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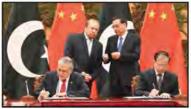


H.E.Mr. Alexey Y.Dedov,

Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

| Volume 08 | Issue 5











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30	President Xi termed Pak China relations
	as "Iron Brothers"

Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif held separate meetings with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Li Keqiang, assuring both the leaders that Pakistan fully supports China's giant One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative.

38 CPEC must not be politicized: PM Nawaz

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Sunday said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) under the One Belt-One Road (OBOR) initiative was open to all countries in the region and that it 'must not be politicised'.

50 Saudi Arabia, US release joint statement on working agreements A new strategic 21st century partnership Saudi Arabia and the United States have released a joint statement emphasizing the threat of Iranian interferences in the region after concluding meetings in Riyadh during a two-day summit.

Pakistan assured Iran it would take steps to prevent cross-border terrorist attacks

Pakistan and Iran agreed in principle to revive hotline between the border security forces of the two countries in order to resolve any issues at border

Special Supplements



on the Republic Day of Azerbaijan & 25th Anniversary of Azerbaijan-Pakistan diplomatic relations



on National day of Portugal Special Feature Reports by:

Mian Fazal Elahi CEO/Editor/Publisher "Diplomatic Focus"

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ANNOUNCEMENT

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Editorial



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Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) once again reminded the grim situation prevailing in the territory due to vicious cycle of terror unleashed by occupying forces there. In the latest acts of violence, Indian troops martyred twelve Kashmiris, including Sabzar Ahmad Bhat, the successor of Burhan Wani. As the news of Sabzar spread in the region, thousands of people including students took to the streets shouting "Go India, Go Back and We Want Freedom".

These very slogans clearly narrate the whole story of acrimony that is reaching new heights in IOK. The killing of Burhan Wani last year had sparked a wave of protests despite the imposition of curfew. Indian security forces had resorted to violence, resulting in the killing of nearly 100 people while thousands were injured and blinded due to the pellet guns. The violent tactics of the Indian forces to suppress the freedom voices have continued since then. The recent news of using Kashmiris as human shields by the Indian forces depict a bleak picture of human rights in the valley. Indian Army Chief Bipin Rawat termed the act of tying a Kashmiri to an army Jeep as 'innovative'. The steps like curbing freedom of speech by banning social media and using Kashmiris as human shields are only going to worsen the situation. India must realise that it cannot continue to suppress the Kashmiri voices through violence.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has taken the right stance at the first Belt and Road Forum by pointing out the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has the potential to connect the whole region. Since India already pulled out of the summit, citing concerns over CPEC, prime minister took the opportunity to point out that the project must not be politicised and should be taken as an opportunity for the uplift of the whole region.

Keeping the regional view in perspective, the remarks from Chinese President Xi Jinping have further supported the stance of Pakistan, as India refused to send an official delegation to Beijing, reflecting displeasure with China for developing a trade corridor through Pakistan

CPEC holds the potential to boost the South Asian region. Pakistan has invited the regional countries to join the project. On other side, Pakistan has been already making efforts to improve relations with Afghanistan, by extending the hand of friendship through official and track-II initiatives, and also by playing a role in the Afghan peace process with the backing of Beijing, Moscow and Ankara. The region is already at the crossroads of major economic development especially with the One Belt One Road (OBOR) project rapidly materialising. It would be helpful if the administration in Kabul were to fashion foreign policy goals which are conducive to regional economic and cultural synergy, rather than conflict. In fact, all countries of the region would benefit from keeping this priority paramount.





Mian Assad ullah

Important Announcement

It has been announced for the general information that Mr. Mian Assad Ullah has been appointed as Editor In Chief of the Monthly "Diplomatic Focus" for the UK/EU Edition. He is entitled to participate official /non-officials diplomatic(engagements, events, national days, social evenings/gatherings, press conferences/interviews and can be contacted for all kinds of stuff including articles, supplements and advertisements etc). It is requested to all Diplomatic missions and government high officials of UK, please contact with Mr. Mian Assad Ullah on His mailing address, 4 lpswich Road, SW17 9RH, London, Cell number:+44-7961005954/ 2087694850 Email: uk.diplomaticfocus@gmail.com, assadmian1@gmail.com

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H.E.Mr. Alexey Y. Dedov,

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan



Message

THE DAY OF RUSSIA

The Day of Russia is the main national holiday of our country, the state with centuries-old historical and cultural traditions. It dates back to June 12, 1990, when the "Declaration of State Sovereignty of Russia" was proclaimed. Celebrated annually it symbolizes the unity and fraternal friendship of many peoples building together their future within one Federation. On this day we traditionally honor our homeland - a country with a thousand-year history and rich heritage.

In the recent years we achieved significant progress moving toward our goals. We got stronger as a country, as one nation. In the world community Russia is being perceived as a dynamically developing democratic state which commands authority in the international arena. Today we can state that we are seeing positive economic momentum in Russia. Almost all key indicators for 2016 show us that last year's results exceeded our expectations.

Being a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the Russian Federation implements and will continue to implement a balanced, pragmatic and proactive foreign policy aimed at building just and democratic world order, ensuring peace, strategic stability, equal and indivisible security.

On 1st of May Russia and Pakistan celebrated the 69th anniversary of diplomatic relations. Today the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is our important partner with whom we develop mutually beneficial cooperation in all fields. The significance of Pakistan is determined by its role in the global and regional politics, its influence in the Muslim world and its geostrategic position in close vicinity of the CIS borders. As neighbours in the region we face similar challenges and threats to national security.

As the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin recently said: "but there was not, there is not and there will never be a power that could defeat our people. However, the consolidation of the world community is needed for an effective fight against terrorism, extremism, neo-Nazism and other threats". We are open to such cooperation.

Pakistan is one of the states which suffered most from terrorism. Russia has supported and will support counterterrorism efforts of the Pakistani partners in future. Russia and Pakistan share approach in Afghan settlement aimed at peaceful, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan free from terrorism and drugrelated crime. Our fruitful cooperation in the Moscow format on Afghanistan can be mentioned in this regard.

While considering Pakistan an important partner in dealing with terror threat in the region I should say that it is not only struggle against terrorism that unite us.

Our countries have been effectively and constructively cooperating within the UN and other international organizations. Our countries have close positions on a wide range of international problems, including the issues of peaceful settlement of conflicts, reigning of the multipolar world order, strengthening of the UN's central role, the supremacy of international law in interstate relations.

We supported the aspiration of Islamabad to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a full-fledged member and that finally happened during the latest SCO Summit in Russian city of Ufa in July 2015. We hope that the next step in this direction will be done during the coming SCO Summit in Astana in June this year. After India and Pakistan become members, the SCO will include as many as 43% of the world's population while its member states will account for 24% of global gross domestic product.

As the President of Russia Vladimir Putin puts it, it is necessary to eliminate infrastructure restrictions for integration - mainly by creating a system of modern and well-connected transport corridors. Russia with its unique geographic location is willing to engage in this joint activity.

It would be proper to mention that being the largest transit state, Russia quite positively assesses Pakistan's transit capabilities, whose importance is undoubtedly gaining ground in today's interdependent world. Despite the fact that Moscow is not discussing the possibility of joining China-Pakistan economic corridor, we can say with confidence that Russia-Pakistan trade and economic cooperation has its own inherent value, and we intend to strengthen it. Russian companies are implementing business projects in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, including the planned construction of the North-South gas pipeline from Karachi to Lahore, on a bilateral basis.

We see a lot of promising opportunities in the economic field, in energy sector. A huge potential for economic cooperation we possess has yet to be fulfilled. Combined efforts on all levels are needed to give a new impetus to the development of economic cooperation.

We are absolutely confident that further strengthening multifaceted cooperation and partnership bonds between Russia and Pakistan not only fully meets the interests of Russian and Pakistani people but also promotes regional peace and prosperity. We are committed to pursuing stronger friendship and long-term cooperation with Pakistan.

I would like to extend my congratulations to all our friends here in Pakistan and express my sincere gratitude for the continuous support they provide our Embassy.

Happy Russia Day!



Russian National Day Marked in Islamabad

Ambassador of Russian Federation H.E. Alexey Dedov hosted a grand and well attended reception to mark the National Day of his country in Serena Hotel, Islamabad. The official participation was not only up to the mark but was the reflection of rapidly growing relations between two countries. Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif was the chief guest on the occasion.

















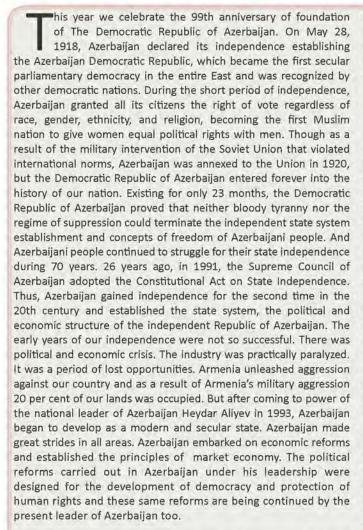


Vessage of

H. E. Ali Alizada

Ambassador of Azerbaijan

on the ocassion of the Republic Day of Azerbaijan and 25th anniversary of Azerbaijan-Pakistan diplomatic relations



And in that difficult time of early years of our independence Pakistan was one of the first countries which recognized independence of Azerbaijan in 1991 and in 1992 we established our diplomatic relations. And since then we enjoy cordial and warm relations. We always support each other on all issues, as well as on Nagorno-Karabakh and Kashmir issues based on UN Security Council resolutions. And because of the Armenian occupation of Azerbaijani lands Pakistan



has not recognized Armenia as an independent state and have not established diplomatic relations with agressor country. The Government and people of Azerbaijan highly value this brotherly and fair approach. Thanks to the efforts and positive views of the leaders of both countries, our relations are at the strategic partnership level. Last year we had a fruitful visit of H. E. Prime Minister of Pakistan to Azerbaijan, and this year after 12 years break H.E. President of Azerbaijan visited Pakistan. Moreover in 2016-17, we have had mutual visits of more than 10 ministers and other officials. In the upcoming months Chief of Air Staff, Chairman Joint Chief of Staff Committee of Pakistan armed forces will visit Azerbaijan. Last year our trade turnover was increased more than 2 times, but we are not satisfied and very keen to boost our economic ties. The successful session of intergovernmental commission was also held last year. We have very good cooperation in the military area, in defence industry. We have discussions to cooperate in establishing joint ventures, to realise joint defence industry production, to purchase most modern defence products from Pakistan. During the visit of H.E. President of Azerbaijan to Pakistan this year, we signed Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Energy and started our energy cooperation. We also have good relations in humanitarian-social field. A number of different humanitarian-social projects were implemented by Heydar Aliyev Foundation of Azerbaijan in Pakistan. We are very interested to further strenghten people to people contacts, as well as to enhance our cultural and tourism relations. This year we have siplified visa prosedures for our Pakistani brothers and sisters and now every Pakistani citizen can get Azerbaijani visa online, through electronic visa system.

This year is significant for our countries because we are also commemorating 25th year of our diplomatic relations. Taking this opportunity, I would like to congratule the governments and peoples of both countries and to thank the government of Pakistan for cooperation and brotherly approach which they showed during these years. 25 anniversary are only the beginning of our modern relations. Throughout the history our nations have communicated, worked together. We can see many signs of Pakistani culture in Azerbaijan and vice versa. Azerbaijan-Pakistan relations are based on confidence, strong, sincere mutual trust and respect between the two countries and nations, and our relations do not depend on material interests. We share our grief together and rejoice in our success together.

These priceless relations we have to value forever.

Azerbaijan declared 2017 as an Islamic Solidarity Year

The strengthening of Islamic solidarity is a challenge of time



By Ilham Aliyev President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

overnment of Azerbaijan has always attached great importance to Islamic solidarity. Position of Azerbaijan on Islamic solidarity was explained in detail in the article titled "The strengthening of Islamic solidarity is a challenge of time" by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev which was published in OIC Journal, as below:

With its ancient history, rich cultural legacy, huge natural and human resources, the Islamic world has played a crucial role in the establishment and development of the modern world order and international relations system. Islam always encouraged peace, tolerance, humane ideals and made an outstanding contribution to the world civilization.

Being a crucial and integral part of the Muslim world, Azerbaijan is renowned as one of the important places where the Islamic cultural legacy was established and preserved. Islam, which became widespread in the territory of Azerbaijan in the 7th-8th centuries, enriched the spiritual life of our people, later growing into one of the main factors defining their lifestyle and co-existence norms. Ashabi-Kahf pilgrimage site, the most ancient mosque in the Caucasus-Shamakhi mosque built in 743-Bibiheybat mosque and pilgrimage complex, Ganja "Imamzade" complex and many other sites can be considered as Azerbaijan's outstanding contribution to the system of Islamic religious and cultural values. The people of Azerbaijan have always had great respect for their history, spiritual values; and even the flag of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, which was founded in 1918, reflected their Islamic identity. Despite persecutions under the USSR, the people of Azerbaijan managed to preserve some of their religious sites and mosques, and remained committed to their religious values.

Restoration of state independence in the early 1990s marked the establishment of the

freedom of religion in Azerbaijan. If there were only 17 mosques in Azerbaijan during the Soviet period, their number reached 2166 at the beginning of 2017. 306 mosques are currently under state protection as historic monuments. Bibiheybat mosque and pilgrimage complex, Tazapir mosque, Icharishahar Juma and Holy Muhammad mosques, Ajdarbay mosque, Shamakhi Juma mosque, Ganja "Imamzade" complex and tens of other religious monuments and mosques were completely repaired and renovated by the state, and opened doors to believers. Building and developing relations with the Islamic world have been among the key priorities of Azerbaijan's foreign policy in the years of independence. Azerbaijan opened its first diplomatic missions in Muslim countries, and in a short period of time our state became an active member of the organizations, which unite the Muslim world, such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and ISESCO. Azerbaijan initiated the establishment of new organizations that contribute to the strengthening of Islamic solidarity, including OIC Youth Forum, OIC Labor Center and the Journalist Association of OIC Member States. Our country also created bilateral and multilateral cooperation formats, which serve the expansion of relations with the Muslim world, and numerous projects implemented within the framework of these platforms contribute to the strengthening of mutual ties.

