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This was one of the greatest comebacks in the history of cricket - against the best the world had, in four straight knockout games`  
The green shirts set up a daunting 339-run target for the men in blue, but Indian batting collapsed under a calculated bowling attack, with all out at 158 runs in the 31st over.



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## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Diplomatic Focus Office has been Shifted  
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new location

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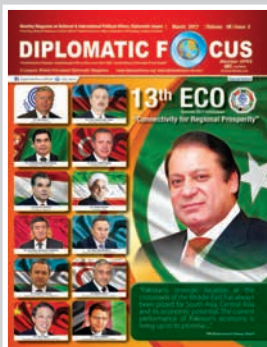
May 2017



April 2017



March 2017



Mian Fazal Elahi

Pakistan has indisputably achieved a diplomatic feat with the acquisition of full-fledged membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) this month.

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev in his inaugural speech during the 17th SCO summit welcomed Pakistan as full member of the organisation.

Indeed, it is an impressive diplomatic cum substantial breakthrough for Islamabad. The full membership of the SCO not only advances Pakistan's positive image internationally, but also be having tangible political, security and economic dividends.

With Pakistan, the total population of the SCO countries will be almost 3.5 billion, which roughly accounts for half of the world, and the combined GDP is estimated to be exceeding 25% of the global GDP.

Pakistan's SCO membership will strengthen its ability to seamlessly sail through an economic sea change, the result of landmark projects of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Since Pakistan's flag has risen at Beijing, the headquarters of SCO, this may usher in a new era of economic and trade growth coupled with the success of CPEC. Both SCO and CPEC complement each other. Russian, Eurasian and Central Asian states are eyeing to partake in CPEC, and in return for participation in CPEC, Pakistan can tap minerals, gas and oil resources from these states to satisfy its energy needs. Pakistan's membership will give it influence in the global arena, and the SCO will serve as a platform for the expression of the country's commitment to peaceful regional cooperation. At this multilateral forum, other members may also learn from Pakistan's pursuit of the eradication of terrorism and extremism through a robust anti-terrorism apparatus.



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 Ipswich Road, SW17 9RH, London. Cell number:+44-7961005954/ 2087694850, Email: uk.diplomaticfocus@gmail.com, assadmian1@gmail.com

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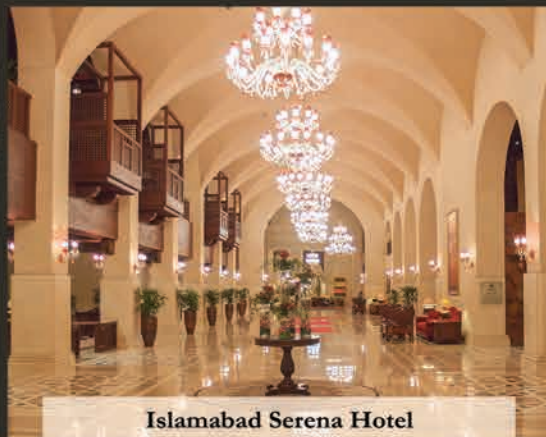


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Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif meeting with President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at Astana, Kazakhstan.

## PM Nawaz underscored the need for enhancing trade

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Agencies

**P** rime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif called on President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev at Astana.

During the bilateral meeting, the Prime Minister thanked President Nazarbayev for invitation to participate in the ongoing 17th SCO Summit and congratulated him on hosting the summit. The Prime Minister reiterated Pakistan's strong commitment to cooperation with Kazakhstan in energy sector, regional connectivity and human resource development. He also underscored the need for enhancing trade between the two countries, which was much less than the potential.

The Prime Minister expressed the hope that the outcome of the ongoing SCO Summit will result in paving way for cooperation and economic prosperity of the people of the region.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif thanked the President of Kazakhstan for the warmth and hospitality extended to him and his delegation.

Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif also called on President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

The Prime Minister stated that Pakistan cherishes its close, friendly and fraternal relations with Uzbekistan, as both the countries are bound by strong commonalities of history, faith and culture. Pakistan is keen to further



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif warmly received by Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Mr. Akylbek Kamaldinov upon arrival at Astana, Kazakhstan.

PM Nawaz expressed the hope that the outcome of the ongoing SCO Summit will result in paving way for cooperation and economic prosperity of the people of the region





Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif meeting with President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev at Astana, Kazakhstan.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif meets UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on the sidelines of the meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Member States in Astana, Kazakhstan.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif along with other world leaders at the opening ceremony of Expo-2017 at Astana, Kazakhstan.

expand ties in all fields, particularly economic and energy cooperation, connectivity and human resource development,” expressed the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister expressed the desire to take bilateral relations to new heights based on mutually beneficial cooperation. Pakistan is keen to further expand ties in all fields, particularly economic and energy cooperation, connectivity and human resource development, added the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister stated that Uzbekistan’s impressive annual economic growth and rich energy resources, and Pakistan’s large industrial and agricultural base provide an ideal environment for expansion of trade and commercial cooperation between the two countries.

The Prime Minister proposed that both countries work together for making appropriate reforms in trade policies to facilitate trade, investment and free flow of goods and services between Pakistan and Uzbekistan.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif was seen off by Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan akylbek Kamaldinov at astna.





Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif along with Heads of States/Governments of SCO member countries in Astana, Kazakhstan.

# Pakistan become a full member of the SCO

The Prime Minister participated in 17th meeting of the Heads of State Council of Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited the Pakistani stall at Expo-2017 in Astana. Pakistan has formally become a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization during 17th meeting of the Heads of the State Council summit held in Astana, Kazakhstan. Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev in his inaugural speech during the 17th SCO summit welcomed Pakistan as full member of the organization. Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif along with his delegation attended the meeting of the Heads of State Council of SCO. Pakistan has been an Observer with SCO since 2005 and applied for full membership of the organization in 2010. The decision, in principle, to give membership to Pakistan was taken by the SCO Heads of States meeting held in Ufa, Russia, in 2015. The Heads of State Council is the highest decision-making body of SCO which meets annually. Pakistan fully subscribes to the Charter of SCO and the Shanghai Spirit.





Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif meets Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Member States in Astana, Kazakhstan.

## Pakistan important partner of Russia in south Asia: Putin

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif held a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Astana. Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Pakistan is an important partner for Russia in South Asia. The two leaders discussed bilateral relations, including trade and economic cooperation, and also current international issues during the meeting. "I am glad that we met for a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the SCO Summit". Russian-Pakistani relations have been constructive and mutually beneficial. President Putin said: "our relations are developing in many areas, and our trade has increased, even if only by a few percentage points. Of course, we are able to do much more than we are doing now."

Russian-Pakistani relations have been constructive and mutually beneficial: President Putin

I am glad that we met for a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the SCO Summit: President Putin



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif shaking hands with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Member States in Astana, Kazakhstan.





## STATEMENT OF **MUHAMMAD NAWAZ SHARIF,** PRIME MINISTER OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN, **AT THE SCO HEADS OF STATE COUNCIL, ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN**

Your Excellency

President Nursultan Nazarbayev,

Distinguished SCO leaders,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today is a historic day for Pakistan, India and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. With immense pride and high expectations, Pakistan enters into this prestigious and important organization as a full member.

On this occasion, I thank the founding members of the SCO – China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan – for their staunch support to Pakistan's membership.

We are grateful to the SCO Secretary General

and his efficient team for their assistance in the membership process.

I also convey my profound gratitude to President Nazarbayev and the people of Kazakhstan for hosting this important summit; and for extending warm hospitality.

Mr. President,

Pakistan is not unfamiliar with the SCO. In fact, over the last decade, it has developed a deep association with the organization as its active Observer. We have attended all Summits; and worked earnestly with SCO's institutions such as its Business Council, Interbanking Consortium, SCO Forum and the Regional Anti-terrorist Structure.

So, in a sense, we come prepared but we realize that we have a lot to learn from the wisdom of

the founding members, as we orient our foreign policy in a changing international environment.

Mr. President,

With SCO members, we share deep historical and cultural ties, as well as strong economic and strategic linkages. SCO's goals resonate with Pakistan's national ethos; and so do the core values of the Shanghai Spirit and the SCO Charter with our own quest for a peaceful neighborhood.

In this contact, I welcome the proposal made by President XI on the need for a "long term treaty of good neighborhood for the next 5 years" among SCO members.

As leaders, we should leave a legacy of peace and amity for our future generations; not a toxic harvest of conflict and animosity. Instead





Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in a group photo with Heads of States/Government in Astana, Kazakhstan.

of talking about counterweights and containment, let us create shared spaces for all.

Mr. President,

I congratulate India for joining the SCO family.

Today, in its outreach, the SCO is truly transcontinental. In coming decades, it would serve as a strong link between the Asia-Pacific, East Asia, West Asia and the Atlantic region.

Over the years, the SCO has emerged as a sheet anchor for regional stability. Now it is destined to become a cornerstone of global politics and economics, with economics gaining primacy.

The SCO gives us a powerful platform for partnerships to promote peace, build trust, and spur economic development for shared prosperity. Moreover, it helps us all combat terrorism, reduce arms race, eliminate poverty, fight epidemics, deal with natural disasters, tackle climate change, and ensure water security.

Mr. President,

We fully endorse the SCO's resolve to fight the twin evils of terrorism and extremism. Pakistan has fought its own fierce war against international terrorism and violent extremism; and with the grace of God we have been able to turn around the security and economic situation in our country. The SCO's expansion takes place at an opportune time, as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) transforms global

economic landscape. And, in Pakistan, we are diligently implementing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is the flagship of the BRI. What is more, these mega projects will benefit the entire SCO community.

Mr. President,

We attend this summit with the confidence that

we would be able to change the world for the better. We would do so by harnessing the SCO's enormous potential and proven competencies, as well as by leveraging the strong political will of the nations represented in the SCO. Pakistan stands ready to contribute to this collective endeavor. Thank you.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif warmly received by Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Mr. Akylbek Kamaldinov upon arrival at Astana, Kazakhstan.



# Pakistan set a stall at Expo-2017 in Astana

Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Saturday morning visited the Pakistan stall at international specialized exhibition 'Expo 2017'.

The prime minister took keen interest in the items displayed at the stall and was briefed about the traditional arts items and wind and solar technologies gadgets on display.

The Prime Minister also visited Belarus stall and was briefed by the high officials.

Advisor to PM on foreign affairs Sartaj Aziz, minister for commerce Khurram Dastgir and minister of state for petroleum Jam Kamal accompanied the prime minister.

Expo 2017 being held from June 10 to September 10, is dedicated to the development of alternative energy sources, green technologies and preservation of ecology system. It hosts the world's best technologies in harnessing of renewable resources.

