and major shares in Lahore and Quetta. Jang also publishes the largest circulating weekly magazine in Urdu, Akhbare-Jehan, and two evening papers, the Daily News and Awam. The News, an English newspaper is also a publication of the Jang Group. Jang Group also owns some of the very large and important electronic media channels like Geo TV, Geo News and Geo Tez.

Pakistan Herald Publications Ltd. publishes Dawn, which has had a dominant hold over Karachi readership. The Herald Group also publishes the Star (an English evening paper) and The Herald (an influential English monthly). Publications under the Herald Group target the upper class and the better-educated segment of Pakistani society and consequently practice a liberal editorial policy.

The Nawa-e-Waqt Group publishes Nawa-e-Waqt and also started The Nation, an English daily. This group also publishes Family, an Urdu weekly.

Other big T.V news networks include Express News, ARY News and Duniya News.

### **Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA)**

PEMRA is an independent and constitutionally established federal institution responsible for regulating and issuing channel licenses for establishment of the mass-media culture, print and electronic media. It has jurisdiction to impose reasonable restrictions in the interest of the religion, the integrity, national security of Pakistan. PEMRAN often halts and censors the broadcast material by the channels. It is frequently criticized by the people for misusing its control over the media.

### **Government Control of Media**

#### **Direct:**

In Pakistan, the state media is almost totally owned, controlled and financed by the government. Such a strict control is exercised by the government over radio and television in Pakistan that not a single word can be broadcast against the government on radio and television. This is not true only for the present government but every government adopted the same policy to use electronic media for its own publicity and projection. Hence the state-media has become the image of the government.

#### **Indirect:**

The government doesn't directly control the privately owned newspapers and T.V channels but the influences can be seen. It is in a way concealed rather than open. The government uses a number of



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techniques and tools to influence media. Financial benefits are offered to owners and chief editors of the newspapers, if they favour and support the government. Foreign trips are also used as a bribe to get the support of the journalists. In February 2004, Government has invited applications from journalists to allot them plots at expensive locations in Islamabad. (Daily Nawa-i-waqt, Feb.24 th , 2004)

The influence of the government as advertiser is the most effective one on media content. In Pakistan, the government has the most powerful 'weapon' of advertisements. The government uses this 'weapon' to achieve the desired goals and the flow of government advertisements always remains towards the newspapers that favour and support the government policies and decisions. No newspaper will choose the way of loss. More or less every newspaper is favouring the government to get its share in advertisements. There is no other way to meet the expenses of publishing and to earn a profit. Readers' subscription cannot meet the expenditures of a newspaper.

According to a Research done, more than 73% Journalists agree that greater the amount of government advertisements paid to the newspapers, the greater will be the pro-government coverage.

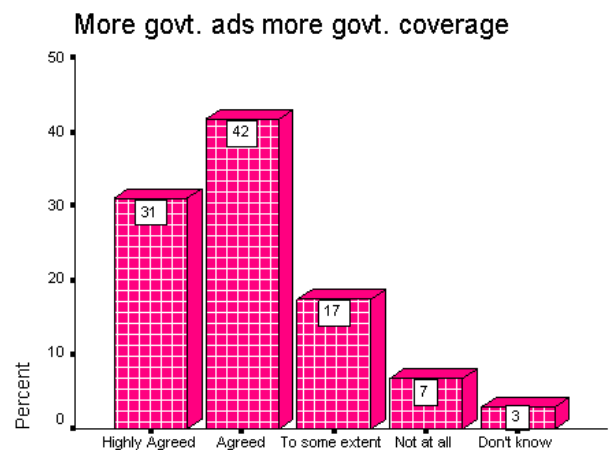
### Government Control of Internet

Not only the government affects the main media channels but it has also influenced the internet censorship in Pakistan, especially in the recent times.