Islamic countries played a vital role in Azerbaijan's election as a member of the UN Security Council in 2012. We consider this as a manifestation of the high level of our political relations, mutual support and solidarity with Islamic countries. During its membership of the UN Security Council, Azerbaijan put forward and implemented a number of proposals serving the interests of the Islamic world. For example, along with an initiative to organize a high-level international conference on the fight against terrorism, Azerbaijan also ensured the organization of a high-level meeting on the expansion of cooperation between the UN and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

We have to admit that today the Islamic world is facing serious challenges and numerous problems, which await solution. The Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Palestine and Kashmir problems, conflicts in the Middle East states, refugee crisis, etc. can be singled out among these problems. It is a well-known fact over the past 200 years the

Armenians have committed bloody crimes in order to occupy Azerbaijan's historic lands. Continuing its policy of aggression, Armenia occupied 20 per cent of the Azerbaijani territories at the beginning of the 1990s, and as a result more than one million Azerbaijanis became refugees and IDPs, our fellow countrymen were subjected to ethnic cleansing and genocide. In 1993, the UN Security Council adopted four resolutions condemning the use of force against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories, and recognizing the country's territorial integrity, sovereignty and inviolability of its internationally-recognized borders. Similar documents were adopted by the OSCE, Council of Europe, European Union, Non-Alignment Movement, and other influential international organizations. OIC adopted numerous resolutions supporting Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and just position, and urging recognition of the Khojaly genocide and practical measures against Armenia's policy of occupation. The issue has repeatedly been discussed at the OIC Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and a Contact Group on the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan was established within OIC and held its first meeting in September, 2016.

The UN and OIC resolutions, which clearly recognize Armenia as an aggressor, must be the main message to all Muslim countries that want to develop relations with the invader because Armenia's policy of occupation is an attack not only on Azerbaijan's religious and cultural assets, but on historic and cultural legacy of Islam in general. Hundreds of Islamic culture monuments, mosques, temples, cemeteries, etc. were destroyed in the territories occupied by Armenia, and all this was confirmed by the OSCE fact-finding missions. I also have to note that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia refused to officially recognize Armenia because of its occupation of the Azerbaijani territories, while Turkey has not established any relations with this country. Currently five Muslim states have officially recognized Khojaly genocide. We consider all this as an example of brotherly relationship and real support.

Azerbaijan spares no efforts to contribute to resolution of the ongoing conflicts in the Islamic world, unambiguously stands for international law during discussions on fair resolution of problems and always remains committed to its principled position. In 2013, Azerbaijan hosted "The donor's conference to finance the strategic plan for the development of the city of Al-Quds", and "The establishment of an Islamic Financial Safety Net in Support of the State of Palestine" conference, and made significant donations to this cause. Azerbaijan, which is strongly committed to religious and cultural values of Islam, is also renowned as one of



the world's centers of multiculturalism. We consider the provision of cultural diversity, an atmosphere of ethnic and religious tolerance in Azerbaijan as a great achievement. There has never been religious and ethnic discrimination in our country, and representatives of all religions have lived here in peace and mutual understanding. This is our lifestyle and the best way to confidently move forward.

We're openly speaking against Islamophobia and working consistently to promote Islamic values around the world. Azerbaijan actively contributed to the organization of the Department of Islamic Arts in famous Louvre museum in France, and was the first Muslim country to demonstrate its exhibition in the Vatican. In 2009, Baku was declared the capital of Islamic culture with the support of ISESCO. In 2018, Nakhchivan, another ancient Azerbaijani city, was awarded this honorary title.

Azerbaijan is taking practical steps to strengthen intercultural dialogue. Baku, which annually hosts the Intercultural Dialogue Forum, International Humanitarian Forum and other major international events, is already called a "humanitarian Davos". In 2016, we witnessed how aggressively the migrants from the Middle East and African countries seeking refuge in Europe were met, and also saw a clear manifestation of Islamophobic trends. In such a situation, by declaring 2016 "The Year of Multiculturalism", Azerbaijan once again showed the world that representatives of different religions, nationalities, ethnic groups

can live together comfortably and with dignity in the same country, under the same sky. We not only perfectly regulate inter-ethnic, interfaith relations within the country, but offer the world a progressive model of tolerance and multiculturalism.

As one of the few countries, which are members of both the Council of Europe and OIC, Azerbaijan is making a practical contribution to the strengthening of dialogue among civilizations.

This year Baku will host the 4th Islamic Solidarity Games. It is symbolic that in a short space of time the European Games are followed by the Islamic Solidarity Games, and this shows that Azerbaijan has become the center of dialogue of civilizations and religions, and an economic and cultural bridge.

Today the Islamic world needs unity and solidarity like never before. Therefore, declaration of 2017 as "The Year of Islamic Solidarity" in Azerbaijan is a goodwill message to the Muslim community and to the whole world. Major goals of "The Year of Islamic Solidarity" are to strengthen unity in the Muslim world and to show the whole world that Islam is a religion of peace and culture. I think that apart from being a sporting event, the Islamic Solidarity Games to be held in Baku this May will be the days of unity and solidarity of the Islamic world.

THE REPUBLIC OF **AZERBAIJAN**

zerbaijan is a marvelous country with its unlimited natural resources, centuries old culture, history and ancient people, whose lifestyle presents a unique and harmonious combination of the traditions and ceremonies of different cultures and civilizations.

According to archeological dig and written sources, Azerbaijan people has been occupying with carpet-making since bronze epoch (late II millennium - early I millennium). Herodotus, Claudius, Aelianus, Xenophon and other world historians wrote about carpet-making development in Azerbaijan. Carpets, weaved by separate carpet-making schools of Azerbaijan (Guba, Baku, Shirvan, Gandja, Gazakh, Nagorny Karabakh, Tabriz) in different periods, amaze people till nowadays. Most of them kept in well-known museums of the world.

Gobustan rock pictures belonged to the early of bronze epoch (III millennium B.C) in Aychingilli and Parichingil mountains near the Zalkha lake in Kalbacar region, rock pictures in the Gamigaya mountains in the north of Ordubad town have exceptional importance among the most old patterns of fine art.

Azerbaijan was rich of architectural pieces one of branches of folk art along with works of fine art since ancient times. Maiden tower and Shirvanshahs palace in Baku, Momina Xatun and Yusif ibn Kuseyr mausoleums, Shaki Khan Palace and other patterns are rare pearls of architecture.

Enriching the musical culture of world, Azerbaijani music has centuries-old traditions.

Folk songs, dances, the activities of ashiks (folk poets-singers) have specific place in Azerbaijani national music. Mugham is wellknown important folk musical composition. It is not accidental that UNESCO, specialized organization of UN, included Azerbaijani mugham in the list of world cultural heritage.

Territory

86,600 square km (forests 12%, water basins 1.7%, sown area 54,9%, including 31.1 % pastures and hayfields, 31.4% other lands). The country extends between longitude 44° and 52° east and latitude 38° and 42° north, Baku situated at the parallel of 40°.

Neighbours

It borders with Iran (765 km) and Turkey (15 km) on the south, Russia (390 km) on the north, Georgia (480 km) on the north-west and Armenia (1007 km) on the west.





Our national music has been developing along with literature since ancient times. For instance, mugham developed along with Eastern poetry. Thus, singers performed mugham, recited ghazals (a kind of poem) written by well-known Azeri poets as Nizami Ganjavi, Khagani Shirvani, Fuzuli, Nasimi.

Azerbaijan has a rich centuries old history of science and the enlightenment. The Baku State University was founded in 1919 and the institutes of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan played an exceptional role in scientific, educational and cultural development of Azerbaijan. Local scientists are currently studying various important issues such as the depths of the Caspian Sea, space exploration.

Today, independent Azerbaijan is an active member of United Nations (UN), Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Council of Europe (CE), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), GUAM, Black Sea Economic Collaboration (BSEC), and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). Azerbaijan also actively cooperates with the European Union, Islamic Development Bank, NATO, International Monetary Fund, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and other organizations. It accedes to the new joint documents and international agreements.

HISTORY OF AZERBAIJAN, AN OLDEST LAND

Sounding of "Azerbaijan" regularly changed along the history. Historical sources reflect former names of Azerbaijan as Andirpatian, Atropatena, Adirbijan and Azirbijan.

The beginning of AD, Azerbaijan was a part of the Sassanid Empire in the 3-7th centuries and later Arabic Caliphate conquered the country in the 7th century. As Azerbaijani people mostly adopted Islam during the time of Rashidun



chalifs, Independent Albanian Apostolic Church of Azerbaijan existed in the northern part of the country, especially in western mountainous regions, Nagorno Karabakh till it was abolished and subordinated directly to the Armenian Church by Russian Empire in 1836.

Acceptance of Islam in the 7th century made a great change in the history of Azerbaijan. Islam turned a strong push in the formation of unique people and the language and quickened this process. Islam, as a common religion of Turkic and non-Turkic ethic groups, led to formation of the same traditions, moral and spiritual revival, widening of kinship relations and deepening of the integration process in the territory of Azerbaijan. Islam united all the Muslim Turkic and non-Turkic ethic groups living in the region.

After Arabic Caliphate fell into decay since the mid of the 9th century, Turkic-Islamic empires consolidated their positions in the Caucasus, in the Middle East. States ruled by Islamic-Turkic dynasties such as Sajis, Shirvanshahs, Salaris, Ravvadis, Shaddadis, Seljuqs, Atabays, Timurid, Ottoman, Qara Qoyunlus, Ag Qoyunlus, Safavids, Afshars, Gajars and others set the seal on the history of the Azerbaijan statehood, of the whole South Caucasus and the Near and the Middle East.

According to Gulustan (1813) and Turkmanchay (1828) agreements which were the results of the wars between Russia and Iran, Azerbaijan remained occupied within the Russian empire.





May, 1918, the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic-the first parliamentary, democratic and Muslim republic in the whole East and Islamic world was established. During 23 month independence, Azerbaijani nation proved that no colonial or repressive power is able to crush its liberty ideals and state traditions. The first theatre in the Muslim East was founded in Azerbaijan, and the first opera was also staged here. Azerbaijan was the first country in the Muslim world that granted women voting rights.

The latest period of modern Azerbaijani statehood was marked with the adoption of the Constitution Act about the State Independence of Azerbaijan Republic on October 18, 1991 and is still successfully going on. The patriotism,



national and spiritual values of our people and Turkic-Islamic unity were re-established in Azerbaijan.

In 1993, Heydar Aliyev was elected the president of the independent Azerbaijan. Under his leadership, Azerbaijan ensured its political-economic stability and started the development in the different fields of social and economical life, as well as on human rights and democracy. As a result, Azerbaijan was accepted full member of the Council of Europe in 2001.

Today, Azerbaijan is pursuing balanced foreign policy, expanding the relations with both Eastern and Western countries. Azerbaijan is also cultural bridge between Muslim and Western countries. Azerbaijan won 2011 Eurovision Song Contest which proved that Muslim country Azerbaijan is able to represent Western values as well. In 2015, 1st European Games was held in Baku. In May, 2017, this year Azerbaijan hosted 4th Islamic Solidarity Games. And in June, 2017, Formula 1 Grand Prix will be organized in Azerbaijan.

Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan

Historically, Azerbaijani people have never felt hatred against Armenians. For many centuries, Armenians had been living and doing activities freely in the countries ruled by Azeri-Turkic dynasties, such as Kara Koyunlu, Ak Koyunlu, Safavi and the khanates. Armenians used all of their rights quite freely. They offered



their prayers, did not join the army and were engaged in trade and handicraft, benefiting from protection of the state. Therefore, they were known to be wealthy.

After occupation of Azerbaijan by Tsardom Russia in 1828, Tsardom Russia on mass scale resettled 50 thousand Armenian from Iran and 90 thousand from Turkey in the territories of Azerbaijan, especially to the mountainous regions of Karabakh and in those territories, the foundation of future Armenian state on Azerbaijan lands was started.





Russian envoy A. Griboedov noted "It's necessary to resettle Armenians from the regions occupied by Russian Army that are Tabriz, Khoy, Salmas, Maragha to Nakhichevan, Yerevan and Karabakh" in 1828. Writer N. Shavrov also wrote "To date 1 million out of 1 million and 300 thousand Armenian people of Transcaucasia are not aboriginal inhabitants" in 1911.

Since then, Armenians has become more chauvinist and aggressive against Muslim Turkic peoples, including Azerbaijanis. They made ethnic and cultural cleansing and expelled Azerbaijanis from their native lands in 1905, 1918, 1948-1953, 1988. In 1988, chauvinist Armenian nationalists began mass ethnic cleansing against Azerbaijanis. Subsequently, the war started and Armenian forces occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and other 7 neighboring districts.

Azerbaijan never accepts the annexation of its native lands and requires occupying forces' withdrawal from these territories in all

platforms. In this regards, UN Security Council adopted 4 resolutions numbered 822, 853, 874 and 884, identifying Armenia as occupier power of Nagorno-Karabakh and demanding withdrawal of Armenian forces from occupied districts in 1993.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted a resolution No. 1416 (2005), UN General Assembly GA/10693 (2008), The European Parliament (2009/2216(INI)), confirming Armenian occupation and demanding withdrawal of occupying forces from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan. But Armenia does not obey international law and continues the occupation. The position of Azerbaijan is that Azerbaijani government is ready to guarantee Armenian people of Nagorno-Karabakh with the highest level autonomy within Azerbaijan and invading forces should have to leave Azerbaijani lands, 1 million of Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons expelled from Nagorno-Karabakh and other adjacent 7 districts by Armenians return to their native lands.

How to go to Azerbaijan?



n 2009, the United Arab Emirates' low-cost Fly Dubai started the flights to Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. Now, Baku-Dubai-two hours in one direction and up to 200 USD, afterwards, travelers can enjoy any flights of FlyDubai carrying passengers from Pakistan to Dubai to Baku. Turkish Airlines (THY) is operating Islamabad-Istanbul and Istanbul-Baku flights, so Pakistani travelers can use THY flights in Islamabad-Istanbul-Baku route.

Furthermore, Qatar Airways is operating Islamabad-Doha and Doha-Baku flights, Qatar Airways' flights are also beneficial for travelers in this regard.

Emirates airline is carrying out Islamabad-Dubai flights. Travelers from Pakistan can utilize this flight to visit Baku as well.

Pakistani travelers can go to Azerbaijan via Iranian territory by motor vehicles.