About 115 countries as well as 22 international organizations are participating in the exhibition.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif visiting different stalls in Pakistan Pavilion at Expo-2017, Astana.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif visiting different stalls in Pakistan Pavilion at Expo-2017 Astna.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif visiting different stalls in Pakistan Pavilion at Expo-2017 Astna.



# Military leaders agreed to further enhance defence cooperation in multiple fields

By Agencies

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa in Turkey on official visit. On arrival, COAS visited Ataturk Mausoleum and laid floral wreath to pay homage to the father of Turkish nation and penned down his respects on the visitor's book.

COAS visited Turkish Land Force Headquarters where he was received by General Salih Zeki Çolak, Commander Turkish Land Forces and was presented guard of honour. At the Turkish Land Force Headquarters, COAS was briefed on the regional security situation as well as the Turkish Land Forces and their various undertakings in field of training, defence production and peace keeping operations.

COAS was awarded the Legion of Merit in a simple and graceful ceremony in recognition of his services for promotion of Pakistan-Turkey defence ties. Speaking on the occasion, COAS underscored the special place that Turkey enjoys in the hearts of all Pakistanis. He dedicated the award to the Shuhada of both Pakistani and Turkish Armed Forces.

Later, COAS called on chief of Turkish General Staff, General Hulusi Akar and discussed matters related to regional security and the role Armed Forces of both countries play towards peace and stability. The two military leaders agreed to further enhance defence cooperation in multiple fields. Turkish military leadership was greatly appreciative of the role Pakistan Army plays against terrorism as well as in peace keeping operations and as a factor of stability in a very volatile region, stated in a statement issued by ISPR.



Turkish military leadership was greatly appreciative of the role Pakistan Army plays against terrorism as well as in peace keeping operations and as a factor of stability in a very volatile region



# Remembering the lifeline of PPP, Benazir Bhutto on 64th birthday

21 June 1953



By Maleeha Manzoor

In a society that was stuck in the morass of misogyny, where women were surrounded by strangling mediocrities, a young woman emerged as the strongest and the most powerful: Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto. Muslim World's first female Prime Minister, who broke all the barriers refuting the anti-woman narrative and paved way for all the female achievers, once caged in the prisons of patriarchy.

Not for the women alone, Benazir Bhutto rose as the hope to countless of the poor and destitute. A saviour to the marginalised who were subdued under dictatorship post the assassination of her father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Pakistan's undisputed leader who preferred to

accept gallows but didn't bow down before usurpers – for a people's love; for country's honour. He continues to be eulogised decades after his assassination.

"What gift can I give you from this cell out of which my hand cannot pass? I give you the hand of the people." – writes Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in a birthday letter to his daughter Benazir Bhutto from his death cell on June 21, 1978.

BB was the father's daughter. She held the people's hand. Bhutto's legacy as her *raison d'être*, she fought for democracy, for emancipation of masses till the last breathe. Inherited the prowess to woo popular support from her father, she ruled over the hearts of millions. Such deep-seated was her connection to the people that no exiles could keep them

away, 1986 and 2007's grand receptions remain unequalled in Asia's political history. But BB's rise to becoming Pakistan's greatest political hope was not a piece of cake; it was a trial by fire.

In 1977 when tragedies befell Pakistan and its elected government was overthrown, BB was only 24. She was placed under house arrest as she returned home after completing her studies. Bhutto's dismissal landed the young Benazir on a hard road and the PPP in dire straits.

Under the worst of the dictatorial regimes governed by the law of the jungle, where human rights were a fiddling little affair, BB had to fight for her father's life and later on, for the PPP's survival. During Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's





homicidal trial and after his execution, BB was faced with a lot of challenges from within and outside. She along with Begum Nusrat Bhutto was left unescorted by the powerful political elite that once enjoyed perks during Bhutto regime. To change things outside, the biggest challenge for the young Bhutto was to first put her own house in order.

Apart from breach of trust by party leaders, she had to run the gauntlet of some egocentric elders. The New York Times in 1986 quoted some of her colleagues that she refused to be treated as a mere face to the campaign, asserted her command to lead instead. And what strengthened the BB-led PPP the most was her credence in workers' loyalty. As she fielded young loyalists on important positions, the party workers backed her, the ministers and uncles did not – nor did she care about them.

BB was told that she could not win an election, that she didn't know the language of the people. Nevertheless, she brought all her opponents' claims to naught. The Oxford educated proved that she might be new to the political environment but was well acquainted with her roots; that she might not speak people's language initially but knew their music.

Within a few years, she took party to a position where people would believe that even if a pole is given the PPP ticket, it would win. To quote two big examples of transfer of power from political elite to workers: the feudal lord and spiritual leader Pir Pagara was defeated by a PPP commoner Pervaiz Ali Shah and Mumtaz Ali Bhutto, ZA Bhutto's cousin and his former aide, lost elections to a BB's candidate Deedar Hussain Shah, who had once served as his manager. Her art of political war was her penchant for positioning the educated young people against the mightiest.

This day marks the 64th birthday of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto. More than 9 years have passed since her assassination but the party is somehow unable to grasp biggest of the popular support, and rightly so. The juxtaposition drawn between current popularity of other parties and the PPP's is unmerited. PPP has not only survived the assassination of its leading figures but has also arisen to eminence in the political realm every now and then. Is it possible to imagine a PMLN and a PTI without their main leaders?

Today, the hullabaloo over defections is same as 80s. Bilawal Bhutto is confronted with many challenges similar to BB's – he is living in better times though; living in a democracy restored with his mother's blood where no political leader has to stay in the blazing hot Sukkur jail in political vendetta like she did. Critical opprobrium against him too is on the account of his young age and his first language etc.

## Bilawal pays moving tribute to Benazir Bhutto on her birthday



**BilawalBhuttoZardari**   
@BBhuttoZardari

 Follow

On my mother's B'day, I pray to fulfill her aspirations for Pak. Her dream for a progressive & peaceful Pak lives on!

#HappyBirtdaySMBB

2:10 PM - 21 Jun 2017



1,334



7,628





But he has this whole legacy of his mother to follow, which provides him best of the solutions to overcome crises. Empowering workers whilst giving no fig to the desertions and committing to not let them re-enter, prioritising loyalists over turncoats, making everyone abide by party policies, instilling faith into the workers – this is the BB Shaheed's strategy.

BB was not concerned about the political elite. In an interview she said, "all ministers who betrayed us, people who made hay while the sun was shining. I decided I didn't want such men around me, ever." If the picayune renegeing of party members had to matter, BB would not have re-emerged after sitting in the parliament with only 17 members in 1997, nor had she sustained betrayal of infamous party leaders elected on PPP tickets landing in Musharraf's lap in 2002.

PPP has survived everything. What this almost fifty year old party will not be able to survive is the deviation from its ideological basis and that is out of question as long as the workers remain. PPP's power headquarters lies among its ideological workers for BB gave them this empowerment; she is the lifeline of this party. She breathed oxygen into PPP with her sacrifices. She connects the third generation of the party to the first, links Bilawal Bhutto to Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. She is still the rescuer and what can make this party the most popular again, is the SMBB's way of running the PPP.

BB's son, like his mother, has the savoir faire to represent Pakistan internationally. He has inherited the same affection for masses; he too has his heart in the right place. PPP is undergoing an extensive reorganisation process under his watch and he has been personally interviewing every single candidate. With sheer commitment to mother's cause, he is trying to connect to the masses. If the facts are not resented out of prejudice and if the history tends to repeat itself, then the party is not over yet - the party has just begun...

This snippet from SZAB's letter to his warrior daughter should serve as the motivation for the young Chairman and all the supporters:

"I believe I still have a role to play. I believe people still want me on this stage, but if I have to bow out, I give you the gift of my feelings. You will fight the fight better than me. Your speeches will be more eloquent than my speeches. Your commitment equally total. There will be more youth and vitality in your struggle. Your deeds will be more daring. I transmit to you the blessing of the most blessed mission."

*Courtesy Daily Times*





# A pyrrhic victory for Theresa May

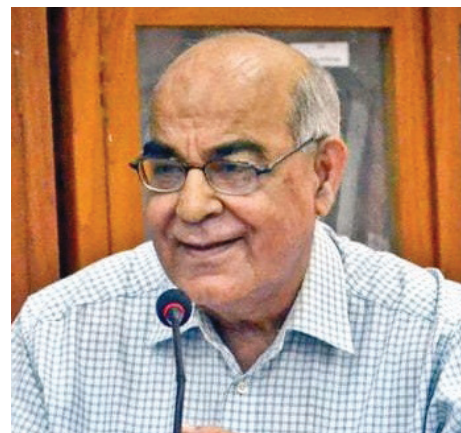
British Prime Minister Theresa May must be regretting her decision to hold a snap election on June 8, 2017. Her Conservative Party possessed a majority of 12 seats in parliament, consisting of 650 members, and there were three years still left before the scheduled elections. However, opinion polls showed a 20-point lead for Conservatives over Labour, and May thought she would secure a larger majority in a new election that would strengthen her hand in negotiating Britain's exit from European Union (EU). In a televised statement, she said: "I have concluded the only way to guarantee certainty and security for years is to hold this election. Division in parliament will risk our ability to make a success of Brexit."

But on Election Day, May could only win a pyrrhic victory. Her party secured 317 seats as against 330 in the outgoing parliament. Labour increased its strength to 262 seats as against 232. Conservatives are still the largest party but are short of 326 votes needed to form a government. In the post-election reactions, May is being heavily criticised by both friends and foes. Almost two-thirds of her party members want May to resign. However, she is determined to hang on and has already been asked by the Queen to form a new government. The likely coalition ally would be DUP (Democratic Unionist Party of Northern Ireland), a religious-minded, pro-EU party. Such an unwieldy coalition would hardly give May the "strong and stable" government she had promised to strengthen her hand in Britain's exit from EU. Instead, Britain now has a "hung parliament" where May's own position as Prime Minister seems vulnerable. She would remain in power but would not be able to pass any major laws. It is likely she will become ineffectual and unpopular and would be at a disadvantage in dealing with the EU in the complex negotiations ahead on Brexit.

So what went wrong? Most observers agree that the election result shows a direct repudiation of May's approach to Brexit negotiations with EU. There are many ways in which the UK can formally leave EU, either retaining some ties or cutting many. May was pushing for a "harder" Brexit, which meant limiting trade and immigration with EU. This seems far less likely now. The stakes are high. The nature of deal the UK makes with EU will shape the lives of millions. Some analysts argue that the future of EU itself is also at stake, including its global role.