Internet filtering in Pakistan is regulated by the Pakistan Telecommunications Authority (PTA) and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) under the direction of the government, the Supreme Court of Pakistan, and the Ministry of Information Technology (MoIT). Although the majority of filtering in Pakistan is intermittent—such as the occasional block on a major Web site like Blogspot or YouTube, the PTA continues to block sites containing content it considers to be blasphemous, anti-Islamic, or threatening to internal security.

Pakistan has blocked access to websites critical of the government or the military. Blocking of websites is often carried out under the rubric of restricting access to “blasphemous” content, pornography, or religious morality.

The banning of Facebook and Youtube is often deemed useless by many Journalists as most internet users know how to use certain Proxy server applications to access these websites.



More govt. ads more govt. coverage

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## Comparison of social media in Turkey and China

### ● Statistics on internet users

	Global	Turkey	China
% connected to the internet	35.6%	47.2%	34.3%
% of total population using social media	17%	35%	17.64%
% of 18-29 year olds using social media	-	69%	Not founded, but higher than average according to research.

### Comment

Though higher than global average, in fact, statistics suggest that a relatively low percentage of the population is online in Turkey – less than 50 per cent (the corresponding figure for Britain is 80 percent according to OFCOM). However, it seems that those that are online are very active, particularly on social media, and particularly among the young. Prevalence of internet in China is low, but it is increasing in a fast speed.

### ● Popularity of famous social websites in Turkey & China

	Global	Turkey	China
Facebook	3	1	Blocked
Twitter	15	6	Blocked
LinkedIn	16	32	Not popular

### ● Restrictions on social media

#### Turkey

Turkish citizens are clearly capitalizing on their capacity to access and utilize the Web in order to circumvent traditional channels for engaging with government that have proved ineffective or restricted. The harsh response of the Turkish state to the use of social media as a mobilizing tool (including the arrest of social media users) is worrisome.

Turkey does not block views that are unfavourable to the government, nor does it imprison those who voice such criticism. It does however, potentially, imprison those whose views can fit in the stretchable category of “insulting Turkishness,” it blocks sites with relative ease and extensiveness, tries to exert Internet jurisdiction outside of its territory, and seems to have little regard for freedom of the Internet as a basis. The tendency to censor instead of protecting civil liberties may be reflective of seeing itself as being vulnerable. Without a doubt, the debate over freedom of speech in Turkey will bring forth further views on these issues, as forces of rule of law, human rights, democracy, protection of societal norms and security attempt to balance each other.

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## **China**

China is ranked 174 out of 179 countries in 2012 worldwide index of press freedom. According to a government report, the number of publications has soared in recent years. However, the plethora of newspapers has not delivered plurality to the media landscape in China. The myriad new publications remain "a populist, socialist media, just as controlled by the government.

Certain websites that the government deems potentially dangerous, like YouTube, Facebook, are blocked; specific material deemed a threat to political stability such as controversial photos, search terms, or particular iPhone applications are also banned. The websites of Bloomberg and the New York Times were blacked out in 2012 after each ran reports on the private wealth of Party Secretary Xi Jinping and Premier Wen Jiabao.

Restrictions were also placed on micro-blogging services in April 2012 in response to rumors of a coup attempt in Beijing involving the disgraced former Chongqing party chief Bo Xilai. Sina Corp. and Tencent Holdings Ltd. were forced to shut down the commenting function, a key feature for discussions, for three days.

### **Control of Media in China**

China is rapidly developing in its economy day by day. But while China increasingly incorporates free-market reforms in its economy, its approach to the media remains draconian.

Only state agencies can own media in China, though there is privatization. China News Network Corporation (CNC), a twenty-four-hour global news network launched in July 2010, for example, is reportedly half privately financed.

However, the Chinese government has long tried to keep a tight rein on traditional and new media to prevent any challenges to its political authority.