Getting visa is very easy now

"ASAN Visa System" was established according to the Degree No. 922, dated June 1, 2016, on "Simplification of procedures for issuing e-visas and establishment of "ASAN Visa" system" by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to facilitate visa regime and to attract more tourists to Azerbaijan. Now, the citizens of Pakistan can simply visit www.e-visa.gov.az and get the e-visa in three steps (apply, pay and submit e-visa) and within three days. The e-visa is given to only tourists. E-visa fee is 20 US dollars and it presents a single-entry e-visa with a 30 days validity to stay in the territory of the country.

Hotels

Today, there are more than 500 hotels with the highest level of service. The most popular hotels in Baku are the chain of brand hotels, such as Four Seasons Hotel Baku, Hyatt Regency, JW Marriott Absheron Baku Hotel, Bilgah Beach Hotel, Grand Hotel Europe, Hilton Baku, Hotel Badamdar and many other hotels in the regions with cheap prices.





ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF AZERBAIJAN

1) POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STABILITY

- In the past 10 years: GDP grew by 2.4 times, non-oil GDP by 2.3 times,
- foreign trade by 2.4 times, strategic currency reserves by 16.3 times.
- Foreign debt of Azerbaijan is only 19.8% of the GDP, the volume of
- currency reserves accounts to about 77% of the GDP, and public deficit is about 1.2%
- 40th most competitive economy among 140 countries and 1st among CIS members (WEF Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016)
- Safety, government and political stability are considered the strongest factors by international business community operating in Azerbaijan (WEF Global Competitiveness Report 2015-2016)
- Investments worth 220 billion USD since 1995.

ATTRACTIVE INVESTMENT CLIMATE

- Attractive investment incentive schemes
- NO restrictions to foreign investments. National regime applied
- NO local content requirement

- NO business inspections by state authorities and agencies
- Party to all major multilateral instruments on protection and promotion of foreign investment
- 47 bilateral investment treaties and 51 double taxation treaties with foreign
- Over 450 e-services by state authorities

REFORMIST BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

- A number of fundamental reforms since 2015
- Top reformer of business regulations in the world according to the World Bank's Doing Business 2009 and 2015
- Low burden of government regulation
- Strengthening welcoming environment and legislative reforms are among the top priorities of "Azerbaijan 2020: the vision of the future" - national development concept

SKILLED LABOUR FORCE

- About half of the population is economically active. Total labour force reached 4.84 million persons
- One of the highest employment rates in



- the region (95%)
- The main driver of employment is the private sector (74%)
- Extremely high literacy rate of 99.8%
- Around 30 thousand students graduate from universities and other higher education institutions annually
- Large number of Azerbaijani students studying in the best universities worldwide in the framework of the State Program on Education of Azerbaijani Youth Abroad in 2007-2015











A large R&D center, the National Academy of Sciences with its 28 research institutes in parallel with 53 universities and 107 VAT schools ensures the scientific and HR component of economic development

A PERFECT HUB 5)

- Located on the south-eastern border of Europe serving as the natural bridge between Europe and Asia
- Caspian East-West Corridor as a key route connecting two major global economies, China and Europe (4,200 km length, 12-14 days transit period)
- Logistics hub for the Caspian region with the biggest airport, sea port and railway
- Free access to CIS and Georgia markets of 270 million consumers and GDP worth 1.6 trillion USD
- Outreach to 50 countries with almost 50% of world consumers within 4-hours-flightrange (medium-haul-flight)

FAST DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURE

- The most state-of-the-art transport infrastructure in the region
- About 19,000 km of hard-surface roads, 8,000 km of which built and constructed in past 10 years
- 6 international airports. Baku operates the largest international airport in the region
- A new international sea port with annual

capacity of 10-11.5 million tons of cargo and 50 thousand TEU (to be increased up to 21-25 mln tons of cargo and 1 mln TEU). A new shipyard and the only one on the Caspian Sea commissioned in 2013

Over 2,000 km of operational railroads. The so-called "Iron Silk Way", Baku-Tbilisi-Kars trunk-railway connecting European and Asian railway systems is under construction.

ABUNDANT RESOURCES

- 9 climatic zones out of 11 existing in the world ranging from humid subtropical climate to semi-arctic
- The territory of Azerbaijan stands out for its complex geological structure, diversity and manifold of minerals

- Major deposits of oil and gas
- Ferrous and nonferrous, rare and fine metals: iron and chromite ores, copper, lead and zinc, cobalt, molybdenum, aluminum, quicksilver, gold
- Nonferrous minerals and construction materials: building stone, facing stone, clay, cement raw materials, construction stone, sand-gravel, sand, bituminous sands, perlite, pumice, gypsum, anhydride, alabaster, bentonite clays, sodium chloride, dolomite, quartzite, limestone for flux and soda, ceramic raw materials, mineral dye (clayey ochre), quartz sands, barite, pebble, brim- stone, Icelandic spar, refractory and hard clays, natural soda flashes, zeolites









25 Years of Pakistan-Azerbaijan relations & Republic Day of Azerbaijan Marked in Islamabad

Ambassador Ali Alizada and Mrs. Aynura Alizada hosted a reception to celebrate the Republic Day of Azerbaijan marking 25th anniversary of Azerbaijan-Pakistan diplomatic relations. The chief guest of the event was federal commerce minister, Khurram Dastgir Khan.

A large number of guests including ambassadors, other diplomats, senior civil and military officials as well as prominent people from various segment of society graced the ceremony.











42nd Reunification day Golf match held at Bahria Golf City Islamabad

H.E. the Ambassador of Vietnam Mr. NGUYEN XUAN LUU hosted a golf match at Bahria Golf City, Murree Expressway, Islamabad. In this golf tournament about 30 golf players participated with two groups of ladies. At the end Ambassador of Vietnam thanked all guest for making this event colourful. H.E. also thanked the sponsor of this match Mr. Nadeem Malik of Tahoor Company, Bahria Golf City and Freeline Movers.



President Xi termed Pak China relations as "Iron Brothers"

By M. Saeed Yousafzai

rime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif held separate meetings with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Li Kegiang, assuring both the leaders that Pakistan fully supports China's giant One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative.

During the meeting with President Xi Jinping, the two sides discussed a range of issues of bilateral interest as well as developments in the region. President Xi said that China and Pakistan are iron brothers and this partnership has withstood the test of time.

The Prime Minister expressed support to "One China Policy" and to other core issues including Taiwan, Tibet, Xinjiang and South China Sea.

The Prime Minister deeply appreciated President Xi's vision of "One Belt One Road" (OBOR) and congratulated President Xion hosting Belt and Road Forum with the timely theme of "Cooperation for Common Prosperity". The Forum will serve as an important platform for discussing international cooperation and joint development for win-win cooperation among a large number of countries.

The Prime Minister noted that these goals are aligned with his own vision for economic development, regional connectivity & peace. In this context, the two sides also discussed the impressive progress of Pakistan-China bilateral China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which is a flagship project of OBOR. The Prime Minister also thanked the Chinese President for China's strong support to Pakistan's full membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

President Xi stated that China greatly valued its all-weather strategic friendship partnership with Pakistan. He stressed that at a time when major and profound changes are taking place both internationally and regionally, exemplary cooperation between China and Pakistan would serve the fundamental interests of the two countries and help promote regional peace and development. He thanked the Prime Minister for his support to OBOR and for his participation in Belt and Road Forum with a high powered delegation.

He appreciated the sacrifices Pakistan security forces has rendered in facing the challenges of terrorism and expressed China's full support to Pakistan's measures in this regard.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Shrif shaking hand with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif shaking hand with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang in Beijing.

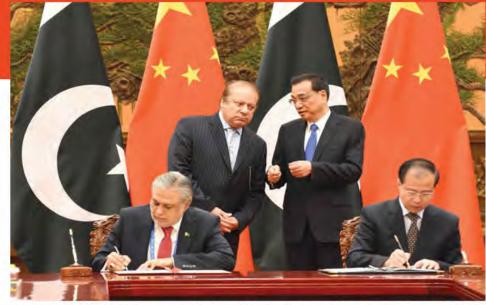
The Prime Minister **Nawaz Sharif** deeply appreciated **President Xi's** vision of "One Belt One Road"

The Belt and Road Forum (BRF) is part of the 'Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road' initiative launched by President Xi Jinping in 2013 and attended by 27 other heads of states or governments.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the flagship programme of OBOR.

Xi has championed what China formally calls the "One Belt, One Road" or OBOR initiative to build a new Silk Road linking Asia, Africa and Europe, a landmark programme to invest billions of dollars in infrastructure projects including railways, ports and power grids.

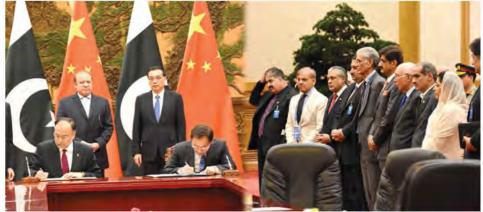
China has dedicated \$40 billion to a Silk Road Fund and the idea was the driving force behind the establishment of the \$50 billion Chinabacked Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang witnessing signing of MOUs at Beijing.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Head of NEA witnessing Signing of MoU on Roadmap for Power Projects unde CPEC at Beijing.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang witnessing Signing of MoUs at Beijing. Chief Ministers of the four provinces are also seen.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Chinese Premier Li Keqian Leading their Respective Sides in delegation level talks at Beijing.

He also expressed appreciation for Pakistan's accelerated social and economic development under the leadership of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Noting with satisfaction the smooth progress of China Pakistan Economic Corridor, he stated that it was not only a flagship bilateral project but would also play a major role in development of the region and of the world.

Both sides agreed to continue to deepen cooperation in all areas of bilateral relations while exploring new avenues of bilateral cooperation.

Earlier the prime minister, chief ministers and federal ministers met with Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang at Peoples Great Hall of China. The meeting, according to the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), focused on intra-regional trade and connectivity as a crucial factor for sustainable development of Asia and beyond.

The two sides discussed progress on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), - an important part of Chinese President Xi Jinping's One Belt, One Road vision.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif congratulated Premier Li Keqiang on hosting the OBOR forum and said Pakistan fully supports the project.

He said composition of his delegation to China particularly the presence of four chief ministers was testimony to the broad-based Pak-China friendship.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif being warmly received upon arrival at Beijing. Chief Ministers of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan are also seen.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif meets Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegan on the sidelines of Belt and Road Forum in Beijing.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif meets President of Veitnam Tran Quang on the sidelines of Belt & Road Forum in Beijing.



Belarus Alexandr Lukashenko on the sidelines of Belt & Road Forum in Beijing.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif meets President of Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the sidelines of Belt & Road Forum in Beijing.

Pakistan believed that China's strategic policies in the region were for peace and prosperity, he added. The Prime Minister said Pakistan was grateful to China's support for the launch of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Later on, Pakistan and China signed various agreements at ceremony which was witnessed Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and his Li Kegiang.

The meeting was attended by Chief Minister Punjab Shehbaz Sharif, Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah, Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pervaiz Khattak, Chief Minister

Balochistan Nawab Sanaullah Zehri, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Commerce Minister Khurram Dastagir, Planning Minister Dr Ahsan Iqbal, State Minister for Information Technology Anousha Rehman and PM's Adviser on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz.

Li Shixiang, vice chairman of Beijing Municipal People Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) and China's ambassador to Pakistan Sun Weidong and senior government officials received the prime minister at the Beijing International Airport. Pakistan's Ambassador Masood Khalid was also present.

A contingent of static guard presented salute to the prime minister as he alighted from his aircraft. The prime minister's entourage included the four chief ministers; Shahbaz Sharif of Punjab, Pervaiz Khattak of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sanaullah Zehri of Balochistan and Murad Ali Shah of Sindh. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Railways Minister Saad Rafique, Minister for Planning Dr Ahsan Iqbal, Commerce Minister Khurram Dastagir, State Minister for Information Technology Anousha Rehman and PM's Adviser on Foreign Affairs Sartai Aziz also accompanied the prime minister.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and First Lady in a group photo with other world leaders and their spouses at the Great Hall of People in Beijing.

China did not have selfish motives nor pursue selfish interests: Chinese State Councilor

hinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi said they just concluded Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation outlined the roadmap for the success of the Belt and Road Initiative and pointed a clear way for future cooperation.

Yang said in an interview that the forum, which was held in Beijing, clarified an assortment of projects that would be implemented within the framework of the initiative. The forum yielded a list of outcomes, which included 76 consensuses comprising more than 270 detailed results in five key areas, namely policy, infrastructure, trade, financial and people-topeople connectivity. "The grand blueprint of

the Initiative is being converted into a clear roadmap," said Yang.

Yang said forum was the largest multilateral diplomatic activity that was proposed and held by China since the founding of the People's Republic of China. The forum sent a positive signal for all parties to work together to build a community of shared future, which would be extremely important for China and the world.

Yang said that China did not have selfish motives nor pursue selfish interests, and hosted the forum with an open, inclusive, democratic and transparent attitude. He said the forum consisted of an opening ceremony, a roundtable summit and high-level meetings to ensure all parties had the opportunity to fully take part in the forum. Yang said he believes the broad and in-depth participation of all parties involved into the initiative will contribute hugely to China and world development.

Twenty-nine foreign heads of state and government attended the forum. Other delegates included officials, entrepreneurs, financiers and media from over 130 countries and regions, which are home to more than two thirds of the world's population and their combined gross domestic product accounts for 90 percent of the world's total.

President Xi's speech at opening of Belt and Road forum

Government,

Heads of International Organizations,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

In this lovely season of early Summer when every living thing is full of energy, I wish to welcome all of you, distinguished guests representing over 100 countries, to attend this important forum on the Belt and Road Initiative held in Beijing. This is indeed a gathering of great minds. In the coming two days, I hope that by engaging in full exchanges of views, we will contribute to pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative, a project of the century, so that it will benefit people across the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

Over 2,000 years ago, our ancestors, trekking across vast steppes and deserts, opened the transcontinental passage connecting Asia, Europe and Africa, known today as the Silk Road. Our ancestors, navigating rough seas, created sea routes linking the East with the West, namely, the maritime Silk Road. These ancient silk routes opened windows of friendly engagement among nations, adding a splendid chapter to the history of human progress. The thousand-year-old "gilt bronze silkworm" displayed at China's Shaanxi History Museum and the Belitung shipwreck discovered in Indonesia bear witness to this exciting period of history.

Spanning thousands of miles and years, the ancient silk routes embody the spirit of peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit. The Silk Road spirit has become a great heritage of human civilization.