May did not run an effective election campaign. Despite their initial lead in polls, the Conservatives saw a sharp decline in closing days of the election. The party manifesto was poorly-designed and offered little hope to

the people. It included a proposal to make the elderly pay what was dubbed the "dementia tax". This was criticised as being heartless and cruel and was hastily withdrawn from the manifesto. Cabinet members were sidelined and learnt about the manifesto shortly before its release. From that point onwards, the polls showed a declining curve for the Conservatives. There was criticism of the choice of campaign managers as also the Presidential style of the campaign, focusing on the figure of Theresa May. She was criticized for refusing to take part in televised debates with her opponents. She chose not to speak to



By Shahid M Amin

large audiences and was unimpressive in her campaign speeches. The word "robotic" was commonly used in British press to describe her performances.

Labour Party has been the main beneficiary of the election and has 30 more seats in the new House of Commons. Its leader Jeremy Corbyn was able to generate some enthusiasm among the young voters. The youth turnout rose from 43% in 2015 to 72% in the latest election.



Another party that fared poorly was the Scottish National Party (SNP) which lost 21 seats and now has 35. This result would diminish prospects of Scotland's secession from the UK. The SNP leader decided to resign on June 14. The white supremacist party UKIP secured just 1.8% of the popular vote, down from 12.7% in 2015. It failed to win a single seat in parliament. Its manifesto had sought ban on burqa, outlawing of sharia law and imposing a moratorium on new Islamic schools. Following the election, its leader Paul Nuttall had to resign. The Liberal Democrats did get 4 more seats but with a total of 12 seats, they remain a minor force. Its leader Tim Farron also resigned after the election.

Britain today is a less stable country than before, mainly due to Theresa May. She took an unnecessary gamble that backfired badly. The biggest impact of the election will be on Brexit. The Conservatives have a harsh anti-immigration position, calling for no more than 100,000 people to be admitted to Britain per year. For this to happen, they need to end free flow of people from the EU to Britain. Three million EU citizens currently live in the UK, and 250,000 moved in last year. The EU is unlikely to agree to this while continuing to allow Britain access to EU market. 44% of British exports go to the rest of Europe at this time. Getting cut off from the EU market could badly hurt the British economy. It now seems likely that May would have to accept softer terms for Brexit as the voters have clearly rejected her request for a hard Brexit mandate.

*The writer served as Pakistan's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, the ex-Soviet Union, France, Nigeria and Libya.*

Email: shahid\_m\_amin@hotmail.com

Courtesy to Pakistan Observer



# Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Ambassador of Afghanistan Mr. Hazral Omar Zakhilwal called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House, Islamabad.



Ambassador designate to the Thailand Mr. Asim Iftikhar Ahmed called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House, Islamabad.



Mrs. Khadija Almahzoumi Ambassador of Somalia called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House, Islamabad.



Ambassador designate to the Uzbekistan Dr. Irfan Yusuf Shami called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House, Islamabad.



Ms. Margaret Adamson High Commissioner of Australia called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Parliament House, Islamabad.



H.E. Mr. Adel Elarbi, Ambassador of Tunisia called on Federal Minister for Defence Production, Rana Tanveer Hussain in Islamabad.



# Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in a meeting with British High Commissioner Thomas Drew in Islamabad.



Advisor to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs, Sartaj Aziz inauguration the China-Pakistan Study Centre at Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad.



Finance Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar in a meeting with US Ambassador David Hale at M/o Finance, Islamabad.



H.E. Mr. Nicolae Goia, Ambassador of Romania called on Rana Tanveer Hussain, Federal Minister for Defence Production in Islamabad.



Federal Minister for Commerce, Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan in a meeting with Ambassador-designate of Pakistan to Uzbekistan, Dr. Irfan Yusuf Shami in Islamabad.



Teresita C. Schaffer, retired US Ambassador along with a delegation called on Federal Minister for Commerce, Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan in Islamabad.





## Queen Elizabeth II turns 91:

From a young girl who did not expect to be Queen, to an iconic and celebrated figure who has ruled for more than 60 years



The Queen has ruled for longer than any other Monarch in British history, becoming a much loved and respected figure across the globe. Her extraordinary reign has seen her travel more widely than any other monarch, undertaking many historic overseas visits. Known for her sense of duty and her devotion to a life of service, she has been an important figurehead for the UK and the Commonwealth during times of enormous social change.

Her Majesty continues to carry out a full programme of engagements, from visits to charities and schools, to hosting visiting Heads of State, to leading the nation in Remembrance and celebratory events - all supported by other members of the Royal Family.

Queen Elizabeth II was born Princess Elizabeth Alexandra Mary on April 21, 1926, in London, to Prince Albert, Duke of York (later known as King George VI), and Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon. She married Philip Mountbatten, Duke of Edinburgh, in 1947, became queen on February 6, 1952, and was crowned on June 2, 1953. She is the mother of Prince Charles, heir to the throne, as well as the grandmother of princes William and Harry. As the longest-serving monarch in British history, she has tried to make her reign more modern and sensitive to a changing public while maintaining traditions associated with the crown.





The Queen sees public and voluntary service as one of the most important elements of her work. The Queen has links - as Royal Patron or President - with over 600 charities, military associations, professional bodies and public service organisations. These vary from well-established international charities to smaller bodies working in a specialist area or on a local basis only.

Her patronages and charities cover a wide range of issues, from opportunities for young people, to the preservation of wildlife and the environment. Having Her Majesty as Royal patron or president provides vital publicity for the work of these organisations, and allows their



enormous achievements and contributions to society to be recognised.

Her Majesty supports and encourages achievement in all walks of life through the annual programme of Investitures (at which she presents members of the general public with their honours), Garden Parties, receptions and other awards given in her name, which allow her to say 'thank you' to all those who have contributed to the life of the nation and the Commonwealth.

The Queen carries out all of her duties against the backdrop of a full personal life which has seen her raise four children and welcome grandchildren, and now great-grandchildren to the Royal Family. The Duke of Edinburgh has been – in her own words – her 'strength and stay' during her reign, whilst other members of the Royal Family continue to offer vital support through their work in the UK and overseas.

## The Queen's birthday

The Queen celebrates two birthdays each year: her actual birthday on 21 April and her official birthday on (usually) the second Saturday in June every year. The Queen usually spends her actual birthday privately, but the occasion is marked publicly by gun salutes in central London at midday: a 41 gun salute in Hyde Park, a 21 gun salute in Windsor Great Park and a 62 gun salute at the Tower of London.

The tradition is linked to the unreliable British weather because the Royal family want to hold the grand royal birthday parade in the summer.

For example, Edward VII was born on November 9, but his official birthday was always marked in May and June during his reign. It is believed that the tradition started during the reign of King George II in 1748.

George II was born in October but the annual summer military cavalcade became a celebration of the king as well as the armed forces.





# Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Federal Minister for Water and Power, Khawaja Asif in a meeting with High Commissioner of Bangladesh H.E. Mr. Tarik Ahan in Islamabad.



Seaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq presenting a gift Mr. Nicola Goia Ambassador of Romania at Parliament House, Islamabad.



European Union Delegation led by Mr. Jean Francois Cautain, Ambassador of EU delegation to Pakistan meeting with Federal Minister for Human Rights Senator Kamran Michael in Islamabad.



Ambassador of Azerbaijan, H.E. Ali Alizada called on National Security Adviser, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nasser Khan Janjua at his office in Islamabad.



National Security Adviser, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nasser Khan Janjua in a meeting with Australian High Commissioner Ms. Margarete Adamson and Canadian High Commissioner Mr. Perry Calderwood at his office in Islamabad.



National Security Adviser, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nasser Khan Janjua in a meeting with British High Commissioner H.E. Thomas Drew at his office Islamabad.



# Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



National Security Adviser, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Naseer Khan Janjua shaking hand with Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran H.E. Mehdi Honardoost at his office in Islamabad.




National Security Adviser, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nasser Khan Janjua shaking hand with Ambassador of Japan H.E. Takashi Kurai at his office in Islamabad.



Photo of Jinnah Young Writer Award winners with Education Minister of Turkey Ismet Yilmaz and Ambassador of Pakistan to Turkey, Sohail Mahmood at the Awards ceremony for the second edition of "Jinnah Young Writers Award" essay competition held in Ankara, Turkey.





their interests. Ankara may be seeing it as an opportunity to establish its foothold in an Arab country to enhance its influence in the Middle East. Sending its troops is a clear signal that Turkey will defend the territorial integrity of Qatar. By supporting Qatar, Turkey also aims to moderate the influence of Iran and act as check against the growing footprint of Israel in the region.



What makes Qatar vulnerable is its heavy dependence on imports. Eighty per cent of food necessities come from Saudi Arabia. And the main land route connects Qatar with Saudi Arabia. That should normally restrict taking independent positions. But with Iran flying over 450 tons of food necessities and Turkey equally keen to win over Qatar the blockade is unlikely to make an impact. This measure would also hurt Saudi businessmen, as they would lose the attractive Qatar market. Despite external support Qatar would eventually have to extend some concessions and Saudi Arabia and its allies will have to soften their position. Prudence demands national decisions should be compatible with national power. Apparently, Hamas leadership is relocating itself either in Sudan or Iran.

It is truly an irony that the rivalry of the Sunni regimes against Iran is so intense that there are no qualms in accepting Israel as an ally. Indeed, Tel Aviv is one of the main beneficiaries of this confrontation.

All these ominous developments reinforce the deep and expanding crisis in the Muslim world. It makes a mockery of the stated objective of the Islamic military alliance to forge a

united front to fight terrorism and extremism. Differences between Saudi Arabia and Qatar are not between its people as much as these are between the ruling families. In fact, the people of both the countries have so much in common and are like one society with different rulers.

The Arab divide places Pakistan in a delicate and challenging situation. Saudi Arabia is Pakistan's staunch strategic ally. It has stood steadfast with Pakistan in crises and extended financial and diplomatic support. Nearly 1.8 million Pakistani expatriates are working in the Kingdom. Saudi Arabia is home to Makkah and Madina, the holiest places for Muslims. Nawaz Sharif personally owes a lot to the Saudi monarchy and enjoys a strong personal relationship.

With Qatar Pakistan enjoys close fraternal relations. It is the primary source of supply of gas. About 80,000 Pakistani expatriates are in Qatar. The prospect of nearly an additional 100,000 Pakistanis being hired before the World Olympics is an added attraction.

There have been voices raised for calling back General Raheel Sharif. I do not foresee any immediate role for him in the Saudi-

Qatar confrontation. The Saudi alliance is not planning any military action against Qatar; the thrust is in persuading it to change policies and if possible force the present ruler to quit through diplomatic isolation and economic coercion. In any case it would take a year or two before the military force that is planned by Prince Mohammed would be operational.