### **Official media policy**

In April 2010, the Chinese government revised its existing Law on Guarding State Secrets to tighten its control over information flows. The amendment extended requirements to Internet companies and telecommunications operators to cooperate with Chinese authorities in investigations into leaks of state secrets. But the definition of state secrets in China remains vague and thus could be used to censor any information the authorities deem as harmful to their political or economic interests.

### **Freedom of China's media**

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Here are some of the restrictions.

- Media must use only Xinhua News Agency information to report on riots in Xinjiang and Shaoguan. No journalist should be sent to Xinjiang.
- Media must not report on corruption allegations relating to the eldest son of President Hu Jintao.
- Media must use Xinhua News Agency information about the visit by Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama to Taiwan.
- Media must report positively on the Green Dam project. No commentary allowed. Website management must delete all critical articles about the project.
- Media must cease reporting on the discovery of a body at a psychiatric hospital in Dongguan.

### **Primary censor agencies**

The government bodies involving in reviewing and enforcing laws related to information flow within, into and from China are Communist Party's Central Propaganda Department (CPD), which coordinates with General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP) and State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT). Xinhua, the state news agency, is considered a propaganda tool by press freedom organizations. The CPD gives media outlets directives restricting coverage of politically sensitive topics--such as protests, Tibet, and Taiwan.

### **The action of media controls**

The Chinese government employs a diverse range of methods to induce journalists to censor themselves rather than risk punishment. Tactics include dismissals and demotions; authorities also sue journalists for libel, impose fines or close news outlets. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for journalists who overstep boundaries to be imprisoned. As of December 2012, China was third to Iran and Turkey for most jailed journalists in a single country with at least thirty-two journalists imprisoned, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

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## The control of foreign media

China requires foreign correspondents to get permission before making reporting trips within the country. All inbound data from foreign Internet sources is filtered through one of three computer centers in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou where keywords alert authorities of provocative content.

As part of its bid to host the 2008 Olympics, China promised to relax constraints, but critics accuse China of reneging on its promise. The Foreign Correspondents Club of China reported 178 cases of interference with foreign media in 2008, but has since stopped publishing figures on its website to ensure its continued operation. Some journalists and bloggers arrested before and after the 2008 Beijing Olympics remain in prison as of February 2011.

### Gezi Park Protest Portrayed in Media in China

<b>Date</b>	01 Jun 2013
<b>Headline</b>	Turkish Police, protesters clash in Istanbul
<b>Summary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Police fired tear gas and water cannon down a major shopping street, where hundreds were injured in clashes on Friday.</li><li>● The demonstration at Taksim's Gezi Park started late on Monday after trees were torn up to make way for the redevelopment.</li><li>● Erdogan vowed to push ahead with the plans and was accused of behaving like a dictator.</li><li>● Tighter restrictions on alcohol sales and warnings against public displays of affection in recent weeks have led to protest.</li><li>● Erdogan acknowledged mistakes in the use of tear gas.</li></ul>
<b>Comment</b>	The report on Gezi park started with this detailed portrait of the protest and how it was initiated. Tight restrictions proposed by Erdogan were accused to be the cause of this protest. The number of injured people was known but which of people died was not provided.

<b>Date</b>	03 Jun 2013
<b>Headline</b>	PM's office attacked
<b>Summary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● A group of protesters threw stones at Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's office on Saturday night.</li><li>● The protesters demanded Erdogan step down, calling his government "fascist" in Istanbul and other cities.</li><li>● Earlier, Erdogan called on demonstrators to end their protest, saying the government will press ahead with the redevelopment plans for Gezi Park.</li><li>● Hundreds of angry protesters demonstrated in New York to support the protests in Turkey.</li></ul>
<b>Comment</b>	The attack of PM's office showed the anger of protesters and seriousness of this incident. The influence expanded with demonstrations from other cities.