-- Peace and cooperation. In China's Han Dynasty around 140 B.C., Zhang Qian, a royal emissary, left Chang'an, capital of the Han Dynasty. He traveled westward on a mission of peace and opened an overland route linking the East and the West, a daring undertaking which came to be known as Zhang Qian's journey to

the Western regions. Centuries later, in the years of Tang, Song and Yuan Dynasties, such silk routes, both over land and at sea, boomed. Great adventurers, including Du Huan of China, Marco Polo of Italy and ibn Batutah of Morocco, left their footprints along these ancient routes. In the early 15th century, Zheng He, the famous Chinese navigator in the Ming Dynasty, made seven voyages to the Western Seas, a feat which still is remembered today. These pioneers won their place in history not as conquerors with warships, guns or swords. Rather, they are remembered as friendly emissaries leading camel caravans and sailing treasure-loaded ships. Generation after generation, the silk routes travelers have built a bridge for peace and East-West cooperation.

-- Openness and inclusiveness. The ancient silk routes spanned the valleys of the Nile, the Tigris and Euphrates, the Indus and Ganges and the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers. They connected the birthplaces of the Egyptian, Babylonian, Indian and Chinese civilizations as well as the lands of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam and homes of people of different nationalities and races. These routes enabled people of various civilizations, religions and races to interact with and embrace each other with open mind. In the course of exchange, they fostered a spirit of mutual respect and were engaged in a common endeavor to pursue prosperity. Today, ancient cities of Jiuquan, Dunhuang, Tulufan, Kashi, Samarkand, Baghdad and Constantinople as well as ancient ports of Ningbo, Quanzhou, Guangzhou, Beihai, Colombo, Jeddah and Alexandria stand as living monuments to these past interactions. This part of history shows that civilization thrives with openness and nations prosper through exchange.

-- Mutual learning. The ancient silk routes were not for trade only, they boosted flow of knowledge as well. Through these routes, Chinese silk, porcelain, lacquerwork and ironware were shipped to the West, while pepper, flax, spices, grape and pomegranate entered China. Through these routes,

Buddhism, Islam and Arab astronomy, calendar and medicine found their way to China, while China's four great inventions and silkworm breeding spread to other parts of the world. More importantly, the exchange of goods and know-how spurred new ideas. For example, Buddhism originated in India, blossomed in China and was enriched in Southeast Asia. Confucianism, which was born in China, gained appreciation by European thinkers such as Leibniz and Voltaire. Herein lies the appeal of mutual learning.

-- Mutual benefit. The ancient silk routes witnessed the bustling scenes of visits and trade over land and ships calling at ports. Along these major arteries of interaction, capital, technology and people flowed freely, and goods, resources and benefits were widely shared. The ancient prosperous cities of Alma-Ata, Samarkand and Chang'an and ports of Sur and Guangzhou thrived, so did the Roman Empire as well as Parthia and Kushan Kingdoms. The Han and Tang Dynasties of China entered the golden age. The ancient silk routes brought prosperity to these regions and boosted their development.

History is our best teacher. The glory of the ancient silk routes shows that geographical distance is not insurmountable. If we take the first courageous step towards each other, we can embark on a path leading to friendship, shared development, peace, harmony and a better future.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

From the historical perspective, humankind has reached an age of great progress, great transformation and profound changes. In this increasingly multi-polar, economically globalized, digitized and culturally diversified world, the trend toward peace and development becomes stronger, and reform and innovation are gaining momentum. Never have we seen such close interdependence among countries as today, such fervent desire of people for a better life, and never have we had so many



means to prevail over difficulties.

In terms of reality, we find ourselves in a world fraught with challenges. Global growth requires new drivers, development needs to be more inclusive and balanced, and the gap between the rich and the poor needs to be narrowed. Hotspots in some regions are causing instability and terrorism is rampant. Deficit in peace, development and governance poses a daunting challenge to mankind. This is the issue that has always been on my mind.

In the autumn of 2013, respectively in Kazakhstan and Indonesia, I proposed the building of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, which I call the Belt and Road Initiative. As a Chinese saying goes, "Peaches and plums do not speak, but they are so attractive that a path is formed below the trees." Four years on, over 100 countries and international organizations have supported and got involved in this initiative. Important resolutions passed by the UN General Assembly and Security Council contain reference to it. Thanks to our efforts, the vision of the Belt and Road Initiative is becoming a reality and bearing rich fruit.

- These four years have seen deepened policy connectivity. I have said on many occasions that the pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative is not meant to reinvent the wheel. Rather, it aims to complement the development strategies of countries involved by leveraging their comparative strengths. We have enhanced coordination with the policy initiatives of relevant countries, such as the Eurasian Economic Union of Russia, the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, the Bright Road initiative of Kazakhstan, the Middle Corridor initiative of Turkey, the Development Road initiative of Mongolia, the Two Corridors, One Economic Circle initiative of Viet Nam, the Northern Powerhouse initiative of the UK and the Amber Road initiative of Poland. We are also promoting complementarity between China's development plan and those of Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Hungary and other countries. China has signed cooperation agreements with over 40 countries and international organizations and carried out framework cooperation on production capacity with more than 30 countries. During the forum, a number of cooperation agreements on policy connectivity and action plans will be signed. We will also launch Belt and Road cooperation initiative on trade connectivity together with some 60 countries and international organizations. Such policy connectivity will produce a multiplying effect on cooperation among the parties involved.

-- These four years have seen enhanced infrastructure connectivity. Building roads and railways creates prosperity in all sectors. We have accelerated the building of Jakarta-Bandung high-speed railway, China-Laos railway, Addis Ababa-Diibouti railway and Hungary-Serbia railway, and upgraded Gwadar and Piraeus ports in cooperation with relevant countries. A large number of connectivity projects are also in the pipeline. Today, a multidimensional infrastructure network is taking shape, one that is underpinned by economic corridors such as China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor and the New Eurasian Continental Bridge, featuring land-sea-air transportation routes and information expressway and supported by major railway, port and pipeline projects.

-- These four years have seen increased trade connectivity. China has worked with other countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative to promote trade and investment facilitation and improve business environment. I was told that for Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries alone, customs clearance time for agricultural produce exporting to China is cut by 90%. Total trade between China and other Belt and Road countries in 2014-2016 has exceeded US\$3 trillion, and China's investment in these countries has surpassed US\$50 billion. Chinese companies have set up 56 economic

cooperation zones in over 20 countries, generating some US\$1.1 billion of tax revenue and 180,000 jobs for them.

-- These four years have seen expanded financial connectivity. Financing bottleneck is a key challenge to realizing connectivity. China has engaged in multiple forms of financial cooperation with countries and organizations involved in the Belt and Road Initiative. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank has provided US\$1.7 billion of loans for 9 projects in Belt and Road participating countries. The Silk Road Fund has made US\$4 billion of investment, and the 16+1 financial holding company between China and Central and Eastern European countries has been inaugurated. With distinctive focus, these new financial mechanisms and traditional multilateral financial institutions such as the World Bank complement each other. A multitiered Belt and Road financial cooperation network has taken an initial shape.

-- These four years have seen strengthened people-to-people connectivity. Friendship, which derives from close contact between the people, holds the key to sound state-to-state relations. Guided by the Silk Road spirit, we the Belt and Road Initiative participating countries have pulled our efforts to build the educational Silk Road and the health Silk Road, and carried out cooperation in science, education, culture, health and people-to-people exchange. Such cooperation has helped lay a solid popular and social foundation for pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative. Every year, the Chinese government provides 10,000 government scholarships to the relevant countries. China's local governments have also set up special Silk Road scholarships to encourage international cultural and educational exchanges. Projects of people-to-people cooperation such as Silk Road culture year, tourism year, art festival, film and TV project, seminar and think tank dialogue are flourishing. These interactions have brought our people increasingly closer.

These fruitful outcomes show that the Belt and Road Initiative responds to the trend of the

times, conforms to the law of development, and meets the people's interests. It surely has broad prospects.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends.

As we often say in China, "The beginning is the most difficult part." A solid first step has been taken in pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative. We should build on the sound momentum generated to steer the Belt and Road Initiative toward greater success. In pursuing this endeavor, we should be guided by the following principles:

First, we should build the Belt and Road into a road for peace. The ancient silk routes thrived in times of peace, but lost vigor in times of war. The pursuit of the Belt and Road Initiative requires a peaceful and stable environment. We should foster a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation; and we should forge partnerships of dialogue with no confrontation and of friendship rather than alliance. All countries should respect each other's sovereignty, dignity and territorial integrity, each other's development paths and social systems, and each other's core interests and major concerns.

Some regions along the ancient Silk Road used to be a land of milk and honey. Yet today, these places are often associated with conflict, turbulence, crisis and challenge. Such state of affairs should not be allowed to continue. We should foster the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and create a security environment built and shared by all. We should work to resolve hotspot issues through political means, and promote mediation in the spirit of justice. We should intensify counter-terrorism efforts, address both its symptoms and root causes, and strive to eradicate poverty, backwardness and social injustice.

Second, we should build the Belt and Road into a road of prosperity. Development holds the master key to solving all problems. In pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative, we should focus on the fundamental issue of development, release the growth potential of various countries and achieve economic integration and interconnected development and deliver benefits to all

Industries are the foundation of economy. We should deepen industrial cooperation so that industrial development plans of different countries will complement and reinforce each other. Focus should be put on launching major projects. We should strengthen international cooperation on production capacity and equipment manufacturing, and seize new development opportunities presented by the new industrial revolution to foster new businesses and maintain dynamic growth.

Finance is the lifeblood of modern economy. Only when the blood circulates smoothly can one grow. We should establish a stable and sustainable financial safeguard system that keeps risks under control, create new models of investment and financing, encourage greater cooperation between government and private capital and build a diversified financing system and a multi-tiered capital market. We should also develop inclusive finance and improve financial services networks.

Infrastructure connectivity is the foundation of development through cooperation. We should promote land, maritime, air and cyberspace connectivity, concentrate our efforts on key passageways, cities and projects and connect networks of highways, railways and sea ports. The goal of building six major economic corridors under the Belt and Road Initiative has been set, and we should endeavor to meet it. We need to seize opportunities presented by the new round of change in energy mix and the revolution in energy technologies to develop global energy interconnection and achieve green and low-carbon development. We should improve trans-regional logistics network and promote connectivity of policies, rules and standards so as to provide institutional safeguards for enhancing connectivity.

Third, we should build the Belt and Road into a road of opening up. Opening up brings progress while isolation results in backwardness. For a country, opening up is like the struggle of a chrysalis breaking free from its cacoon. There will be short-term pains, but such pains will create a new life. The Belt and Road Initiative should be an open one that will achieve both economic growth and balanced development. We should build an open platform of cooperation and uphold and grow an open world economy. We should jointly create an environment that will facilitate opening up and development, establish a fair, equitable and transparent system of international trade and investment rules and boost the orderly flow of production factors, efficient resources allocation and full market integration. We welcome efforts made by other countries to grow open economies based on their national conditions, participate in global governance and provide public goods. Together, we can build a broad community of shared interests.

Trade is an important engine driving growth. We should embrace the outside world with an open mind, uphold the multilateral trading regime, advance the building of free trade areas and promote liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment. Of course, we should also focus on resolving issues such as imbalances in development, difficulties in governance, digital divide and income disparity and make economic globalization open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all.

Fourth, we should build the Belt and Road into a road of innovation. Innovation is an important force powering development. The Belt and Road Initiative is new by nature and we need to encourage innovation in pursuing this initiative.

We should pursue innovation-driven development and intensify cooperation in frontier areas such as digital economy, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology and quantum computing, and advance the development of big data, cloud computing and smart cities so as to turn them into a digital silk road of the 21st century. We should spur the full integration of science and technology into industries and finance, improve the environment for innovation and pool resources for innovation. We should create space and build workshops for young people of various countries to cultivate entrepreneurship in this age of the internet and help realize their dreams.

We should pursue the new vision of green development and a way of life and work that is green, low-carbon, circular and sustainable. Efforts should be made to strengthen cooperation in ecological and environmental protection and build a sound ecosystem so as to realize the goals set by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Fifth, we should build the Belt and Road into a road connecting different civilizations. In pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative, we should ensure that when it comes to different civilizations, exchange will replace estrangement, mutual learning will replace clashes, and coexistence will replace a sense of superiority. This will boost mutual understanding, mutual respect and mutual trust among different countries.

We should establish a multi-tiered mechanism for cultural and people-to-people exchanges, build more cooperation platforms and open more cooperation channels. Educational cooperation should be boosted, more exchange students should be encouraged and the performance of cooperatively run schools should be enhanced. Think tanks should play a better role and efforts should be made to establish think tank networks and partnerships. In the cultural, sports and health sectors, new cooperation models should be created to facilitate projects with concrete benefits. Historical and cultural heritage should be fully tapped to jointly develop tourist products and protect heritage in ways that preserve the distinctive features of the Silk Road. We should strengthen exchanges between parliaments, parties and non-governmental organizations of different countries as well as between women, youths and people with disabilities with a view to achieving inclusive development. We should also strengthen international counter-corruption cooperation so that the Belt and Road will be a road with high ethical standards.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

China has reached a new starting point in its development endeavors. Guided by the vision of innovative, coordinated, green, open and inclusive development, we will adapt to and

steer the new normal of economic development and seize opportunities it presents. We will actively promote supply-side structural reform to achieve sustainable development, inject strong impetus into the Belt and Road Initiative and create new opportunities for global development.

-- China will enhance friendship and cooperation with all countries involved in the Belt and Road Initiative on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence. We are ready to share practices of development with other countries, but we have no intention to interfere in other countries' internal affairs, export our own social system and model of development, or impose our own will on others. In pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative, we will not resort to outdated geopolitical maneuvering. What we hope to achieve is a new model of win-win cooperation. We have no intention to form a small group detrimental to stability, what we hope to create is a big family of harmonious co-existence.