Historically, Pakistan has never taken sides in intra-Arab feuds. In the Yemen conflict too Pakistan took a neutral position. It realises confrontation among Arab countries has consequences for Muslims worldwide. It will undermine the fight against Islamic State and further weaken the voice of Arab countries at international forums. However, the recent visit of a Qatari delegation to Lahore and its meeting with Shahbaz Sharif and Nawaz Sharif's visit to Saudi Arabia this week suggest Pakistan's efforts at defusing the crisis. If Pakistan, along with Turkey, can contribute in bringing peace to the region it would be a great achievement.

*The writer is a retired lieutenant general of the Pakistan Army and a former federal secretary. He has also served as chairman of the Pakistan Ordnance Factories Board. Courtesy to Express Tribune*

# US signs deal to supply F-15 jets to Qatar after Trump terror claims

## Agreement comes after president accused emirate of 'high-level funding' of terrorism and amid Saudi-led embargo

**T**he US has signed a \$12bn deal to supply dozens of F-15 jets to Qatar, despite recent high-profile claims by President Donald Trump alleging Qatar's "high-level funding" of terrorism.

"We are pleased to announce today the signing of the letter of offer and acceptance for the purchase of the F-15QA fighter jets, with an initial cost of \$12 billion dollars," the Qatari Defense Minister said in a statement.

The deal was signed at a meeting between Qatari Defense Minister Khalid al-Attiyah and U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis amid a diplomatic spat between several Gulf states.

Meshal Hamad al-Thani, Qatari ambassador to the U.S., posted a picture of the meeting on Twitter, claiming the deal would create "60,000 new jobs in 42 states across the United States." The signing of the deal is the latest twist in the highly contradictory US diplomacy over the crisis around Qatar and Trump has repeatedly echoed the accusations against Qatar – now in its second week – with the emirate targeted by a Saudi-led embargo.

Qatar is facing a severe economic and diplomatic boycott by Saudi Arabia and its regional allies, who cut ties last week accusing it of funding terrorist groups, a charge Doha denies.

The Pentagon said the jets sale would increase

security cooperation between the US and Qatar. State Department officials say the deal will not interfere in the current dispute among Qatar and other Gulf states, such as Saudi Arabia, as the sale will take several years to fulfill.







## Premier Sharif expressed the hope that the current impasse in the Gulf would be resolved soon

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Monitoring Desk

Pakistan has been treading a careful path since Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries snapped diplomatic ties with Qatar after accusing the oil-rich country of supporting terrorist groups.

But now Riyadh wants Islamabad to side with the kingdom as it ramped up efforts to isolate Qatar.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif held a meeting with Saudi King Shah Salman bin Abdul Aziz at the Jeddah Royal Palace.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Advisor on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz and Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa were also present in the meeting.

Earlier, King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz received Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif at the entrance to the palace on his arrival at the Jeddah Royal Palace along with the Pakistan delegation.

Prime Minister visit Saudi Arabia along with high level delegation for consultations with Saudi leadership on the emergent situation among GCC countries. Arab powers, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, on June 5 took the unprecedented decision to cut off their air, sea and land links to Qatar, accusing it of sponsoring terrorism

in the Middle East. Pakistan had expressed serious concerns over the growing tensions between Saudi Arabia and Qatar and on June 8, PM Sharif – during his visit to Kazakhstan – said Pakistan would do all it could to amicably resolve the diplomatic crisis in the Gulf.

“Since Pakistan enjoys good relations with Saudi Arabia, Iran and Qatar, we will try our best to resolve the differences among the

Qatar”.

The Saudi demand for Pakistan to take a clear position on Qatar came during a meeting between Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz, diplomatic sources The Express Tribune claimed.

Premier Sharif, who was also accompanied by army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and other senior officials.

kingdom had a very special place in the hearts of Pakistanis and that the Muslim world looked up to the monarch as the custodian of the two Holy Mosques: PM Nawaz

Arab countries,” Sharif had said while speaking to journalists during a two-day meeting of the Heads of State Council of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

Express Tribune reported that Pakistan has told Saudi Arabia it will not take sides in the brewing diplomatic crisis in the Middle East after Riyadh asked Islamabad “are you with us or with

The Express Tribune added a senior government official, who was briefed on the talks in Jeddah, that the Pakistani side told the Saudi leadership that Islamabad would support any efforts to foster unity among the Muslim Ummah. However, Pakistan would not take sides in any event that would create divisions within the Muslim world.

Nevertheless, in order to placate Saudi Arabia, Pakistan offered to use its influence over Qatar to defuse the situation. For this purpose, the prime minister will undertake visits to Kuwait, Qatar and Turkey.

The official said Pakistan was not directly mediating between Qatar and Saudi Arabia at this stage.

“This is primarily an issue among the Gulf countries and we hope they resolve the issue by themselves,” the official said while



requesting not to be quoted on record because of the sensitivity of the issue Express Tribune reported. The official added if efforts of Kuwait and other regional countries could not succeed, then other Muslim countries, including Pakistan and Turkey, were always there to facilitate.

At this stage, Pakistan is only complementing efforts of Kuwait. For this purpose, the prime minister is likely to travel to Kuwait, which is currently spearheading efforts seeking de-escalation of tensions between Qatar and other Gulf countries.

The official also explained that the prime

## Fight against extremism and terrorism was in the interest of all Muslims and the Ummah: King Salman

minister's visit to Saudi Arabia was also part of a 'goodwill gesture' in the wake of speculations that Pakistan was sending troops to Qatar.

"The false media reports gave the impression as if we are taking sides in the ongoing crisis in the Gulf," the official said.

Meanwhile, a statement issued by the Foreign Office said that during meeting with King Salman, Premier Sharif expressed the hope that the current impasse in the Gulf would be resolved soon in the best interest of the Muslim Ummah.

While expressing solidarity with the kingdom and the people of Saudi Arabia, the prime minister said the kingdom had a very special place in the hearts of Pakistanis and that the Muslim world looked up to the monarch as the custodian of the two Holy Mosques.

"The prime minister reaffirmed the strong commitment of the people and the government of Pakistan for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the kingdom, and the safety of Harmain al Shareifain," the statement said.



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif was received by Prince Khaled Al-Faisal, Advisor to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and Governor of Makkah Region, At King Abdulaziz International Airport, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

King Salman, according to the statement, thanked the prime minister for his visit and recalled the special nature of relationship

between the kingdom and Pakistan ever since its independence. King Salman also said that the fight against extremism and terrorism was in the interest of all Muslims and the Ummah.

He also appreciated the exceptional successes of Pakistan against extremism and terrorism, despite the challenging situation and environment, and reiterated the kingdom's strong commitment and support for all issues of interest for Pakistan, including matters of its national security. Meanwhile, leader of the opposition in the National Assembly Khursheed Shah claimed that the prime minister's visit to Saudi Arabia could not achieve the desired results and hence no joint statement was issued.

Speaking to reporters, he demanded that the government clarify the role of former army chief General (retd) Raheel Sharif in the Saudi-led counter terrorism alliance in the wake of ongoing developments.

## Raheel Sharif cannot be recalled from Saudi Arabia: PM's adviser

Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz on Wednesday told the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs that former chief of army staff Raheel Sharif had taken command of the 41-nation Saudi-led military coalition in his personal capacity. The adviser was briefing the committee on the on-going diplomatic rift in the Middle East that began after Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Yemen and the Maldives severed their ties with Qatar. Aziz told the committee that Sharif was not sent by the government to lead the alliance and therefore, cannot be asked to return. Aziz added that the resolution adopted by Pakistan on the Yemen conflict will serve as the foundation for the role Pakistan will adopt in the current Gulf crisis.

The resolution proposed that Pakistan "should maintain neutrality in the conflict so as to be able to play a proactive diplomatic role to end the crisis".



## Qatar calls Arab moves to cut ties unjustified, baseless

By Monitoring Desk

Qatar said it regretted a coordinated decision by Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain to cut diplomatic relations on

Monday over Doha's alleged support for terrorism, according to Qatar-based al Jazeera TV. "The measures are unjustified and are based on claims and allegations that have no basis in fact," the network quoted the foreign

ministry as saying. Qatar said the decisions would "not affect the normal lives of citizens and residents".

"The campaign of incitement is based on lies that had reached the level of complete fabrications," AFP quoted the Qatari foreign ministry. It added that, as a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, it was committed to its charter, respected the sovereignty of other states and did not interfere in their affairs.





By Monitoring Desk

## Mohammed bin Salman named Saudi Arabia's crown prince

Saudi king replaces first in line to the throne with his son, Mohammed bin Salman, the defence chief, state media says

Saudi Arabia's King Salman has appointed his son, Mohammed bin Salman, as heir, in a major reshuffle announced early on Wednesday.

A royal decree removed Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, a 57-year-old nephew of the king, as next-in-line to the throne and replaced him with Mohammed bin Salman, 31, who was previously the deputy crown prince.

According to the official Saudi Press Agency, the newly-announced crown prince was also named deputy prime minister and maintained his post as defence minister.

The former crown prince was also fired from his post as interior minister, the decree said.

Saudi Arabia's Allegiance Council endorsed the changes by 31 out of 34, according to the state-owned al-Arabiya channel.

The Saudi king called for a public pledging of allegiance to the new crown prince early on Wednesday, the channel said.

Mohammed bin Nayef promptly vowed loyalty to his successor after the decree.



# President Mamnoon Hussain hosted the Iftar dinner in honor of diplomatic corps in Islamabad

President Mamnoon Hussain urged the international community to take notice of gross human rights' violations in Indian Occupied Kashmir and called upon India to resolve all outstanding issues including Kashmir through dialogue.

Addressing an Iftar dinner he hosted in honor of Islamabad-based diplomatic corps at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the President said that the world was faced with an extraordinary situation owing to wars, religious, racial and linguistic prejudices as well as a sense of superiority.

The Iftar reception was also attended by Chairman Senate Raza Rabbani, Leader of the House in Senate Raja Zafarul Haq, federal ministers including Ishaq Dar, Professor Ahsan Iqbal, Sardar Yousuf, Khurram Dastgir, Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Sartaj Aziz, Anusha Rehman and Pir Amin-ul-Hasnaat.

Earlier, accompanied by Chairman Senate, the President received the guests at the Aiwan-e-Sadr before Iftar.

He viewed that the complex problems in the world had further widened the divide between different societies and nations.

President Mamnoon Hussain said in this modern



era, it was impossible for some societies to reap the benefits of development and prosperity at a time when their neighbors were confronted by terrorism. Therefore, he said it was necessary to work for the betterment and welfare of the humanity by joining hands for a greater goal

of peace, security and development of the neighboring countries.

He also prayed that by the blessings of the holy month of Ramazan, the world becomes a cradle of peace and security.



President Mamnoon Hussain along with Chairman Senate Raza Rabbani, Federal Minister and Members of Parliament during the Iftar Dinner hosted in honor of diplomatic corps at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.





