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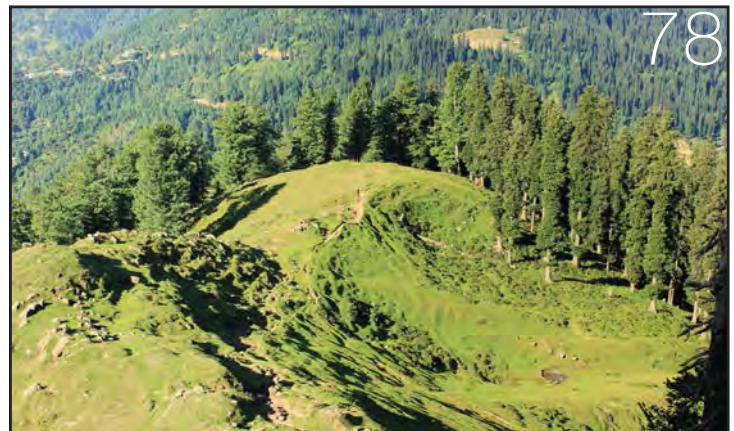
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Mian Fazal Elahi

The Trump speech reflected three failed Afghan policies: those of Kabul, the US and Pakistan. The Afghan government has failed to consolidate itself, establish its authority and credibility in the country, and compel or persuade the Afghan Taliban to come to the negotiating table within the parameters of the Afghan constitution and indefinite US military activity in Afghanistan. What transpired after months of consultations is a policy that envisages no timeline for withdrawal from Afghanistan, a surge in troops but the number has been kept by Trump to his chest, reliance on use of force and same old threats to Pakistan to cooperate in the war against terror.

Pakistani leadership have sent an unambiguous message to the United States that its approach of making Pakistan as a scapegoat is unacceptable and its new strategy, which is highly flawed, is unlikely to stabilise the war-torn Afghanistan. After a lengthy session of the National Security Committee under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Thursday, the top decision-making body in the realm of national security and defence, showed mirror to the United States by recounting successes of Pakistani forces in the war against terror and American failures in Afghanistan that have turned that country into a safe haven for terrorists and the resultant instability in Afghanistan posing great threat not just to Pakistan but the entire region.

The policy response of Pakistan contains elements that, if accepted and implemented by the other side, could help resolve the tricky Afghan conflict, providing face-saving to the United States to leave the country with some grace. Washington has been told in plain words that a politically negotiated outcome remains the best option to bring stability to this war torn country. A prolonged military campaign in Afghanistan has resulted in destruction and killing of hundreds of thousands of Afghan civilians. Americans have made it a fashion to shift entire burden of their failures on Pakistan accusing the country of not taking action against some terrorist outfits especially dreaded Haqqani network prompting the NSC to point out that Pakistan would like to see effective and immediate US military efforts to eliminate sanctuaries harbouring terrorists and miscreants on the Afghan soil including those responsible for fomenting terror in Pakistan. They have been told that Afghan war cannot be fought in Pakistan and hopefully this message would go in the right perspective. The United States is misleading the world to believe that Pakistan is not cooperating despite receiving billions of dollars but the Committee exposed the claim by telling the US that the reimbursements to Pakistan since 2001 only account for part of the cost of ground facilities and air corridors used by the United States for its operations in Afghanistan, rather than any financial aid or assistance.

Pakistani nation celebrated its independence with a difference this year as it marks completion of 70 years of creation of Pakistan and there is greater involvement of masses in celebrations than before. This shows greater awareness among people about blessings of independence and sovereignty, which augurs well for unity and solidarity of the country. Happy 70th Anniversary to a great nation. Long live Pakistan!