- China has reached practical cooperation agreements with many countries on pursuing the Belt and Road Initiative. These agreements cover not only projects of hardware connectivity, like transport, infrastructure and energy, but also software connectivity, involving telecommunications, customs and quarantine inspection. The agreements also include plans and projects for cooperation in economy and trade, industry, e-commerce, marine and green economy. The Chinese railway authorities will sign agreements with their counterparts of related countries to deepen cooperation on China-Europe regular railway cargo service. We will work to launch these cooperation projects at an early date and see that they deliver early

- China will scale up financing support for the Belt and Road Initiative by contributing an additional RMB 100 billion to the Silk Road Fund, and we encourage financial institutions to conduct overseas RMB fund business with an estimated amount of about RMB 300 billion. The China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China will set up special lending schemes respectively worth RMB 250 billion equivalent and RMB 130 billion equivalent to support Belt and Road cooperation on infrastructure, industrial capacity and financing. We will also work with the AIIB, the BRICS New Development Bank, the World Bank and other multilateral development institutions to support Belt and Road related projects. We will work with other parties concerned to jointly formulate guidelines for financing the Belt and Road related development projects.

-- China will endeavor to build a win-win business partnership with other countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative, enhance trade and investment facilitation with them, and build a Belt and Road free trade network. These efforts are designed to promote growth both in our respective regions and globally.

During this forum, China will sign business and trade cooperation agreements with over 30 countries and enter into consultation on free trade agreements with related countries. China will host the China International Import Expo starting from 2018.

-- China will enhance cooperation on innovation with other countries. We will launch the Belt and Road Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation Action Plan, which consists of the Science and Technology People-to-People Exchange Initiative, the Joint Laboratory Initiative, the Science Park Cooperation Initiative and the Technology Transfer Initiative. In the coming five years, we will offer 2,500 short-term research visits to China for young foreign scientists, train 5,000 foreign scientists, engineers and managers, and set up 50 joint laboratories. We will set up a big data service platform on ecological and environmental protection. We propose the establishment of an international coalition for green development on the Belt and Road, and we will provide support to related countries in adapting to climate change.

-- In the coming three years, China will provide assistance worth RMB 60 billion to developing countries and international organizations participating in the Belt and Road Initiative to launch more projects to improve people's wellbeing. We will provide emergency food aid worth RMB 2 billion to developing countries along the Belt and Road and make an additional contribution of US\$1 billion to the Assistance Fund for South-South Cooperation. China will launch 100 "happy home" projects, 100 poverty alleviation projects and 100 health care and rehabilitation projects in countries along the Belt and Road. China will provide relevant international organizations with US\$1 billion to implement cooperation projects that will benefit the countries along the Belt and Road.

-- China will put in place the following mechanisms to boost Belt and Road cooperation: a liaison office for the Forum's follow-up activities, the Research Center for the Belt and Road Financial and Economic Development, the Facilitating Center for Building the Belt and Road, the Multilateral Development Financial Cooperation Center in cooperation with multilateral development banks, and an IMF-China Capacity Building Center. We will also develop a network for cooperation among the NGOs in countries along the Belt and Road as well as new peopleto-people exchange platforms such as a Belt and Road news alliance and a music education alliance.

The Belt and Road Initiative is rooted in the ancient Silk Road. It focuses on the Asian, European and African continents, but is also open to all other countries. All countries, from either Asia, Europe, Africa or the Americas, can be international cooperation partners of the Belt and Road Initiative. The pursuit of this initiative is based on extensive consultation and its benefits will be shared by us all.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends.

An ancient Chinese saying goes, "A long journey can be covered only by taking one step at a time". Similarly, there is an Arab proverb which says that the Pyramid was built by piling one stone on another. In Europe, there is also the saying that "Rome wasn't built in a day." The Belt and Road Initiative is a great undertaking which requires dedicated efforts. Let us pursue this initiative step by step and deliver outcome one by one. By doing so, we will bring true benefit to both the world and all our people! In conclusion, I wish the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation a full success!

Thank you!



President Xi Jinping with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin



CPEC must not be politicized: PM Nawaz

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Monitoring Desk

rime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Sunday said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) under the One Belt-One Road

(OBOR) initiative was open to all countries in the region and that it 'must not be politicised'.

"Let me make it very clear that CPEC is an economic undertaking open to all countries in

the region. It has no geographical boundaries. It must not be politicised," he said in his address at the plenary session of the Belt and Road Forum in Beijing.





Nawaz called for building a peaceful, connected and caring neighbourhood by shunning mutual differences.

"It is time we transcend our differences, resolve conflicts through dialogue and diplomacy, and leave a legacy of peace for future generations," he said at the forum. "Peace and development go hand in hand, and nothing can pave the path for peace and security more than economic development achieved through regional collaboration."

"It is time we transcend our differences, resolve conflicts through dialogue and diplomacy, and leave a legacy of peace for future generations....Peace and development go hand in hand, and nothing can pave the path for peace and security more than economic development achieved through regional collaboration." PM Nawaz

The premier added that OBOR could be a 'powerful tool for overcoming terrorism and extremism'. "As OBOR is unfolding across continents, it is fostering inclusion, creating tolerance, and promoting acceptance of cultural diversity," he said.

Terming China Pakistan's close friend and trusted ally, Nawaz said his participation at the forum was to celebrate the remarkable success of OBOR. He added that Pakistan admired China's vision and ingenuity in developing corridors across regions.

"This is indeed a gathering of great minds," China's President Xi Jinping said while addressing the forum attended by 29 heads of states - including Russia's Vladimir Putin and Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan - and 1,500 delegates.

"We should build an open platform of cooperation and uphold and grow an open world economy," he told the opening of the two-day gathering in Beijing. "The world must create conditions that promote open development and encourage the building of systems of fair, reasonable and transparent global trade and investment rules."

Xi pledged to pump an extra \$124 billion in funds into the initiative, calling it 'a project of the century' in a 'world fraught with challenges'. Terming OBOR a 'road for peace', he cautioned that "all countries should respect each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity". He warned that "isolation results in backwardness".

Praising Xi's initiative, Putin warned that protectionism is becoming the norm. "The ideas of openness, trade freedom are rejected more and more, very often by those who were their supporters not so long ago," he said.

Britain's finance minister told the summit his country was a "natural partner" in the new Silk Road while White House adviser Matt Pottinger said the United States welcomed efforts by China to promote infrastructure connectivity.

Courtesy to Express Tribune





Pakistan is a highly attractive destination for investment that no global player can afford to miss: PM Nawaz

By Mian Fazal Elahi

rime Minister Nawaz Sharif endorsed Pakistan's business prospects at the One Belt-One Road Pakistan Investment Forum in Hong Kong.

Addressing the ceremony, PM Nawaz said Pakistan is a highly attractive destination for investment that no global player can afford to

"Pakistan is set on track for rapid, inclusive, and sustainable growth. I invite you to take benefit from the economic revival of Pakistan and enjoy the first mover's advantage. Pakistan is ready to do business with the world," said the premier, adding that Pakistan is a gateway to energy rich Central Asia, oil rich Gulf and economically advanced Far East.

"Nine Special Economic Zones are being established along the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) route where foreign companies can invest in factories, warehouses, logistic centres and much more for consumption in Pakistan's market as well as for export," said PM Nawaz.

The premier further stated the government of Pakistan has devised a comprehensive plan to create an investment friendly environment.

"We have liberalised investment policies to welcome foreign direct investment (FDI), and have offered incentives to attract new capital inflows including tax exemptions, tariff reductions and investment facilitation services."



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz sharif addresses at the Pakistan Investment Forum (One Belt One Road) in Hong Kong.

Nawaz Sharif visit to Hong Kong thru lens























Photo by Ramzan Mughal

The China Cultural Center in Pakistan opened at the Pakistan National Council of Arts in Islamabad last Tuesday, serving as a new platform to promote cultural exchanges between the two countries. Featuring an exhibition hall, a library and a classroom, the center is expected to host a variety of activities including exhibitions, films, lectures, and training classes.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Maryam Aurangzeb, Pakistani state minister for information, Sun Weidong, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, and other officials and dignitaries from both countries.

















Chinese embassy holds cultural show to popularize authentic Chinese food









Diplomatic Affairs

The fine arts & photo exhibition of Kyrgyzstan held at PNCA, Islamabad









Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan enjoy excellent relations that are growing with the each passing said Erik Beishembiev Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan while speaking at the opening of photo exhibition at PNCA. H.E. Sartaj Aziz Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs was the chief guest of the event. The fine arts and photo exhibition was arrange to mark 25th anniversary of Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan diplomatic relations







Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens





Ambassador of Kuwait Mr. Nassar Abdulrahman Jasser called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Parliament House, Islamabad.



Ambassador of Belarus Mr. Andrei Ermolovich called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Azyad Sadiq in Parliament House, Islamabad.



Canadian High Commissioner, H.E. Mr. Perry Calderwood called on Federal Minister for Defence, Khawaja Muhammad Asif in Islamabad.



British High Commissioner Thomas Drew called on Interior Minister Ch. Nisar Ali Khan at Punjab House, Islamabad.



H.E. Ms. Martine Dorance Ambassador of France to Pakistan called on Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, Minister of State for IB&NH in Islamabad.



H.E Jean Francois Cautain Ambassador of European Union to Pakistan called on Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb Minister of State for IB&NH in Islamabad.



Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Advisor to Prime Minister on Aviation Sardar Mehtab Ahmed Khan talking to Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. S. Babur Girgin who called him in Islamabad.



Mr. Shahabuddin Darai, Iranian Culural Counsellor called on Advisor to Prime Minister on National History & Literary Heritage, Irfan siddiqui at National History & Literry Heritage Division in Islamabad.



Mr. Beishembiev Erik Aidarkanovick, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan called on Federal Minister for Commerce, Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan in Islamabad.



Ambassador of Kuwait Mr. Nassar Abdulrahman Jasser Almutairi called on Deputy Speaker National Assembly Murtaza Javed in Parliament House, Islamabad.



National Security Advisor, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nasser Khan Janjua in a meeting with Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Sadik Babur Girgin in Islamabad.



State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan H.E. Mr. Nobuo Kishi called on Federal Minister for water and power, Khawaja Muhammad Asif in Islamabad.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens





Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engr. Iqbal Zafar Jhagra talking to Ambassador of Azarbaijan in Pakistan Mr. Ali Alizad who called on him here at Governor's House, Peshawar.



Rear Admiral Tatsuya Fukuda, Commander Task force 151 (CTF-151) Japan called on Secretary Defence, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Zamir-Ul-Hassan Shah at Ministry of Defence in Rawalpindi.



Ambassador of Tunisia Mr. Adel Elarbi shaking hand with Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Parliament House, Islamabad.



Group photo of Pakistan Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq with Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Dr. Abdullah Abdullah in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Diplomatic Affairs





Inauguration of Honorary Consulate of Poland in Lahore

Ambassador of the Republic of Poland inaugurated the Consulate in Lahore for the Punjab province with Mr. Ahmad Hasnain appointed as Honorary Consul.

At the inaugural ceremony, attended by representatives of the Provincial Government, Consular Corps, business and media, Ambassador Piotr Opalinski handed Mr. Ahmad Hasnain the nomination and consular insignia.

Presently, there are two Honorary Consuls of Poland - in Karachi and Lahore, who support the Embassy of Poland in Islamabad in providing consular assistance and promoting multifaceted cooperation between Poland and Pakistan.









Saudi Arabia, US release joint statement on working agreements A new strategic 21st century partnership

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Monitoring Desk

audi Arabia and the United States have released a joint statement emphasizing the threat of Iranian interferences in the region after concluding meetings in Riyadh during a two-day summit.

The statement called the agreements a path toward a "a new strategic 21st century partnership" between both countries after US President Donald Trump concluded his visit to Riyadh as part of his first foreign visit since taking power.

Below are key points of the joint statement.

- Working on new initiatives to counter extremism and terrorist financing.
- Strengthen defense cooperation and counter threats to the Middle East.
- Focus on creating a unified and strong regional security infrastructure.
- Recognizing Saudi Arabia's efforts to





counter terrorist organizations.

- Strengthening cooperation between the international coalition and the Islamic Alliance against ISIS.
- The need to contain Iran's interventions and ignite sectarian strife across the region.
- Emphasize Iran's regional interventions pose a threat to the region and the world.
- Agreement on the need to review some of the terms of the nuclear agreement with Iran.
- Agreement on the need to work together to resolve the crisis in Yemen.
- Supporting the American raid on the Syrian airfields airport.
- Support the efforts of the Lebanese state to impose its sovereignty and disarm the Hezbollah terrorist group.
- The importance of working to stop Iranian interference in Iraqi affairs.





Riyadh summit discusses ways of rooting out terrorism

Arab-Islamic-American summit condemns perpetrators that commit terrorist acts in the name of religion.

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Monitoring Desk

S President Donald Trump, leaders and representatives of 55 Arab and Muslimdominated countries kicked off their Arab-Islamic-American summit in Riyadh on Sunday, focusing on unity in the fight against terrorism.

King Salman of Saudi Arabia was the first to address the summit, telling the gathering that Islam provided the best example for coexistence and "will always be the religion of mercy and coexistence".

King Salman highlighted that some people seek to present distorted picture of Islam.

"We all, peoples and countries, reject in every language and in every form damaging the relations of Muslim countries with friendly countries and profiling countries based on a religious or sectarian basis."

In his address, Trump said that the US was seeking a "coalition of nations" in the Middle East with the aim of "stamping out extremism".

Trump told the gathering that the overwhelming majority of victims of terrorist attacks were the "innocent people of the Arab, Muslim and Middle Eastern nations", pointing out that "95 percent of the victims of terrorist attacks are themselves Muslims".

He said that the fight against extremists is a battle between good and evil.

"This is a battle between barbaric criminals who seek to obliterate human life, and decent people of all religions who seek to protect it. This is a battle between good and evil," Trump

"This not a battle between different faiths, different sects, or different civilizations. This is a battle between those who seek to obliterate human life and those who seek to protect it."

He added that the US was prepared to stand with those leaders in the fight against extremists, but that those countries should

take the lead, urging them to drive extremists "out of your places of worship. Drive them out of your community. Drive them out of your holy land".

"America is prepared to stand with you," said Trump. "But the nations of the Middle East cannot wait for American power to crush this enemy for them."

He also called on religious leaders to condemn attacks in the name of religion, but insisted that "this is not a battle between different faiths".

The US leader, who has been accused of anti-Islamic rhetoric in the past, said he was not there to lecture: "We are not here to tell other people how to live... or how to worship. Instead, we are here to offer partnership based on shared interests and values."

"We must be united in pursuing the one goal that transcends every other consideration. That goal is to meet history's great test to conquer extremism...," he said.

Nawaz, Trump exchange pleasantries at Saudi summit





By Monitoring Desk

S President Donald Trump had a brief encounter with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Sunday before the the Arab Islamic American Summit at the King Abdulaziz Conference Center in Riyadh.