## Ghani to Allow Taliban Office if Afghan Peace Progresses

Pakistan waging 'undeclared war of aggression' against Afghanistan, Ghani tells Kabul Process

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

**A**fghan President Ashraf Ghani lashed out at Pakistan at the Kabul Process, alleging that it is waging an "undeclared war of aggression" against Afghanistan, DAWN Newspaper reported.

Ghani again criticized neighboring Pakistan for a lack of cooperation in promoting Afghan peace. Afghan officials allege that Taliban insurgents are using sanctuaries on Pakistani soil to wage the insurgency, VOA reported.

Issuing a stinging rebuke aimed towards Pakistan before a gathering of 23 nations, the European Union, the United Nations and Nato, Ghani asked: "What will it take to convince Pakistan that a stable Afghanistan helps them and helps our region?"

Ghani scolded western countries for attempting to negotiate with the Taliban on their own.

"There are too many players running too many parallel tracks with too little clarity on who they are and what they represent," Ghani said. "We also ask that you respect the integrity of an Afghan-owned and led consolidated process and not set up separate tracks of your own." Guardian reported.

Ghani's fresh criticism comes as the Kabul Process, a forum for the discussing security and political issues in the country, is underway.

Pakistan and Afghanistan have long accused each other of turning a blind eye to militants operating along their porous border, and both forces exchanged fire over a border dispute last month.

Despite strained bilateral relations, Pakistan is participating in the multinational conference, having sent a two-member Pakistani delegation headed by Additional Secretary UN and Economic Cooperation Tasneem Aslam.

According to Bloomberg, Ghani's accusation signal the difficulty NATO and Afghan forces have in defeating the Taliban and other insurgent groups, which have long been said to enjoy safe haven within Pakistan. The Taliban already control or contest more than half of Afghanistan's populated areas, according to U.S. estimates, making it harder for the U.S. to extract itself from its longest-ever war. Ghani called on the world to make good on a promise to end state-sponsored terrorism. Bloomberg further added that, In the last two years, 11,000 foreign fighters have arrived in Afghanistan to fight for Islamic State, while more than 75,000 Afghans have been killed or wounded in 2015 and 2016 said by Ghani.

According to VOA, "Global terror has targeted Afghanistan ... Best estimates show an increase from 200 to 11,000 [IS-linked] foreign fighters over the past four years," Ghani noted.



The U.S. military, however, estimated the number of IS loyalists in Afghanistan stood at about 3,000 at the group's peak two years ago, but sustained counterterrorism operations have since reduced the number to fewer than 800, according to American military officials.

Ghani also issued an ultimatum to the Taliban, calling on the militants to embrace peace or "face consequences". Afghan President again invited the Taliban to peace talks at a "mutually agreeable" venue, promising the insurgents they eventually will be allowed to open a representative office if significant progress is made, Voice of America reported. "We would accept that the location for peace talks can be anywhere that is mutually agreeable, whether it be in Kabul where we would provide guarantees or elsewhere. If there is agreement to develop a peace roadmap acceptable to both sides, we would allow Taliban groups to open a representative office so that both sides can meet in safety," said Ghani. While offering peace talks to the Islamist insurgency, Ghani reiterated his preconditions, including recognition of the Afghan constitution, continuity of the reforms of educating and advancing the rights of women, and renunciation of violence and linkages with terrorist groups. "We are offering a chance for peace but this is not an open-ended offer. Time is running out... this is the last chance, take it or face consequences," Ghani said at the international peace conference in Kabul, DAWN reported.

Talking about the current situation of unrest in the country, the Afghan president said that last week's Kabul truck bombing killed over 150 people, making it deadliest attack since 2001.

Past attempts at peace talks have failed. The Taliban have refused to negotiate with the government until all foreign forces leave, and still refer to themselves as a government in exile, angering authorities in Kabul. A Taliban spokesman rejected Ghani's latest offer of a peace dialogue and denounced Kabul gathering as another attempt to "endorse and prolong foreign occupation" of Afghanistan. "The Kabul administration wants peace talks only for the Taliban to surrender but this fake process will never succeed," said Zabihullah Mujahid in a statement sent to media, including VOA. He asserted that the Taliban, and Afghans in general, would welcome any peace conference that is organized for ending the "occupation" of their country because all other gatherings would be "futile and unproductive."

Voice of America reported that, The Taliban unofficially maintains its "political office" in Qatar, but Kabul does not recognize it and has been pushing Qatari authorities to close it down.

The last direct talks with the Taliban, Afghanistan's main armed opposition group, broke down in 2015 after Taliban founder Mullah Omar was declared dead two years earlier.

Ghani, in his speech, also underscored the urgency of resolving the conflict, saying Taliban-sponsored terrorism is attracting terrorists linked to Syria-based Islamic State to find refuge in Afghanistan.

According to The Guardian, the withdrawal of western troops from Afghanistan is a demand shared by Russia and several regional powers, which further complicates a political settlement.

"The representatives of the countries who attended the conference have many differences. They don't see eye to eye on the regional security problems, the Taliban and Isis," said Javed Kohistani, a military analyst in Kabul. He further said that, "We have had several such conferences of peace in the past. The result has been a piece of paper, which has quickly been forgotten," The Guardian Reported.

## **Instead of blaming Pakistan, Afghanistan needs to look inward and identify the real issues**

Pakistan's army said After a special meeting of top commanders in a statement Ghani's accusations and threats were "unwarranted."

"Forum expressed solidarity with Afghan people and Security Forces on loss of precious lives and vowed to continue its support and cooperation with Afghanistan in fight against terrorism and militancy. The forum took exception to the unwarranted accusations and threats against Pakistan in the aftermath of Kabul blast. The forum also concluded that instead of blaming Pakistan, Afghanistan needs to look inward and identify the real issues.

While reaffirming continued support to regional peace and stability, the forum reiterated Pak Army's resolve to defend the motherland against all types of threat."



# Strong Words from James Mattis 'We are not winning in Afghanistan'

By Monitoring Desk

**D**efense Secretary James Mattis, facing tough questions from Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain, said the U.S. and its allies "are not winning" in Afghanistan and promised a new strategy by the middle of July, US media reported.

The Arizona Republican slammed the administration and sharply questioned Mattis over why a new strategy has not been developed to help turn the tide of the war in Afghanistan, where the militant Taliban is overwhelming the Afghan government in key parts of the country and other terrorist groups, like Al Qaeda and the Islamic State, have made new inroads.

"We want a strategy, and I don't think that's a hell of a lot to ask," McCain, an Arizona Republican, told Mattis. "We're now six months into this administration. We still haven't got a strategy for Afghanistan. It makes it hard for us to support you when we don't have a strategy. We know what the strategy was for the last eight years: Don't lose."

Mattis conceded that "We are not winning in Afghanistan right now" and pledged that "we will correct this as soon as possible."

"I believe by mid-July, we'll be able to brief you in detail," Mattis added. "We're putting it together now and ... there are actions being taken to make certain that we don't pay a price



for the delay. But we recognize the need for urgency, and your criticism is fair."

Mattis' comments echo statements from the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Army Gen. John Nicholson, that the Afghan government and Taliban forces are at a stalemate.

The United States has roughly 8,400 troops in Afghanistan. And Nicholson has said that several thousand more are needed to support the Afghan security forces.

McCain also warned Mattis that senators will "start getting more vocal in our criticism" if a plan isn't delivered soon.

"I was confident that within the first 30 to 60 days we would have a strategy from which to start working," McCain said. "So, all I can tell you is that unless we get a strategy from you, you're going to get a strategy from us."

Asked later by Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) about what "winning" in Afghanistan would look like, Mattis said Afghan forces, with the aid of allies, should be able to "handle the violence" there.

"It would probably require a residual [U.S.] force doing training and maintaining ... high-end capabilities," Mattis added.

## Ukrainians celebrating visa-free travel to EU: Envoy

By M.Saeed Yousafzai, Agencies

**U**krainians celebrated first day of visa-free travel to most European Union countries. On which President Petro Poroshenko has been welcomed as a "a final 'goodbye' to the Russian Empire." This was stated by Ambassador of Ukraine in Pakistan, Volodymyr Lakomov.

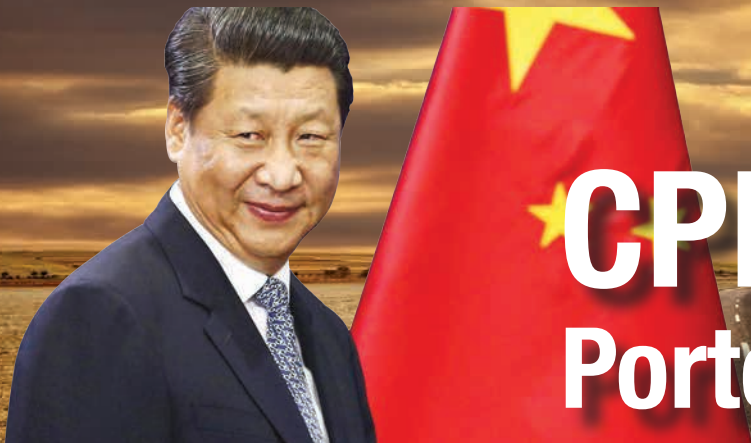
He said that now Ukrainian citizens who had biometric passports could enter to all EU member states except Ireland and the United Kingdom without a visa for up to 90 days during any 180-day period, said a press release here. The ambassador said that visa would be necessary for four Schengen area countries that are not in the EU including Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland. Volodymyr Lakomov said that "The visa-free regime for Ukraine

has started, Glory to Europe, Glory to Ukraine," adding Poroshenko wrote on Twitter after hundreds of Ukrainians crossed the EU border. "It will create new opportunities for all of us, strengthening our economies, or security, and our friendship," he said. "And this is what our partnership is all about: making a difference to our citizens' everyday life." The ambassador said that Ukrainians will be able "to travel to 33 countries of West Europe without any visa requirements." He said that the visa-free regime was "just the first step" toward "intensifying relations" between the EU and Ukraine. "We must return Ukrainians history, decision of the EU is so important, a long process has been completed, first of all, it goes about the return of Ukraine to its historic place among the European countries, not only about the visa-free border crossing," he added.



Ukrainian citizens who had biometric passports could enter to all EU member states except Ireland and the United Kingdom: Ambassador of Ukraine





# CPEC & OBOR: Portents of progress

THE announcement of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as a flagship project of Chinese President Xi Jinping 'One Belt, One Road' (OBOR) vision accentuated Pakistan's pivotal position in Eurasian economic connectivity. Consequently, Pakistan has become an attractive country for the foreign direct investment since 2015. The accomplishment of a few early harvest projects of CPEC not only manifests both Islamabad and Beijing resolve to materialize all the projects within deputed years, but also signifies Pakistan's prominence in the OBOR initiative. The Gwadar port, today, is viewed as an emerging economic hub of Asia.