<b>Date</b>	05 Jun 2013
<b>Headline</b>	2 dead, over 4,000 injured in Turkey's protests
<b>Summary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Two people have been killed and over 4,100 wounded in the week-long anti-government protests across Turkey.</li><li>● The week-long protest started as a peaceful demonstration against the demolition plans</li></ul>

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	of Taksim Square's Gezi Park in Istanbul and later turned into clashes between the police and thousands of protesters across the country.
<b>Comment</b>	The numbers of people injured and died were known and highlighted in the headline. The protest worsened after a week.

<b>Date</b>	15 Jun 2013
<b>Headline</b>	Turkey protesters refuse to leave Gezi Park
<b>Summary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Turkish protesters said they would not leave the park despite a pledge from Prime Minister to hold a vote on plans to redevelop the site.</li><li>● A campaign by environmentalists to save green space spiraled into the most serious show of defiance against Erdogan and his AK Party.</li><li>● Erdogan has long been the country's most popular politician, but his critics complain of increasing authoritarianism.</li></ul>
<b>Comment</b>	Erdogan was criticized for his increased authoritarianism despite that he used to be prestigious for his achievements in developing Turkey.

### Overview of Bo Xilai trial

Bo Xilai, the former Communist Party chief in Chongqing (a city in China). But he has been expelled from the Communist Party. He is charged with corruption, bribery and abuse of power. His wife was given a suspended death sentence for the murder of British businessman Neil Heywood last year.

Press in China

He is charged with corruption, bribery and abuse of power.

Netizen (people commenting online)

1. Support Chinese communist party. They think the justice of this trial is open and fair. He deserves life sentence. His former achievements are not mentioned at all.
2. News and comments that support him are blocked. When he was the mayor of Dalian, he led the transformation of the city from a drab port city to a modern metropolis, a 'showcase' of rapid economic growth. Since Bo's time in office, Dalian became known as one of the cleanest cities in China. In addition, Bo was an advocate for free enterprise and small businesses, and successfully courted foreign investment from South Korea, Japan, and Western countries. In contrast to his colleagues, he held press conferences at Chinese New Year, and developed a reputation among foreign investors for 'getting things done'. According to words of Dalian citizens, he was a good mayor who worked till late night everyday. Unlike other government officials, he did not promote his subordinates by their relations, which annoyed his colleagues and subordinates as he did not follow the secret rules in officialdom. (To take bribery before getting things done or promote someone). Do when he left his position, tens of thousands of people came to for farewell.

### Foreign press

Telegraph

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Brilliantly at ease in public, and with an excellent command of English, Mr Bo easily charmed foreign dignitaries. "He was very comfortable in his own skin. This was someone with very strong confidence in himself."

But his arrogance worried China's top leaders. "The fact that he does come from a very powerful family, that his father was one of the foremost leaders for a long time and the fact that he leveraged that really made people very uncomfortable."

Nevertheless, for decades, Mr Bo steadily rose to power. No crime could derail him while he remained so well-connected.

As one observer pointed out after Neil Heywood's murder: if it took the defection of his police chief in order to expose the murder of a foreign national, imagine how many Chinese deaths might have been swept under the carpet during Mr Bo's rule.

But in Chongqing, a city notoriously difficult to govern, Mr Bo finally came unstuck. Keen to propel himself to the pinnacle of power, he appears to have overstepped the mark and upset the city's political balance.

First academics, and then government investigators, began to raise a red flag over campaigns that won him popular support, but which were toxic at heart.

Tong Zhiwei, a law professor at East China Political and Law university, said he decided to investigate Mr Bo's anti-Mafia campaign and report what was going on to Beijing.

What he found was a police chief who was arresting suspects on Mr Bo's orders. "The torture and the illegal methods of handling cases all point to Wang Lijun," he said.

Meanwhile, Mr Bo and his cronies were busy confiscating the personal assets of the defendants, according to Li Zhuang, a defence lawyer that Mr Bo imprisoned. "Some had millions, others billions. That was the point of it all," he said, earlier this year.