The US president shook hands with PM Nawaz and exchange of pleasantries took place between the two leaders.

During the brief meeting, Trump said that he

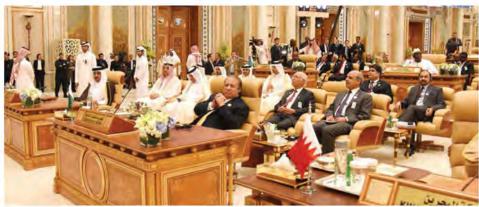
was very pleased to meet PM Nawaz to which the premier responded that the feeling is mutual, TV channels and newspapers reported. Although Trump and Sharif met in person for the first time on Sunday, they made news in December last year when Trump, then the President-elect, reportedly called up Sharif.

King Salman Bin Abdulaziz also warmly welcomed the PM.

PM Sharif was arrived in Riyadh on the invitation of King Salman Bin Abdulaziz.

During the brief meeting, Trump said that he was very pleased to meet PM Nawaz

Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Offered Nawafil at Riyadh-ul-Jannah, Masjid-E-Nabvi, Madina Munawara.





Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif warmly received by Governor of Riyadh upon arrival at Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif arriving to participate in Arab-Islamic-American Summit at Riyadh.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Offering Nawafil at Riyadh-ul-Jannah, Masjid-E-Nabvi, Madina Munawara.

Global Center for Combating **Extremism in** Riyadh adopts unprecedented techniques

"We want to convey a message to the West and the world that the Muslim world is not an enemy," Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Monitoring Desk

including Saudi leaders, King Salman bin Abdulaziz and President Donald Trump, inaugurated the Global Center for Combating Extremism headquartered in Riyadh as the US-Islamic Summit came to a close.

Riyadh hosted three anticipated summits during Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia with nearly 50 leaders, mainly from the Muslim world

"We want to convey a message to the West and the world that the Muslim world is not an enemy," Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir said. - The center is established as a result of the international cooperation in facing the extreme ideology leading to terrorism, the world's first common enemy.

- It was founded by a number of countries who chose Riyadh as its headquarters in confronting extreme ideologies by monitoring and analyzing it, to confront and prevent it, cooperate with the governments and organizations to prevail and promote a culture of moderation.
- The center was established on three basic pillars: confronting extremism by the latest intellectual, media and numerical methods and means
- The center has developed innovative techniques that can monitor, process and analyze extremists' speeches with high accuracy, all phases of data processing and analysis are done in no more than six seconds once the data or comments are posted on the Internet, allowing unprecedented levels of facing extremist activities in the digital world.



- The Center works to refute the hate and extremist speech and promote concepts of moderation, accepting the other, and the production of media content that confront the content of the radical thoughts in order to defy it, and reveal its promotional propaganda.
- The center includes a number of international experts specialized and prominent in confronting extremist speech on all the traditional media means and electronic world.
- The center operates in the extremists' most widely used languages and dialects. Advanced analytical models are being developed to locate digital media platforms, highlight extremist focal point, and secret sources of polarization and acquiring activities.
- The importance of establishing the center lies in that it is the first time that the world countries seriously come together to face the threat of extremism, which poses a threat to the communities and endanger them, therefore it is the center's duty to fight together to win and to be able to protect people from its danger.
- The selection of the (12) representatives of the Board of Directors from states and organizations; reflects the independence of the center's work, which is characterized by a governance system that applies international management best practices of major international organizations, which allows neutrality, flexibility, efficiency and transparency to fulfill the Center's functions and achieve its objectives.





Discover Pakistan'

National tourism conference at Serena Hotel draws huge interest



National Tourism Conference, Discover Pakistan, was a multi-stakeholder effort that aimed to address issues faced by the Pakistan Tourism Industry and to seek solutions to how tourism industry statekholders and the Government could work together to improve Pakistan's economy through sustainable tourism.

The conference, held at the Islamabad Serena Hotel, was well attended by the Government Officials, Diplomats, International Community, Tour Operators, Travel Agents, Hoteliers, Airline representatives and many others associated with the industry but not Holiday Weekly, the most important segment of Pakistan travel, hotel, tourism and aviation industry.

The speakers in the inaugural session included Mr. Anthony Cholst, Acting Country Director, the World Bank, Ms. Vibeke Jensen and UNESCO Representative to Pakistan.

The first session of the conference addressed Pakistan's Tourism Resources and Potential. Panellists included Mahmood Akhtar Cheema, IUCN who gave a brief presentation of Pakistan's Ecological and Landscape Attractions; followed by Ms. Salima Hashmi, Educationist, spoke of Contemporary Diversity and Material Culture in Pakistan; subsequently Aftab ur Rehman Rana, STFP presented the various possibilities of National Tourism Policies and session concluded with Sheikh Ansar Aziz, Mayor of Islamabad who highlighted the importance of Destination Branding.

The second panel discussion focussed on Provincial Tourism Potential and Strategies where the Secretary Tourism for Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, KPK, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Kashmir shared the unique aspects of tourism in their areas.

The third discussion addressed The Way Forward lead by Mustansir Zakir, Chairman PHA, then Sajjad Shah, Chairman PATO suggested key challenges and opportunities followed byMr Hanif Rinch,Ex-Chairman TAAP who shared the roadmap for future of travel industry and discussion concluded with Sami Baig District Manager PIA and Arshad Ali from PTDC discussing the challenges.











H.E. Mr. Nobuo Kishi, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan called on Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif at PM House, Islamabad.

H.E. Mr. Nobuo Kishi, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan called Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif at PM House Islamabad.

PM Nawaz emphasized

Japan has been an important development partner of Pakistan



By M.Saeed Yousafzai, Monitoring Desk

.E. Mr. Nobuo Kishi, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan called on Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in Islamabad.

The Prime Minister warmly welcomed the State Minister and his delegation to Pakistan and stated that Pakistan is keen to carry forward the shared vision for promoting peace, prosperity and development of our people.

The Prime Minister recalled very warm and cordial exchange with Prime Minister Abe in New York in September 2016 and reaffirmed

the common commitment to further strengthen bilateral relations.

The Prime Minister emphasized that Japan has been an important development partner of Pakistan and a number of important development projects in Pakistan have been completed with Japan's assistance and support. The Prime Minister expressed the hope to further enhance trade, investment and development relationship with Japan. Pakistan now offers great investment opportunities in various sectors that can be utilized by Japanese investors, added the Prime Minister.

H.E. Mr. Nobuo Kishi thanked the Prime Minister

for the warm welcome accorded to him and his delegation and expressed the hope to further strengthen Japan – Pakistan bilateral relations. On other side, Japan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs calls on National Security Adviser Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Nasser Khan Janjua to discuss bilateral relations and regional security situation

General Janjua warmly welcomed the Minister on his third visit to Pakistan, which also coincides with 65th Anniversary of the inception of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Japan. While thanking Mr. Kishi for his visit, NSA briefed the visitor on security situation of the region covering Afghanistan, India and recent alarming situation in Indian Held Kashmir. He also explained at length the fragile strategic stability of the region for which the World must play a role. He urged he Minister that Japan should not look at Pakistan through the prism of terrorism which is not of our making. Japan should focus on the potential and "Rising Pakistan" of tomorrow and the role it can play subsequently. Pakistan, he told, was a resilient nation, the people and armed forces of Pakistan had full capability to

Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Nasser
Khan Janjua briefed
the Japan's Minister of
State for Foreign Affairs
on security situation
of the region covering
Afghanistan, India and
recent alarming situation
in Indian Held Kashmir.



National Security Advisor, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nasser Khan Janjua in a meeting with State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan H.E. Mr. Nobuo Kishi in Islamabad.

defeat the forces of terrorism in the region. The Adviser also conveyed concern over the rising tensions in the Korean Peninsula. Expressing support for Japan, NSA wished it be resolved peacefully and through political means.

Minister Kishi said that Pakistan was a warm and traditional friend of Japan. He reaffirmed Japan's continued support for Pakistan's economic development and counter-terrorism cooperation.

He conveyed appreciations for Pakistan's constructive efforts for the restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region.

Expressing his concern about tensions in Pak-India relations over Kashmir, the Minister hoped that the two countries would keep the

Minister Kishi reaffirmed Japan's continued support for Pakistan's economic development and counter-terrorism cooperation.

channels of dialogue open.

The Minister conveyed readiness of his Government to further build on existing cooperative relations with Pakistan and to enhance mutual understanding on issues of mutual concern.

Nobuo Kishi is the grandson of former Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Nobusuke Kishi who established the diplomatic relationship with Pakistan and the younger brother of incumbent Prime Minister Shenzo Abe.

YEN 2.665 bn LOAN FOR ISLAMABAD BURHAN TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT

overnments of Japan and Pakistan today signed a loan agreement amounting to Japanese Yen 2.665 billion (equivalent to US\$ 24 million) for implementation of "Islamabad-Burhan Transmission Line Reinforcement Project (Phase-I)". Mr. Takashi Kurai, the Ambassador of Japan and Ms. Anjum Assad Amin, Additional Secretary, Economic Affairs Division (EAD) signed the loan documents. Mr. Nobuo Kishi, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan and Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Water and Power witnessed the signing ceremony.

Minister for Water and Power stated that Pakistan values Japan's assistance in the field of energy and Japan's economic cooperation has played imperative role in development of socio economic sector with main focus on human



uplift, poverty reduction and capacity building of our institutions. Energy sector has direct impact on economic growth and prosperity of Pakistan. The total loan assistance from Government of Japan stands at US\$ 960 million and grant at US\$ 156 million.

Japan Cooperation Agency (JICA) will implement the loan project. The objective of the Project is to improve reliability of the national grid and to meet the growing demand for electricity transmission through reinforcement of transmission lines necessary for power supply to the Islamabad capital territory and surrounding areas, thereby contributing to the improvement of economic infrastructure of Pakistan. The scope of the project includes civil work and equipment for transmission lines of 220 KV between the Tarbela Hydropower Plant and the Burhan sub-station. Government of Japan has provided the loan on very concessional terms and conditions with interest rate of Japanese Yen LIBOR plus 10 bases point (equivalent to 0.12%) and repayment during 30 years including 10 years grace period.

Minister of Water and Power emphasized that Pakistan looks forward to further economic cooperation with Japan for the benefit of the people of Pakistan in line with Government's priorities and strategy.



Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. Javad Zarif called on Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif at PM House Islmabad.

Pakistan assured Iran it would take steps to prevent cross-border terrorist attacks

By M.Saeed Yousafzai, Monitoring Desk

ranian Foreign Minister Dr. Javad Zarif called on the Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif.

The Prime Minister expressed satisfaction at the increasing high level exchanges between the two countries to strengthen bilateral cooperation in diverse fields. He hoped that the two sides will continue to expand economic interaction for promoting mutually beneficial cooperation in the areas of trade, investment, energy and connectivity. In this regard, he underlined the need of concerted efforts from both sides to achieve the target of \$ 5 billion in the bilateral trade as soon as possible. The issues of peace and stability in the region also came under discussion during the meeting.

On the tragic incident that took place in the Iranian province of Sistan O Balochistan

involving martyrdom of 11 Iranian border security guards on 26 April 2017, the Prime Minister conveyed Pakistan's serious condolences to the government and people of

Pakistan and Iran agreed in principle to revive hotline between the border security forces of the two countries in order to resolve any issues at border

Iran. The Iranian Foreign Minister thanked the Prime Minister and the government of Pakistan for continued efforts for strengthening bilateral relations and enhancing interaction in all areas including trade and economic cooperation as well as border and security issues. He also conveyed the desire of the Iranian leadership and the government for continued efforts for growth in bilateral ties. The Iranian Foreign Minister Mr. Mohammad Javad Zarif along with his delegation called on National Security Adviser Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nasser Khan Janjua.

Besides bilateral relations, the issue of recent border attack also came under discussion. NSA said that "Pakistan and Iran are strength of each other". He reiterated that Pakistan sees a great future with Iran and vehemently condemns the terrorist attack and stands united with Iran to curb the menace of terrorism. NSA briefed the Foreign Minister on the security situation along the border and how two sides need to make efforts to harden it against those who are involved in terrorism, smuggling, human and drug trafficking. He reassured the Iranian side to continue to work against those who



Iranian Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif called on Speaker Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Islamabad.



Interior Minister Ch. Nisar Ali Khan and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif exchanging views during their meeting at Islamabad.

are hurting the common interests of both the Countries. Pakistan can neither approved nor support any group who can work against Iran, He underscored. The Iranian Foreign Minister stressed to reactivate and also establish effective joint mechanisms at local and national levels. He emphasized the need for joint mechanisms and more regular meetings at different levels to resolve mutual irritants.

In a meeting, Interior Minister Ch. Nisar Ali Khan and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, on behalf of their governments, reaffirmed their commitment to work closely for furthering Pak-Iran bilateral relations and promoting mutual cooperation encompassing all areas mutual interest and concerns including effective border management, curbing drug trafficking and checking illegal cross border movement through better coordination, greater intelligence sharing and frequent interactions at political, military, security and at the level of various ministries.

The two sides agreed in principle to revive hotline between the border security forces of the two countries in order to resolve any issues at border.

The Iranian Minister also extended invitation to the Interior Minister to visit Iran observing that such high level visits especially that of the Interior Minister would add momentum to the efforts aimed at further cementing our Pak-Iran bilateral relations and cooperation.

Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq said robust Pak-Iran relation is inevitable for regional peace, security and prosperity.

He was speaking on the occasion of lunch hosted in honor of Foreign Minister of Iran Jawad Zarif along with his delegation at Speaker's House, Islamabad, a press release said.

Chairman Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari, Makhdum Khusro Bakhtyar and Ambassador of Iran in Pakistan, Mehdi Honardoost were also present in the meeting.

He further added Pak-Iran parliamentary engagement is highly imperative for promoting cohesion and stability in the entire region.

Discussing regional security and peace, Speaker Avaz Sadig said Pakistan and Iran share views on the importance on the establishment of peace and security in the region and the reinforcement of unity in the Muslim world. The regional issues should be resolved by the neighboring countries themselves, he added.

Referring to numerous capacities of both countries for cooperation, the speaker said signing of banking agreement and declaration



National Security Adviser, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nasser Khan Janjua in a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in Islamabad. H.E. Mr. Mehdi Honardoost, Ambassador of Iran is also present on the occasion.

of Gawadar and Chabahar as sister ports are significant steps in line with using existing capacities in promoting bilateral ties.