Ironically, a few analysts deliberately or inadvertently have been articulating concocted stories against the expectant benefits of the OBOR project. The negative propaganda against OBOR directly undermines CPEC project. Admittedly, objective debate on both CPEC and OBOR is indispensable for revamping the policies for the economic prosperity of Pakistan. For instance, the demand for the transparency of the projects is a practical approach. Notably, both the Government of Pakistan and the Chinese diplomats have been explaining the nature, cost and outcome of the CPEC projects.

Conversely, the subjective or prejudice judgments on the OBOR and CPEC projects are not in the national interest of Pakistan. Without investigating or examining the details of the projects expressing opinion is a destructive approach. Hence, it's imperative to generate explanatory discourse to reveal the reprehensible agenda of the forces, which always desire to keep Pakistan economically

underdeveloped and instable country. The informative discourse definitely increases the people of Pakistan's confidence in the CPEC projects. Since 2013, the Chinese have been striving to set up an intercontinental infrastructure network between Europe, Africa and Asia. It is because, without the regional connectivity the sustainable economic growth is a mere wishful thinking in the 21st century. The primary objective of OBOR is to bring Asian countries closer and establish new accesses with Europeans and Africans countries. On May 15, 2017, China's President Xi Jinping while highlighting the aim of OBOR stated: "We need to seek win-win results through greater openness and cooperation, avoid fragmentation, refrain from setting inhibitive thresholds for cooperation or pursuing exclusive arrangements and reject protectionism." Chinese ruling elite seems convinced that through sustainable multinational economic projects, China would economically advance. Precisely, it marked that Chinese believe in collective progress.

The international community is equally cognizant about the potential of OBOR, i.e. to establish connection among the 65 countries across three continents with China, which would influence the lives of 4.4 billion people with a total gross domestic product of US\$2 trillion once the vision is realized. Indeed, it would boost the global trade. Therefore, 29 heads of state and government, besides delegates from around 130 countries participated in the Belt and Road summit held in Beijing on May 14-15, 2017.

The CPEC is a flagship project of the OBOR initiative. Therefore,

Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, senior Federal Ministers and four Chief Ministers of the provinces participated in the recent Road and Belt Summit in Beijing. Prime Minister Sharif categorically stated: "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 politicized." During the Summit, Pakistani participants underlined their country's ability and capability to facilitate the Central, West and South Asian nations to benefit from OBOR through CPEC. On May 15, 2015, Premier Sharif stated: "take this historically unique opportunity to build a peaceful, progressive, inclusive and sustainable world." He once again said the government of Pakistan ensured the international community that CPEC is not against any country. Although Prime Minister Narendra Modi openly opposed CPEC, yet Pakistani and Chinese leadership is determined to engage the South Asian states including India for the prosperity of entire region. The economic connectivity, certainly, assists in replacing the enmity with amity between the belligerent neighbours.

The sovereign development is perquisite for sovereign defence of the country. Since 2015, Pakistan has been endeavouring to improve its economic situation with the cooperation of China. Indeed, economic prosperity is not acceptable to Pakistan's adversaries. They have been hatching conspiracies to malign the CPEC project by spreading fictitious analysis. Hence, the people of Pakistan ought to act as the vigilant custodian of the CPEC for the sake of a sovereign defence of the motherland.



By Dr Zafar Nawaz Jaspal

*The writer is director and associate professor at the School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. Email: jaspal\_99@hotmail.com Courtesy to Pakistan Observer*

## Western route of CPEC to be completed by June next year

By M. Saeed Yousafzai

National Assembly Standing Committee on Communications was informed that Western Route of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will be completed by June next year.

The meeting of the committee was held in Islamabad under the chairmanship of Muhammad Muzamil Qureshi.

The Committee was informed that Western Route of CPEC has been divided in to five zones and the work has been started on all five zones and contractors are being working on the sites.

The meeting directed that Motorway Police be equipped to meet the needs of CPEC.

The Committee was briefed that more than ten thousands human resource is needed to meet the requirements of all newly built Highways, Motorways and CPEC. It also directed that creation of the required posts and appointment against vacancies on merit should be completed by December this year.





# A positive move

Finally, some good news on the Pakistan-Afghanistan front: President Ashraf Ghani and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit and have signed up to try and get the relationship back on track.

Given where things have been heading of late, this isn't trivial. Ghani has been on the 'bash Pakistan' bandwagon without pause. Pakistan has given up on trying to make things work. Recent policy choices — forced return of Afghan refugees and border fencing for example — were, in some ways, designed to signal that Pakistan no longer cared.

This is myopic. Taken to their logic conclusions, these stances can't make for a happy ending. Neither can Afghanistan articulate a way to peace without Pakistan being on board, nor can Pakistan do anything to avoid a spillover of continued instability in Afghanistan. Such is the tyranny of geography in this relationship.

So kudos to the two leaders for signalling their intent to break the logjam. They have gone beyond pleasantries. The read-out from their meeting suggests they have put their finger on the two most important prerequisites for a way forward.

First, they seem to have reopened the conversation of a peace process involving the Afghan Taliban. We are told the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) will be revived. This is good news and ought to force a rethink about Ghani's intentions in the Pakistani camp.

Pakistan's security establishment has been of the view that Ghani opposes any reconciliation with the Taliban and benefits from continuing to stall efforts to revive the peace process. But his acquiescing to the QCG doesn't fit this logic. The forum is Pakistan's preferred choice — because it keeps India out and allows Pakistan a seat on the table without making it solely responsible for the success of the process. As the party that has been advocating reconciliation and stands to

gain immensely from it, not to take Ghani's overture seriously would be self-defeating.

Second, Ghani and Sharif have reportedly agreed on the need for a verification mechanism to confirm each other's actions against terrorism. Perfect! Genuine verification is the only way to give pause to the reflexive tendencies to blame major terrorist incidents on the other; or to establish culpability to force the state in question to make amends in tangible ways.

But two types of verification mechanisms will be needed: one, to identify if the other side's territory or people had anything to do with an attack across the border; and another, as agreed, to confirm that the state in question has acted sincerely against the perpetrators of an attack.

This isn't easy. Verification requires coordination, information sharing and use of technical means beyond merely carrying phone data and voice intercepts to each other's capitals after attacks. Also, the two sides may need third parties like the US and China, both as work-arounds to their mutual mistrust and to leverage their superior technical capacities. Sans this involvement, verification efforts may end up being another avenue for point scoring. The US and China must also use the backdrop of the Sharif-Ghani meeting to publicly reaffirm their commitment to the QCG process and the four participants should immediately announce a meeting to agree on next steps. Ghani should task his newly appointed High Peace Council chief (or anyone else he may choose to) to fast-track efforts to engage the Taliban through this process. Pakistan should not ask to be at the centre of the process, nor seek to host any meetings with the Taliban. A Pakistan-led process will not be acceptable to the Afghans or the Taliban. Pakistan's role should primarily be to facilitate free exchanges between Kabul and the Taliban willing to speak to it. In return, Ghani should agree not to hold Pakistan



By Moeed Yusuf

responsible for the fate of the talks.

For any of this to work, the civilian leadership in both countries will have to force their security establishments into action. Intelligence agencies on both countries have long been convinced that the civilian principals on the other side don't control their opposite numbers. Worse yet, they believe the other has and will continue to sabotage all efforts aimed at improving ties between the two countries. This implies that neither the ISI nor the NDS will move on the proposed agenda unless they are convinced that their counterpart will. President Ghani and Prime Minister Sharif will have to prove that they are in charge.

Pak-Afghan ties are too broken to return to normalcy immediately. And yet, the two sides must push ahead with this approach. The alternative is mutual instability and suffering — in perpetuity.

*The writer is a foreign policy expert based in Washington, D.C.*



# Polio eradication national imperative: Ayesha Raza

By M. Saeed Yousafzai

**P** rime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq Tuesday said Polio

eradication has become our national imperative and most importantly enjoys broad political and popular support.

She was addressing global leaders at Drop to Zero – Global Pledging event for Polio Eradication in Atlanta, USA, said a press release received here.

She said led personally by our Prime Minister, a whole of government effort with effective GPEI support has proven decisive.

“Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has made a commitment to a polio-free world for the current and future generations of Pakistani children, we have absolutely no intention of letting them and the children of the world down”, said Senator Ayesha. This is backed up by a direct financial contribution of US\$154 million and substantial indirect contribution of \$100 million is made each year in Government and security infrastructure and time, she added.

Ayesha said our National Emergency Action Plan for Polio Eradication is clearly delivering results – to clear the polio reservoirs, respond aggressively to any outbreak and maintain high population immunity elsewhere. There are no magic solutions, just extraordinary hard work with a focus on the basics of vaccination to ensure success by our heroic vaccinators on the doorstep and inside each home.

She said today, there are no longer any children inaccessible to the programme.

Ayesha said campaign quality has strengthened and we have expanded surveillance to reduce the risk of any missed transmission. Senator Ayesha thanked all donors and partners for their continued support towards this public



Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif Being Received by Prime Minister of Qatar H.E. Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasir Bin Khalifa Al-Thani at Hamad International Airport, Doha.

health milestone for children. The event was participated by Mr. Bill Gates co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of International Development of Canada, John Germ, President, Rotary International, Faisal Shuaib, Executive Director, National Primary Healthcare Development Agency of Nigeria, Takashi Shinozuka, Consul General of Japan in Atlanta, Neven Mimica, Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission Hamdullah Mohib, Ambassador to the United States, Afghanistan, Anne Schuchat, Acting Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Michel Zaffran, Director, Polio Eradication, World Health Organization.

The Global Forum was informed that since the

Global Polio Eradication Initiative was launched in 1988, polio cases around the world have dropped by 99.9%. In 1988, polio paralyzed 40 children every hour, resulting in more than 350,000 cases each year across 125 countries. To date in 2017, there have been just five cases of polio anywhere in the world, fewer than in any previous year. These cases have been confined to small areas in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Nigeria has not reported a new polio case since August 2016. Polio is on the verge of becoming only the second human disease after smallpox to be eradicated.

There has been continued progress in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as both countries work together to ensure that more children are reached with polio vaccines.