Once Neil Heywood's murder came to light – and suspicions were raised over his wife GuKailai's involvement – Mr Bo's enemies, who had waited for years, finally had a cast-iron pretext to dislodge him from power. And yet, as late as March, Mr Bo was still gambling that he and his wife could ride out the killing.

That proved to be a gamble too far. "In some ways he was politically ambitious but maybe he wasn't ambitious enough," said Prof Yang, noting that Mr Bo had ultimately sacrificed himself by standing by his wife, confident they would both emerge unscathed.

"Could he have turned against her?" he added.

"He has to regret what has happened but also probably [he must feel] rage about what is happening and the fact that he has no control over what is going on now. It is a profound fall for someone as ambitious and dynamic as he had been."

BBC news

With Bo Xilai's demise, the Communist Party of China has lost the most talented politician of his generation.

It is a bit like the UK Labour Party dismissing Tony Blair just before 1997 when it stood to win the election that year, or the Democrats in the US in 1992 dumping Bill Clinton.

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Bo's charisma and his natural political gifts put him in the same league as these figures. And had he been a politician in a democracy, it is even possible that he could have survived the misdeeds of his wife and his closest ally Wang Lijun, because the brute fact is that in the courtroom in Jinan where he was tried in August not a shred of evidence connected him to their crimes.

The worse that could be said of him was that he was the victim of misguided loyalty. Bo was also the only leader of his generation to truly try to reach across from the privileged elite zone of power in modern China and speak directly to people”  
Bo would have been a hard person to leave out of the new line-up, but also a very tough person to place well. Some speculated that he could be made the head of the National People's Congress, or of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. Both would have offered natural power bases for him to mobilise public opinion. It would have been very hard to sideline him.

The campaigns that Bo was most publicly associated with while in Chongqing - the clampdown on the mafia and the red song campaigns - were regarded with distaste by many commentators.

The first certainly involved the delivery of rough justice and was associated with a lot of brutality. But defenders of Bo might argue that he was pitting himself against some of the least attractive, most venal members of contemporary Chinese society - snakeheads, mafia bosses and criminal leaders, who were not slouches when it came to doling out violence themselves.

The fact that Bo was willing to take them on and stand up for the authority of the party was at least a step closer to greater rule of law and predictability in society. At least people could be assured there was only one entity bossing them about - the government led by the party - rather than multiple illegal ones.

In Chongqing, residents saw crime fall under Bo Xilai

Bo was also the only leader of his generation to truly try to reach across from the privileged elite zone of power in modern China and speak directly to people.

That was the basis of his popularity, and perhaps the reason for why his treatment in Jinan at least gave him some voice and tried to paint him as at the heart of a highly dysfunctional and unsavoury family.

It was always unlikely that people would take to the streets in support of Bo in sufficient numbers to threaten the party. But nor could they bury him without a voice, and their mode of attack- the venality and uncontrolled behaviour of his wife and security chief Wang Lijun - were narrow but effective modes of attack.

### **No justice?**

Justice in the end was not served neither in Jinan nor in Bo's sentencing.

Bo's trial was widely watched - but will he ever be centre-stage again?

Too many questions remain about what precisely the connection between his wife and her claimed murder of the British businessman Heywood was, and about the real nature of his abuse of power and corruption.



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The elephant lurking in the room throughout this process has been the fact - known to everyone but clearly expressed by none - that Bo's treatment was, from beginning to end, based on political rather than criminal issues.

His sentence was almost certainly sanctioned by the Standing Committee Politburo, and his treatment closely managed by them.

His real sentence was delivered by Wen Jiabao, then Premier, at the National People's Congress in March 2012, whose devastating indirect attack on Bo sealed his fate. From that moment, Bo was a dead man walking.

But his final departure is a huge loss for political life in China, and for the party, no matter what sheen it tries to put on things. And it may well be one that, in the years ahead, it comes to rue and regret.