Referring to warm relations between Iran and Pakistan, the speaker remarked that both countries are intertwined by stronger multidimensional relations and underlined the need for renewed commitment to diversification of strategic, trade, economic, cultural and parliamentary relations in the face of regional

"Pakistan and Iran are strength of each other" NSA Nasir Janjua

and global challenges. He also recommended frequent exchange of delegations to assign substantive meanings to inter-Parliamentary relations. Sardar Ayaz Sadig said Pakistan seeks vigorous bilateral partnership with Iran to find durable and peaceful solutions to Afghanistan as well as economic prosperity of the entire

region.

He said the strategic convergence of mutual interests have paved the way for a vibrant Pak-Iran regional partnership.

Iranian Foreign Minister Jawad Zareef said Iran consider Pakistan as its partner for peace in the region and expressed his hope that in future both nations will continue to chart the paths of prosperity together.

He reiterated Ayaz Sadiq's proposal for diversification of trade and economic relations and urged for comprehensive engagement of the parliamentary committees to explore the avenues for mutual cooperation.

Contending that Iran-Pakistan ties are influenced by the ancient and historical bonds between the two nations, Mohammad Jawad Zarif said the two nations have always stood alongside each other in difficult condition and bilateral ties are unbreakable.w



Group of Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif with Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Islamabad.

Ambassador
Designate of Pakistan
to Mexico Tasawar
Khan called on
President Mamnoon
Hussain at the Aiwane-Sadr, Islamabad.



Ambassador
Designate of Pakistan
to Japan Dr. Asad
Majeed Khan
called on President
Mamnoon Hussain
at the Aiwan-e-Sadr,
Islamabad.



Presdient Mamnoon
Hussain talking to Lt.
Gen. A.W.C.
De Silva, Commander
of the Sri Lankan
Army who along with
a delegation called on
him at Aiwan-e-Sadr,
Islamabad.





Federal Miniser for Climate Change Zahid Hamid cutting a cake along with Ambassador of France, Morocco, European Union, World Bank Country Director and Founding members of civil society coalition for Climate Change at launching ceremony of civil society coalition for climate change in Islamabad.



A contract was signed by Chairman PAC Air Marshal Arshad Malik and Turkish Undersecretary SSM Prof. Dr. Ismail Demir contract for sale of 52 Super Mushshak Trainer Aircraft to Turkish Air Force in the presence of Federal Minister for Defence Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain and Minister for National Defence of Turkey, Fikri Isik at Istanbul.



Miniser for Commerce, Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan led a 26 member group of Pakistani businessmen on a visit to Qatar Chamber in Doha.



Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb Minister of State for IB&NH attending a lunch cooked by Wahid Brothers, Sylvestre Wahid and Jonathan Wahid renowned Pakistani french chefs.



Pakistan & Thailand have good potential to complement each other in many areas: Faisal Hassan

By Mian Fazal Elahi

irst Pak-Thai Business Council meeting for the tenure 2017 held at FPPCCI under the chairmanship of Mr. Faisal Hassan Group CEO Global Food Marketing Group Co, Ltd. The meeting was graced with the presence of H.E. SUWAT KAEWSOOK Consul General of Thailand, Mr. Zubair Tufail President FPCCI, S.M. Muneer Chief Executive TDAP, Mr. Arif Suleman Hon. Advisor of Thai Ministry of Commerce, Mr. Kazi A. Muktadir Former Deputy Governor State Bank of Pakistan and the members of the Pak-Thai Business council. Chairman Pak-Thai Business Council Mr. Faisal Hassan highlighted the importance of Pakistan and Thailand trade relations which is upto 1 billion USD Dollar which can be more up to the potential according to the business sectors of both the countries. Exports from Thailand are approx 87% whereas export from Pakistan is very less. The commodities Pakistan export to Thailand includes frozen fish, woven cotton, fabric, crustaceans, cotton yarn, leather, medicament mixtures and electro-medical apparatus, whereas Thailand export commodities are constructional, pharmaceutical, mechanical, textile and industrial goods to Pakistan. Further

discussion emphasized on the need of FTA and how the maximum benefits can be taken from the FTA between Pakistan and Thailand.

Both countries provide geographical advantages to each other as well, since Thailand has the "Look West Policy" while Pakistan has the "Vision East Asia Policy" and both countries have good potential to complement each other in many areas. Pakistan can also explore and develop the tourism sector with the Thai government and share the benefits of CPEC with the Thai entrepreneurs. Thailand can support and help Pakistan in consultative inputs or through joints ventures in Halal Food processing, automobiles, gems and jewellery and agricultural value-added products. Top five imports from Thailand are auto parts, chemical products, iron and steel products, airconditioners and its parts while top five exports to Thailand are seafood, yarn, fiber & fabric, machinery, vegetables and related products, textile products.

A delegation from Pakistan is expected to visit Thailand and have a business meeting with Thai Chamber of Commerce, BOI Thailand and Federation Thai Industry Samutsakorn.

Diplomatic Affairs

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Dean of Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan

H.E. Bakhitbek Shabarbayev

hosted a farewel reception to outgoing Ambassador of Germany H.E. Ina Lepel at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. Large number of diplomates graced the reception.



























n June, 10th, Portugal celebrates its National day, commemorating the Death of the poet Luís de Camões. Having lived in the XVIth century, Luis de Camões is one of the main authors of Portuguese Language literature. Having a classical academic formation, namely in which concerns Latin and Greek, he wrote mostly in Portuguese. At the same time, he received a very important impression from the cultures and languages he was exposed to, during its protracted stay in Northern Africa, first, and then in India and China, where he spent many years. His most important poem is the «Lusíadas» («The Portuguese»), where he narrates the maritime voyage of Vasco da Gama to India, around Africa and the Cape of Good Hope and, availing himself of that opportunity, describes the History of Portugal between the XIIth and the XVIth.

It is an opportunity to show to Pakistani society and Authorities our friendship towards Pakistan and how much Portugal appreciates this country.

Therefore, Portugal has a long relation with Asia, inclusive with the Subcontinent. With Pakistan and the region where it lies, our ties have been always very good. Pakistan is a beautiful land with a very hospitable and friendly people. The relations between ourselves should, therefore, be reinforced and deepened. In a time where countries' and people' relations become each time more globalized, we should use all means to get to know better each other and find ways to come closer together with a view to smoothing our contacts and life together.

Besides political and official contacts that are extremely important, we should work in expanding people' to people's relations, as well as the cooperation in the framework of culture, academic exchanges, trade, economy, youth, sport, media, etc.

Also as a Member of the European Union, Portugal is ready to cooperate with Pakistan in many areas, including the consolidation of Rule of Law, juridical and judiciary training and doctrine, women empowerment, rights of the child, labor legislation etc.. Also the attribution of Pakistan of the Generalized System of Preferences Plus (GSP+), besides the trade opportunities it creates, offers an incentive for both countries to collaborate more narrowly, allowing us to learn with each other and to strengthen each time more our traditional friendship. Pakistan deserves to be better known abroad and that will help developing its trade and relations.





National day of Portugal celebrated

To celebrate the Portuguese National Day, the Charge d' Affaires of Portugal, H.E. Joao Paulo Sabido Costa and Mrs. Maria Gloria Sabido Costa hosted a reception at the Serena Hotel. The event was held at the Shishmahal Hall and attended by a large number of guests including diplomats. The guest of honour was Minister for Human Rights, Kamran Michael and the cake cutting ceremony took place after the national anthem of both countries had been played against a backdrop showcasing a historic building in the Portuguese capital, Lisbon.





Speech of

H.E. Joao Paulo Sabido Costa

Honorable Excellency, the Federal Minister for Human Rights, Senator Kamran Michael, Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you very much for attending the Portuguese National Day that we celebrate again in Islamabad this year.

This is not only a Portuguese celebration, but an event we celebrate together with Pakistan. Portugal is thankful to Pakistan for its friendship that unites us for so long. Our relations have always been good and the Portuguese are

There is a large scope for us to cooperate in so many areas and the perspectives are very good. There are important events planned between our two countries in the mutual benefit of our peoples, and many more that we can still discuss for the future.

I would like to thank Serena Hotel for the wonderful cooperation, the staff of the Embassy for their work and all those who, with their support, helped bringing this event together. Thank you very much.

I also thank HE the Minister of Human Rights, Senator Kamran Michael, for gracing the occasion with his presence, namely after a tiring trip from Portugal to where you have been invited to an important event. Thank you for accepting to participate in it and I hope you bring good impressions from your visit.



















Exhibition of the Portuguese tiles (the art of Azulejo in Portugal) at Serena Hotel, Islamabad

Speech of

H.E. Joao Paulo Sabido Costa

In first place I would like to thank the Serena Hotel and Satrang Gallery for organizing this

I thank Ms. Asma Rasheed Khan and her staff for all the cooperation provided.

Mainly I would like to greet Mr. Aziz Boolani, CEO of Serena Hotels for gracing this event as a Chief Guest- It is an occasion to thank Mr. Aziz Boolani, on behalf of the Portuguese Embassy, for all the friendship and indefatigable collaboration showed to us and to Portugal. Mr. Boolani is an outstanding personality of the Pakistani society and, for all the reasons, we are honoured to have him as a Friend.

In the same context, I would like to recall and underline the excellent relation existing between the Aga Khan Foundation and Portugal that it is, as well, a great honour for my country. Today's exhibition has to do with Art of Azulejo in Portugal or, to be more precise, with Art of the glazed tiles developed throughout the centuries by Portugal together with many other regions of the world with whom Portugal contacted. One of these cases is Brazil, which Embassy graciously added some posters to the exhibition, turning it richer.

With an Arabic origin, the word Azulejo defines an art developed in Portugal. In fact, from all the European countries, Portugal is the one where the glazed tile, or Azulejo, showed the greatest development as well as the most original and functional utilization. For in no other country as in Portugal did the tiles play such a complex part in transforming the closed character of the architectonic space.

Further, as I said, besides being present in the Portuguese mainland, the Portuguese Azulejo and its use spread throughout the Oceans and Continents where they are today depicted and can be admired. At the same time, this form of Art received influences from many other arts, cultures and Civilizations that defined its character and uniqueness. It is a remarkable characteristic of the Azulejo to absorb the most different elements without ever losing its own identity or personality.

That could be also a definition of the Portuguese Culture and its tradition: openness and uniqueness. Therefore, it is this aspect of Portugal that I would invite you to appreciate in today' exhibition













H.E. Joao Paulo Sabido Costa visit to Karachi thru lens















German Embassy exibeted young photographers' and graphic



German Ambassador H.E. Ina Lepel exibeted young photographers' and graphic designers' Art work at PNCA, Islamabad.

In February this year, the Annemarie-Schimmel-Haus (German Cultural Centre Lahore) invited the world-renowned, award-winning National Geographic photographer Matthieu Paley and his wife, the graphic and communications designer Mareile Paley to hold two parallel workshops at the Annemarie-Schimmel-Haus for young photographers and graphic designers from all the major art universities in Lahore and presented the results of workshops in the Alhamra Arts Council Gallery in February. The German Embassy opened this exhibition at the National Art Gallery, PNCA, Islamabad.

Good By H.E. Ina Lepel

German Ambassador

H.E. Ina Lepal cpmleted her diplomatic assignment according to Embassy's message that She was a great Ambassador who always cared for the interests of the Embassy's staff. Therefore, we will miss her a lot and we wish her all the best for the future! Ms. Lepel will devote herself to new challenges in our headquarters.







EU CELEBRATED EUROPE DAY BY ORGANIZING EUROVILLAGE







The European Union and EU member states in Pakistan celebrated Europe Day in a unique manner by setting up a 'Eurovillage' in Islamabad at Lok Virsa.

It was aimed at increasing awareness of Europe and of European culture and values. The general public was provided with a memorable experience of Europe as an interesting, culturally rich and friendly place. The EU's as well as the Member States' stands showcased their countries' culture and traditions, language, their relationship with Pakistan and general information about their country. The premises of Lok Virsa were transformed into a veritable carnival with food stalls and information and activity booths for adults and children including quizzes, selfie walls and giant cut outs of famous landmarks of Europe.

The evening ended with live performances of the two European bands "Live Strings" and "Wild ManGoes" and the Pakistani artist Qurat-ul-Ain Balouch.

Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan, Jean-François Cautain pointed that the year of the 60th Anniversary of the EU Treaty of Rome was also the first year that the EU was organising a Eurovillage with participation from the Member States to remind everyone of the EU's cultural richness while also underlining our unity.

































National day of Italy celebrated

Ambassador of Italy H.E. Stefano Pontecorvo and his better half hosted a reception on the occasion of national day of Italy at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. Federal Minister for Industries Ghulam Murtaza Jatoi was the chief guest. Lt Gen. Saleem Bajwa also attended the reception. Besides, a dress show was also arranged on the sidelines of the event. Dresses prepared by Italian designer were put on display. The audience took keen interest in the dresses and appreciated work of the designer. A large number of guests attended the Italian national day reception.





















President Mamnoon Hussain emphasized that Africa has a special place in Pakistan's foreign policy

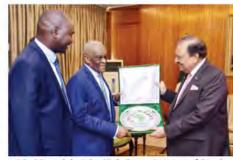
By M.Saeed Yousafzai, Agencies

President Mamnoon Hussain has said that Pakistan has achieved significant successes in war against terrorism and African countries can benefit from Pakistan's experiences in addressing the menace of terrorism.

President Mamnoon Hussain said this during a luncheon in honor of Ambassadors/ High Commissioners of African countries at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad. Ambassadors/ High Commissioners of South Africa, Tunis, Kenya, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, Morocco, Nigeria, Mauritius and Libya were present on the occasion. The President congratulated Ambassadors/ High Commissioners on the 54th anniversary of formation of the African Union (AU). On the occasion, Adviser to PM on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, Foreign Secretary Tehmina Janjua and other senior officials were also present.

The President stated that Pakistan has rendered immense sacrifices in fight against terrorism and now by the Grace of Allah Almighty Pakistan has overcome this menace to a great extent. He further said that African countries can benefit from Pakistan's experiences in this regard. He also offered training for African officers in different fields including defense and foreign affairs.