Founder of Microsoft and Co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Bill Gates met with the Prime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq to discuss global progress on eradicating polio. Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq during meeting with Bill Gates expressed her gratitude for his support to this noble cause of safeguarding humanity from the clutches of a crippling disease. Senator Ayesha expressed satisfaction that international governments and organization pledged 1.2 billion US dollars for the Global Polio Eradication effort which is critical to sustaining the world's largest public health programme

in countries affected by the disease. She apprised Bill Gates of the measures taken by Pakistan to stop transmission of poliovirus. “With resolute commitment of the country's highest leadership we have been able to effect major turnaround in the polio situation.” She added insecurity and inaccessibility were the major challenges which have been tackled through political will, determination and innovation. The importance of routine immunization was also discussed at length during the meeting with Senator Ayesha sharing efforts to upscale routine immunization against nine preventable diseases in Pakistan.



Bill Gates and Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq, Prime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication meeting to discuss Global Polio Eradication Effort in Atlanta USA.





## Distribution of Ramazan Aid Packages by Heydar Aliyev Foundation of Azerbaijan

“Azerbaijan is a country on the road to progress and prosperity, and Pakistan is very much proud of its Muslim brother’s success in a short period of time,” Deputy Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan

By Monitoring Desk

In regard with the holy month of Ramadan, Aid packages of Heydar Aliyev Foundation have been distributed to the needy and poor families of a number of villages in Abbottabad area. The Hon’ble Deputy Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Murtaza Javed Abbasi and the Ambassador of Azerbaijan H.E. Ali Alizada addressed the distribution ceremony at Ghambirr village, Abbottabad. Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada noted that throughout the history peoples of Azerbaijan and Pakistan have communicated with each other, worked together, shared their grief and rejoiced at their success together.

Ambassador noted that Azerbaijan and Pakistan enjoy cordial and warm relations in all fields, as well as in humanitarian-social field and pointed out that a number of different humanitarian-







social projects were implemented by Heydar Aliyev Foundation of Azerbaijan in Pakistan.

Ali Alizada informed the participants that after the devastating earthquake in 2005, Heydar Aliyev Foundation started its work in Pakistan and constructed a new school for girls in Muzaffarabad. Ambassador noted that during these 12 years Mrs.

Mehriban Aliyeva, President of Heydar Aliyev Foundation and the First Lady of Azerbaijan initiated a series of healthcare, education, development and humanitarian projects in all provinces of Pakistan, such as the hepatitis vaccinations, check ups and treatments of women and children, donation of ambulances and thousands of blood collection bags to some hospitals, construction of Water Supply Scheme etc.

During the holy month of Ramadan, the Foundation hosted iftar dinners to the

beneficiaries of Pakistan Sweet Homes and other orphanages in all provinces of Pakistan.

Ambassador emphasized that distribution of Ramadan Aid Packages of Heydar Aliyev Foundation today in Abbottabad in the Holy Month of Ramadan once again proves intimacy, friendship and solidarity between our peoples. Also praising Deputy Speaker of National Assembly of Pakistan as an experienced politician and very committed to his region the Ambassador thanked him and representatives of the people of the region for joining the distribution ceremony.

On this occasion, while commending the promoting ties between the two brotherly Muslim countries Hon'ble Deputy Speaker added that the visit of the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to his constituency is one of its kind visit and that such events would further take our friendly relations to new heights.

He thanked Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Foundation's President and the Ambassador for the urgent response on helping deserving people of this area and that such cooperation and support based on the solidarity between our two brotherly countries would remain in future as well.

Deputy Speaker noted that Azerbaijan is a country on the road to progress and prosperity and that Pakistan is very much proud of its Muslim brother's success in a short period of time.

In conclusion, the Ambassador and the Deputy Speaker pledged to continue supporting each other on just causes.

After the ceremony, Ramadan Aid packages of Heydar Aliyev Foundation were presented to needy and poor families from a number of villages in Abbottabad area of Pakistan.

## Journalism students in Peshawar, Australia link up

By M. Saeed Yousafzai

The students from the University of Peshawar and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) were linked virtually via Skype and participated in four weeks of lectures and coursework May 2-23 before reporting on stories together.

The University of Peshawar's Prof. Altaf Ullah Khan, RMIT's Professor Alexandra Wake, and course creator and researcher Keith Bowen from Stanford University in the United States taught the course.

The course's impetus was the belief that journalism students who would otherwise not cross paths can learn from each other and build relationships.

"The aim of this initiative was to encourage and involve the journalists and students from both countries to help each other and produce quality journalism.

Creating virtual exchanges between young journalists in Pakistan and Australia "developed mutual understanding and communication",

Prof. Altaf said. "Now they can work together and can help each other from their own countries."

Eighteen students from each university participated in the "Reporting from Zones of Conflict" course. A series of virtual lectures and trainings allowed young journalists to exchange experiences, expertise and reporting.





# HONORARY AWARDS FROM THE QUEEN FOR PAKISTANI BRITISH COUNCIL STAFF

By Monitoring Desk

On behalf of Her Majesty The Queen, the British High Commissioner, Mr Thomas Drew CMG, has presented honorary British awards to Nishat Riaz and Shazia Khawar in recognition of their services for the British Council in Pakistan.

Both Nishat and Shazia have been appointed Honorary Members of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE). This honour is awarded to individuals for significant

achievements or exceptional service to the UK, which stands out as an example to others.

Speaking at the ceremony in Islamabad, the British High Commissioner, Mr Thomas Drew CMG, said:

"I am delighted to present Honorary MBE awards to Nishat Riaz and Shazia Khawar in recognition of their services to UK-Pakistan cultural relations and education. These awards reflect not only their significant individual effort over a number of years but also that they are

excellent role models and leaders inside and outside of the British Council."

Head of the British Council Pakistan, Rosemary Hilhorst, said:

"I am pleased to congratulate Nishat Riaz and Shazia Khawar on receiving their well-deserved honours. The British Council Pakistan team are delighted that their outstanding contributions have been recognised."

*Courtesy to Pakistan in The World*





Ambassador of Lebanon Mrs. Mona El-Tannir and Mr. Mohieddin El-Tannir hosted Iftar dinner at their residence in Islamabad. Diplomats as well as prominent Pakistanis attended the reception.







## Diplomatic Focus hosts Iftar Dinner



A large number of dignitaries from business, government, social, Journalists and diplomatic sectors attended the Iftar Dinner hosted by The Diplomatic Focus at Serena Hotel in the honor of Additional Secretary, Asia Pacific (MOFA) Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi, ME & A (MOFA) Tasawar Khan, Additional Secretary, Additional Secretary A & C (MOFA) Dr Irfan Yusuf Shami and Additional Secretary Americas (MOFA) Asad Majeed Khan new envoys designated to Denmark, Mexico, Uzbekistan and Japan respectively. Rana Tanveer Hussain Minister for Defence Production and the Minister for Science and Technology was the Chief Guest.

Mian Fazal Elahi CEO/Editor/ Publisher Diplomatic Focus and Zia ur Rehman, Chairma, Zbeeh Group welcomed the guests at Iftar Dinner Reception. On this occasion Rana Tanveer Hussain said that reiterated Pakistan's to combat terrorism, extremism and militancy. He said that sacrifices made by the people of Pakistan and its armed forces remain unparalleled.

A large number of ambassadors and other diplomats as well as prominent Pakistanis attended the reception.













## Annual Calligraphy Exhibition at Satrang Gallery organized by Satrang Gallery, in collaboration with the Embassy of Turkey in Islamabad





# 54th anniversary of African unity celebrated in Islamabad



Africa Day (formerly African Freedom Day and African Liberation Day), is the annual commemoration of the May 25, 1963 foundation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) (now known as the African Union) which is celebrated in various countries on the African continent, as well as around the world. To celebrate the occasion in Islamabad Pakistan, the Dean of the African Group, High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa, Mpendulo Jele and all the African Heads of Mission accredited to Pakistan, hosted a reception at the Serena Hotel. All the host countries had put up stalls with a display of handicrafts; pictures of scenic sights and presented specialties of home cooked cuisine. A large number of ambassadors and other diplomats as well as prominent Pakistanis attended the reception.









# UAE ambassador hosts Iftar to share blessings of Ramadan



Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to Islamabad H.E. Essa Abdullah Al Basha Noaimi hosted an Iftar dinner at Serena Hotel, Islamabad.

National Security Adviser Lt Gen (R) Nasser Khan Janjua and Minister of State for Religious Affairs Pir Muhammad Amin ul Hasnat were also present at the Iftar dinner. Besides others, it was also attended by diplomats from various countries, politicians and members of the community.











## The Serena Hotels celebrated Mount Everest Day 2017 in collaboration with the Embassy of Nepal







SERENA HOTELS

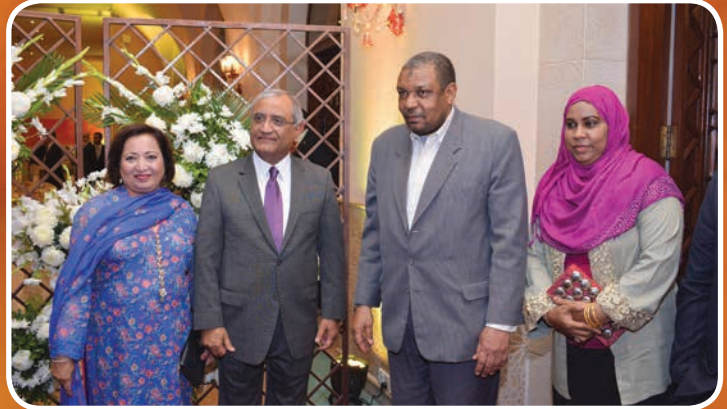
The Serena Hotels celebrated Mount Everest Day 2017 in collaboration with the Embassy of Nepal. The event was held at the Sheesh Mahal Hall Serena Hotel, Islamabad with more than two hundred dignitaries, including members of the diplomatic corps and government, in attendance. Nepal has been celebrating Mount Everest Day since 2008.

H.E. Sewa Lamsal Adhikari Ambassador of Nepal, Guest of Honor Mr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry Minister of State for Capital Administration and Development and Mr. Aziz Boolani CEO Serena Hotels, inaugurated the event by lighting a traditional Nepalese lamp. Her Excellency also presented a letter of appreciation to the summiteers honouring their achievement.





Mr. Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels hosted an Iftar cum dinner reception in Islamabad. Mr. & Mrs. Aziz Boolani welcomed the guests. A large number of ambassadors and other diplomats along with politicians, parliamentarians as well as prominent Pakistanis from different field of life attended the reception.









Mr. and Mrs. Lugman Ali Afzal hosted an Iftar Cum Dinner reception in Islamabad. A large number of ambassadors and other diplomats as well as prominent Pakistanis attended the reception.









# Iftar Dinner by High Commission of Bangladesh in Islamabad

High Commissioner of Bangladesh H.E. Tariq Ahsan hosted an Iftar dinner at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. A large number of ambassadors and other diplomats as well as prominent Pakistanis attended the reception.



SERENA HOTELS





# Pak-Sri Lanka relations key to promote cooperation in region: Nisar

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

Minister for Interior Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan Thursday said that stronger Pak-Sri Lankan partnership was key to promoting greater cooperation in the region and strengthening regional platforms.

During a meeting with former president of Sri Lanka, Rajapaksa Percy Mahinda and his delegation here, he said Pak-Sri Lankan partnership was also a bulwark against the challenges facing the region including, terrorism and poverty besides warding off any self-assumed notion of hegemony, a press release said here.

The Sri Lankan delegation included Mr Gamini Lakshman Peris, former foreign Minister, Mr Dullas Dhaham Kumara Alahapperuma, former Minister, Mr Wimal Weerawansa, former Minister, Mr Lokubandara Udith Sanjaya and Mr Yoshitha Kanishka Rajapaksa. Welcoming the visiting delegation, the Minister remarked that the former president Rajapaksa Mahinda was known to Pakistani people as one of their true friends who during his tenure, not just added great strength to the Pak-Sri Lankan relations but was also instrumental in diversifying this equation in all possible areas of mutual cooperation.

The Minister while expressing satisfaction over the steady and upward trajectory of Pak-Sri Lankan economic, political, socio-cultural and defence cooperation, observed "our relations spanning over six decades are characterized by spirit of sincerity, friendship, mutual respect,



Interior Minister Ch. Nisar Ali Khan and former Sri Lankan President Rajapaksa Percy Mahinda exchanging views during their meeting at Punjab House, Islamabad.

understanding and mutual cooperation for the benefit of our people."

The Minister said that Pakistan and Sri Lanka faced challenges of similar nature and the strategic friendship between the two countries was critical not only to ward off hegemonic intentions in the region but also to fight the mutual challenges and issues. "If poverty, natural calamities and socio-economic conditions pose challenges to our ordinary people, the issues of terrorism, volatile regional peace and instability threaten us at the state level thus impeding our march towards progress and securing brighter and secure future for our people," the Interior Minister added.

He said the tenure of former president Rajapaksa had provided the two countries with a solid base to further build on gains of the past

and broaden the scope of the existing relations by exploring new avenues of cooperation especially in the areas of economy, security, border management, capacity building of law enforcement agencies, fighting illicit drug trade and human trafficking.

The two leaders also discussed regional situation. There was unanimity of views that Pak-Sri Lankan relations and bilateral cooperation needs to be further strengthened.

Former president Rajapaksa thanked the Interior Minister and the government of Pakistan for the warm welcome that was extended to him and his delegation during his visit. He also expressed the hope that two countries would continue to follow the path that leads to greater cooperation and understanding in coming years.

## Growing cellular market in Pakistan & space for new companies

By Agency

Pakistan is considered as one of the fastest growing country in the telecommunications market. Its potential can never be doubted. With the passage of time number of mobile phone manufacturers come-up with new ideas. Couple of month before, a new company has launched its operations with concept to follow to respect the social, cultural and religious festivals of the Pakistani consumers. Tecno Mobile launched its campaign Win Big with TECNO this Ramadan in different mobile markets of major cities. The activity areas include: Hall Road & Telestar in Lahore, Star City Mall in Karachi, Rehman Center in Multan, Kachehry in Faisalabad, Bilore in Peshawar and Singapore Plaza in Rawalpindi. According to details, Customers who will buy Tecno phones

during the last 10 days of Ramadan can not only win cash vouchers of Rs. 5000 and different precious gifts every day, but also have a chance to enter into lucky draw. In this lucky draw, a grand prize of a motorbike awaits any individual who manages to win, stated in a statement by company.

The company has also planned a remarkable contest on its digital forum for its valued customers, along with other contests with various rewards and prizes. The company has already conducted different campaigns on the digital forum; it plans on conducting something bigger with the name of Eidi Before Eid. During the "EidiBeforeEid" campaign, the participants would be asked to share their pictures and selfies taken at Tecno activities using HashTags #EidiBeforeEid& #EidiWithTecno, which will allow the customers to win exciting Eid packages

and rewards. By sharing their customer's social and religious values, Tecno has become a socially-embedded enterprise, which is ready to become one of the most successful mobile technology brands around the world.





# Sheikh Ansar Aziz hosted Iftar Reception

An Iftar-dinner, hosted by the first mayor of the Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation (IMC) Sheikh Ansar Aziz at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. He visited every table to exchange pleasantries. It was a mixed gathering, ranging from diplomats to political and social notables besides serving and retired bureaucrats.







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# Fly, Pakistan, fly

**This was one of the greatest comebacks in the history of cricket - against the best the world had, in four straight knockout games`**

**P**akistan thrashed favourites India by 180 runs in a thrilling competition at London's Oval ground to clinch the Champions Trophy title on Sunday.

The green shirts set up a daunting 339-run target for the men in blue, but Indian batting collapsed under a calculated bowling attack, with all out at 158 runs in the 31st over.

Hardik Pandya was the top-scorer for India with 76 runs before he was run out by Hasan in the 27th over after a mix-up with partner Ravindra Jadeja. The left-hander scored 54 runs off 32 balls, the fastest half-century in a world One Day International (ODI) final.

Pandya was followed by Yuvraj Singh and Shikhar Dhawan, who racked up 22 and 21 runs respectively before being dismissed.

This is the greatest number of wickets India has

lost at the end of 14 overs since Jan 2013 in a 50-over game.

Left-arm fast Muhammad Amir kicked off Pakistan's bowling attack, taking three crucial early wickets.

Two overs into the match, opener Rohit Sharma succumbed to a LBW, whereas skipper and heavy-hitter Virat Kohli was caught out by Shadab Khan.

Dhawan was caught out by Pakistan skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed at the tail end of the 9th over, and Shadab Khan took Yuvraj Singh's wicket in the 13th over in an LBW appeal led by Sarfaraz which was initially ruled not out by the umpire.

MS Dhoni was caught by Imad Wasim off a delivery by Hasan Ali, whereas KM Jadhav was caught out by Sarfaraz.

Jadeja left the field after Babar caught him at

the widish slip, marking Junaid Khan's first wicket in the 28th over.

Ravichandran Ashwin was caught out by Sarfaraz off a delivery by Hasan Ali.

India won the toss and opted to put Pakistan in to bowl first. The green shirts set a daunting target of 339 for the loss of four wickets for India to chase down – the team's second-highest total against India.

A 128-run opening partnership between Fakhar Zaman and Azhar Ali set the mood for the first inning, with Azhar and Muhammad Hafeez both racking up half centuries, whereas Fakhar smashed 114 off 106 deliveries, and Babar Azam scored a solid 46 off 52.

The opening pair broke two records – one for the best score posted by Pakistani openers against India in an ICC tournament (86 runs),





and the second for the best partnership against India in an ICC tournament when 100 came up for Pakistan in the 18th over. The last time Pakistani openers scored more than 100 runs prior to the fall of the first wicket in two consecutive matches was in 2003. This is only the second time the same has happened outside Asia.

Head-to-head, the record is in favour of India against Pakistan in all ICC tournaments. However, the last time Pakistan beat India was in 2009 – also during a Champions Trophy match.

The game appeared to be taking a predictable turn when Bumrah seemed to have nicked Fakhar to the keeper in the fourth over. A replay revealed the bowler had overstepped the crease and it was ruled a no ball, taking the heat off the green shirts.

12 runs came off the high-yielding fourth over, which featured two boundaries, two no-balls and a wide ball, as Pakistan stood at 19 runs with the loss of no wickets.

Azhar smacked the first six of the innings off Ashwin in the eighth over after he and Fakhar made themselves at home on the pitch.

The team had a firm grounding with 56 runs on the board by the end of the first 10 overs, as the two openers scored from both sides, turning up the pressure on the Indian side.







## PM Nawaz Sharif, felicitated team on splendid victory

Prime Minister Nawaz has used for the first time social media for airing his pleasure and gladness about the victory of the cricket team. The message of the prime minister turned viral on the social media immediate after it was issued. Later, in his formal message, the Prime Minister congratulated the nation on Pakistan's classic victory in the ICC Champions Trophy's Final match against India.



COAS watching historic winning moments of cricket match

Just a couple of balls after 200 came up for Pakistan in the 33rd over, Fakhar was caught out by Pandya for 114 runs. He scored his maiden ODI century in style with a four off the 31st over.

Shoaib Malik left the field after Kedhar Jadhav caught him playing a mistimed shot over the mid-off in the 40th over.

In an effort to hit a boundary and reach the 50-run mark, Babar Azam played a mistimed shot straight into the Yuvraj Singh's hands and departed with 46 runs to his name in the 43rd over.

The Indian lineup remains unchanged, whereas Pakistan has replaced Rumman Raees with Muhammad Amir. Amir was ruled out of Pakistan's semi-final against England due to a back spasm during a practice session.

In Champions Trophy history 2013 has been the only edition in which the team batting first won the final. The other 5 finals have been won by the chasing team.



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COAS hosted dinner at Army House for cricket legends Sir Vivian Richards and Ian Chappell. Thanked them for visiting Pakistan

## India arrests 15 for celebrating Pakistan's cricket win

Indian authorities slap sedition charges against villagers for cheering Pakistan's cricket victory in Champions Trophy.

By Monitoring Desk

**P**olice in central India have arrested 15 Muslim men and charged them with sedition - punishable by life in prison - for celebrating Pakistan's victory over India in the Champions Trophy cricket final.

The men, aged 19 to 35, were arrested in central Madhya Pradesh state's Burhanpur district after locals complained that they shouted pro-Pakistan slogans and lit firecrackers after the match ended on Sunday night.

"We received a complaint from a local Hindu man who accused them of celebrating after India lost the match," Burhanpur police chief Raja Ram Parihar told the AFP news agency.

The accused have also been charged with criminal conspiracy, the officer said, adding the celebrations continued for hours in the sensitive locality. The village where the incident took place has a 60 percent Muslim population.

The men were presented before a court on Tuesday and sent to jail pending trial.

In India, sedition is an offence which may result in the surrender of passports, ineligibility for government jobs, and even life imprisonment.



Indian Occupied Kashmir's People celebrating Pakistan's win against India



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Dr. Shahid Mamood is a graduate from the University of Texas, at San Antonio, USA with specialization in Endodontics and Implantology. He has twenty years of experience to his credit. He has also had the privilege of setting up the Department of Dentistry at Shifa International Hospital and remained the head of the department for six years.

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## Queen Elizabeth II turns 91

From a young girl who did not expect to be Queen, to an iconic and celebrated figure who has ruled for more than 60 years



**Mohammed bin Salman**  
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## Benazir Bhutto's 64<sup>th</sup> birthday

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Who broke all the barriers refuting the anti-woman narrative and paved way for all the female achievers...