The President emphasized that Africa has a special place in Pakistan's foreign policy adding that Pakistan has adopted 'Look Africa Policy' to further strengthen relations with African countries. The basic objective of this policy is to further expand cooperation in political, educational, cultural and economic fields so that the trade volume between Pakistan and African countries can be further increased. African countries must prepare themselves to benefit from CPEC.



Mr. Mpendulo Jele, High Commissioner of South Africa (Dean for Africa) presenting a Shield to President Mamnoon Hussain after a meeting with Ambassador/ High Commissioners of African Countries at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

On the occasion, Mr. Mpendulo Jele, High Commissioner of South Africa (Dean for Africa) said that Pakistan has successfully faced the scourge of terrorism which is commendable. The Ambassador of Nigeria expressed gratitude for Pakistan's cooperation in addressing the menace of terrorism in Nigeria.



President Mamnoon Hussain in a meeting with Ambassadors/High Commissioners of African Countires at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.



The British High Commissioner, Mr Thomas Drew CMG, inaugurated a photography exhibition at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) in Islamabad to mark 70 years of Pakistan and United Kingdom's friendship with theme "Shared History".





60th Anniversary of Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Malaysia, Pakistan celebrated



High Commissioner of Malaysia, H.E. Dr. Hasrul Sani Bin Mujtabar, hosted a ceremony on occasion of 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Malaysia and Pakistan. Mr. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi , Minister of Petroleum and Natural Resources was the chief guest of the eve.





Malaysian High Commissioner and his wife welcomed the guests. On the occasion, the Malaysian cultural dance mesmerized the audience. The gathering applauded the special dance groups and the ministry of culture and tourism of Malaysia for their outstanding performance.



4th Serena Hotels Polo Cup 2017



Diplomatic Affairs



41st Armed Forces Unification Day of UAE observed

The Ambassador of United Arab Emirates H.E. Essa Abdullah Al Basha Al Noaimi hosted a reception to mark 41st anniversary of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Armed Forces Day. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) General Zubair Mahmood Hayat was chief guest of the eve.

The reception was also attended by Prime Minister's National Security Advisor (NSA) General (R) Nasser Khan Janjua, Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) Air Chief Marshal Sohail Aman, Secretary Defence Lieutenant General (Retired) Zamir ul Hasan, former Corps Commander and Senator General (Retired) Salahuddin Tirmzi. Saudi Defence Attaché Admiral Nawaf Al-Maliki, ambassadors/ high commissioners and defence attaches of several countries.









Bilateral Relations

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

25th Anniversary of establishment

of diplomatic relations between Turkmenistan and Islamic Republic of Pakistan celebrated









n the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between Turkmenistan and Islamic Republic of Pakistan the Embassy of Turkmenistan to Pakistan in collaboration with Diplomatic Focus hosted the reception at Serena Hotel.

Sartaj Aziz, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs was the chief guest. A large number of diplomats, Government officials, Journalists and leader of civil society Pakistan's Ambassador designate to the Netherlands attended the reception.

Sartaj Aziz, advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan said that during last 25 years both the countries signed many inter-governmental agreements to enhance cooperation in the fields of trade, energy, agriculture & livestock, science & technology, education, health, sports and tourism, which will not only further cement Pak-Turkmen relations but will also boost the economy of both the countries. However, economy is not the only aspect of Pak-Turkmen relations. Simultaneously the establishment of political, parliamentarian, social and cultural links has been taking place.

In welcome speech, Ambassador Atadjan Movlamov said that Turkmenistan and Pakistan are two brotherly Muslim countries with unique commonalities of historical and political nature





and this year both countries are celebrating the 25th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations.

Turkmenistan since the independence in 1991 has enjoyed the dynamically developed bilateral relations with Pakistan, which have been successfully developing with enormous speed since then. Presently, Turkmen-Pak relations are characterized by mutual willingness to enhance advantageous partnership.

Mian Fazal Ellahi said that the Diplomatic relations between the two countries were registered in 1992. Pakistan was among the first few countries, which promptly recognized Turkmenistan as an independent and sovereign state.

This year Turkmenistan and Pakistan celebrate 25th Anniversary of Establishment of diplomatic relations. Turkmenistan and Pakistan enjoy cordial relations, which are characterized by bonds of historical, cultural and religious affinity and mutual respect. These are rooted deep in the hearts of the people of both the countries. Both sides attach great importance to the friendship between their people and the need to further strengthen their cooperation in diverse fields.

Ashgabat and Islamabad agree to enhance cooperation on international and regional issues of common interest, and continue coordination within international and regional mechanisms such as the UN, NAM, G-77, ECO and OIC. Now Ashgabat and Islamabad express their resolve to work together for regional peace, development and prosperity.

Strong political will of both the countries will foster the bilateral relations in terms of greater socio-economic interaction/connectivity, business-to-business coordination, exploration of potential opportunities for joint ventures and foreign direct investments (FDIs) through rigorous commercial diplomacy. Moreover, establishing air, road and rail links on a priority basis will be a value-addition.

Turkmenistan and Pakistan are two brotherly countries with unique commonalities of historical and political nature. Turkmenistan and Pakistan have been enjoying excellent economic, social, cultural and political relations since 1992. Turkmenistan is endowed with huge hydrocarbon resources, which can provide energy to Pakistan to meet its needs. Pakistan also supports Turkmenistan's initiative to establish trans-regional energy corridors.

















5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games in **Turkmenistan**

September 17-27, 2017, Ashgabat

n December, 2010 in the capital of Kuwait, Al Kuwait, headquarters of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) between the OCA, the National Olympic Committee of Turkmenistan and city administration of Ashgabat signed the agreement, about carrying out in September, 2017 in the capital of Turkmenistan of the V Asian indoor and martial arts games that evoked a wide response in the world, and became a milestone event in country life.

The decision of the Olympic Council of Asia was a bright result of the large-scale activity which is carried out under the leadership of the President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, aimed at the broad development of sport and physical culture, increase in the authority of the country in the field of sport.

On November 5, 2010 in Ashgabat, construction of the largest multipurpose sports complex, the Olympic town - the arena of holding the V Asian indoor and martial arts games in 2017 began.

In January, 2013 the resolution of the President of Turkmenistan created the Organizing committee of the V Asian indoor and martial arts games, and in December - Executive committee on preparation and holding these games.

On November 28, 2014 in capital hotel "Oguzkent" was held the ceremony of signing of the Memorandum of participation of the countries of Oceania in the V Asian indoor and martial arts games. According to this document, besides 45 National Olympic Committees of Asia, also 17 National Olympic Committees of the countries of Oceania for the first time will participate in the Asian games held in 2017 in Ashgabat.

In addition, according to the proposal of the President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly



Berdimuhamedov, the program V of Asian games included equestrian sport (show jumping) and the Turkmen national fight "goresh". On May 5, 2016 in the National historical and cultural park of Nis, at walls of ancient fortress in the western suburb of Ashgabat, during five hundred days will be horse run across Turkmenistan, which symbolizes time countdown - 500 days prior to the start of V Asian indoor and martial arts games. Along with it, time countdown timer prior to the games was started.

The horse group of 17 riders on horses of ahalteke breed within 500 days will pass on all five velayats (areas) of the country, being for 100 days in each of them. At the final stage of a horse run, on the gas field "Galkynysh", largest in the country, at Mary region, the ceremony of ignition of a torch of the V Asian games will

be held, and then the horse group will deliver a torch to Ashgabat where fire of the Olympic Games will be lit.

Within preparation of the V Asian games in 2016, on the basis of the Olympic town 6 international tournaments and the championships of Asia as test actions are held, and in April, 2017 similar competitions still in three sports will be organized. For service of participants and guests of the V Asian games, according to the special program about 10 thousand volunteers are prepared.

For increase in efficiency of activities of media, for covering of events of the Asian Games-2017 in worldwide network, the Website of the V Asian games is open, are carried out and media forums with participation of specialists of foreign mass media will be still organized.

Fresentation on 5" Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games September 17-27, 2017, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan ay 16, 2017, Pearl Continental Hotel, Karachi

The Embassy of Turkmenistan in collaboration with Mr. Yagoob Tabani, honorary consul of Turkmenistan in Karachi organized the Presentation on 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games, Ashgabat, 2017

The Embassy of Turkmenistan in collaboration with Mr. Yaqoob Tabani, honorary consul of Turkmenistan in Karachi hosted a reception to mark 25 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Turkmenistan-Pakistan in Karachi.

Turkmenistan relations in recent years have reached a "qualitatively new level, successfully developing in political, economic, and humanitarian spheres", said the Turkmenistan ambassador Atadjan Movlamov during a speech, which marked the 25th anniversary celebrations for the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries. He took pride in acknowledging that Pakistan was among the first countries to develop the idea of neutrality of Turkmenistan at the UN on December 12, 1995. This idea was first voiced at the Islamabad meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organisation in 1995, and current year on February 7, in the UN General Assembly, Pakistan co-sponsored the resolution to declare December 12 as International Neutrality Day. The government, and people of Turkmenistan will remember it with gratitude. Mr. Yaqoob Tabani in his speech urged the Pakistani businessmen to visit Turkmenistan for there existed tremendous potential for cooperation in the field of energy, and transportation. He said Turkmenistan had made great strides for development in recent years. Similar sentiments were expressed by S M Muneer, chairman of TDAP in his speech.

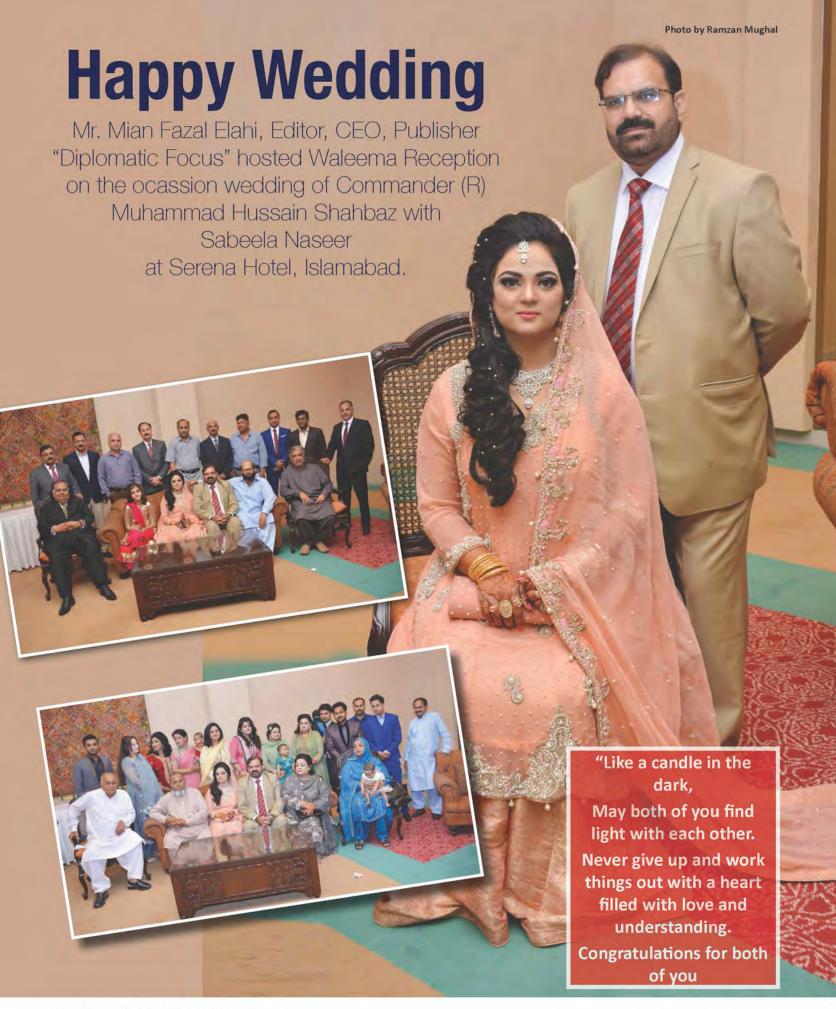
Prominent guests among the others were consuls general of Russian Federation Oleg Avedeev, Bangla Desh Noor-e- Helal Saifur Rehman, Indonesia, Turkey Mustafa Onart, Chairman of the Trade Development Authority S M Muneer, vice chairman of FPCCI Khalid Taawab, Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, and number two of Oman consulate, etc.





Governor Sindh Mr. Mohammad **Zubair talking** with ambassador of Turkmenistan Atajan Movlamov at Governor House Karachi







The Embassy of Spain and Serena Hotels collaborated to host a fundraising gala dinner featuring a performance by renowned Spanish band La Bejazz at Serena hotel, Islamabad.

The proceeds from the evening, amounting Rs5 million, were donated to the Aga Khan University Hospital to finance treatment of children who require heart surgery. La Bejazz is a group of musicians from the south of Spain, who perform an extraordinary fusion of two distinct musical styles, Jazz and Flamenco. Under its cultural diplomacy banner, Serena has promoted arts and intercultural activities to inspire ethos of peace and hope, engaging with foreign missions able to raise funds to support worthy causes.











25th Anniversary of the Diplomatic Relations between Kazakhstan and Pakistan **Celebrated at Serena Hotel Islamabad**



The Ambassador of Kazakhstan H.E. Bakhitbek Shabarbayev, underlined underline that Pakistan was main political and economic partners in South Asia; therefore relations between Pakistan and Kazakhstan had great potential for development. Senator Talha Mehmood was the chief guest of the event.

















Sweden Day celebrated

H.E. Ms. Ingrid Johansson, Ambassador of Sweden hosted a Sweden Day Reception at her residence in Islamabad. Chief Guest of the eve was Mr. Ghulam Murtaza Khan Jatoi Federal minister of Industries and Production. Large number of diplomats and other prominent persons from twin cities attend the event.



Norwegian Constitution Day celebrated

Ambassador of Norway Tore Nedrebo hosted a reception at his residence to celebrate the Constitution Day of Norway. Pakistani band played folk tunes as well, which added color to the event. Large number of diplomats graced the event.





"Peace Walk 2017" on the occasion of the 2561Birth Anniversary of Shakyamuni Gautam Buddha organized by Embassy of Nepal in collaboration with Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad. The embassy of Nepal has organized the peace walk with an aim to underline the significance of peace. Deputy Mayer of Islamabad Mr. Syed Zeshan Shah Naqvi, Ambassador of NEpal h.e. Sawa Lamsal and others diplomates graced the event.



INVISIBLE BRACES











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H. E. Ali Alizada Ambassador of Azerbaijan