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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New envoys to Pakistan, presented credentials to President Mamnoon Hussain



By Agency

Envoys designate of Myanmar, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Paraguay and Mexico presented their credentials to President Mamnoon Hussain during an impressive ceremony at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Later, the Ambassadors/ High Commissioner separately called on the President. Speaking on the occasion, the President said that Pakistan is keen to further promote friendly and brotherly relations with all countries for peace, stability and prosperity in the world. In their separate meeting, they discussed bilateral relations and matters of mutual interest. The President stated that Pakistan's economy is improving and the country offers great investment and business opportunities. He urged the foreign envoys to play their role in further boosting the trade activities and for availing the investment opportunities Pakistan offers in

different sectors. He emphasized that Pakistan is committed to eliminate terrorism and extremism and emphasized that action against terrorists will continue till elimination of the last terrorist. The President felicitated the newly appointed Ambassadors/High Commissioner to Pakistan and hoped that they would work for further cementing the existing ties of their respective countries with Pakistan. The President also wished the newly appointed envoys a comfortable and pleasant stay in Pakistan.

The envoys who presented their credentials included Mr. Win Myint, Ambassador of Myanmar to Pakistan, Mr. Martin Kobler, Ambassador of Germany to Pakistan, Commodore Nawaf Saeed Ahmad Almalki, Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, Lt. Gen. Kayonga Charles Ambassador of Rwanda to Pakistan (Non-Resident), Mr. Alimamy Amara Kamara, High Commissioner of Sierra Leone to Pakistan (Non-Resident),

Ms. Vandy BOUTHASAVONG, Ambassador of Lao People's Democratic Republic to Pakistan (Non-Resident), Mr. Nelson Aleides Mora Rodas, Ambassador of Paraguay to Pakistan (Non-Resident) and Mr. Jose Alfonso Zegbe Camarena, Ambassador of Mexico to Pakistan (Non-Resident). Earlier, upon arrival at the Presidency, the National Anthem of Pakistan and their respective countries were played and the envoys were presented Guard of Honour by an elegant contingent of Pakistan army.

Pakistan is keen to further promote friendly and brotherly relations with all countries for peace, stability and prosperity in the world: President Mamnoon Hussain



Message

H.E. Mamnoon Hussain

President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan

70th Independence Day



Happy Independence Day to all my fellow citizens!

While we happily hoist the national flag today we need to reiterate our strong resolve to always uphold the values of determination and dedication for the objective of development of Pakistan. Seventy years ago while struggling for freedom our elders had resolved that this nation through constant endeavors will make our country a cradle of peace, brotherhood and a welfare society which will be an example for the world to follow.

In the wake of challenges confronted by the country today, it is imperative to promote moderation and rationality while availing the available opportunities. In such a situation, it is necessary to unite under the Constitution in the national interest by setting aside our differences and ensure its supremacy. The Constitution is a document which will show us the path to realize national objectives by rising above our personal interests. It will also guarantee progress and stability of the motherland as a manifestation of national aspirations, God Willing.

Today let us make a firm commitment that we will adhere to our national objectives and goals. This will pave the way for better governance. It will lead to maturity of democratic traditions and will also strengthen the process of national progress.

Let us join hands for development and prosperity of the motherland by keeping aside our differences. Let us promote love and harmony by overcoming hatred and misgivings and secure the future of our nation by turning despondency into hope in order to celebrate freedom in its true sense.



Message

H.E. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi

Prime Minister of Islamic Republic Of Pakistan

70th Independence Day

The independence that we achieved seventy years ago was an outcome of the unparalleled sacrifices made by our ancestors. Millions of Muslims rendered sacrifices for our as well as the future of the posterity. Today we are treading the path of prosperity and progress in a peaceful and dignified country because of those sacrifices. We are greatly indebted to our ancestors for their sacrifices and we can repay that debt only by making Pakistan a free and independent country.

We may belong to different tribes, fraternities and ethnicities; we may be working in different spheres of national life; our political vision and thinking can be different and our economic vision may have different perspectives but ascendancy of national interests and invincible defence are common objectives of the entire

nation, for which we have to make collective endeavours.

Quaid-e-Azam had envisioned Pakistan as a modern democratic entity. This dream faces myriad of challenges and the PML (N) government notwithstanding the confronting difficulties has made the realization of Quaid's dream as its abiding mission. The recent transition of power through a democratic process was quintessential of the accelerated strengthening of democratic values in the country.

We have to strengthen and reinforce the state institutions so that they can play their prescribed role within the limits of law and the constitution. Only a strong economy can ensure strong defence. A moderate society guarantees stability of the state, where people enjoy all



their fundamental rights and national resources are equitably and judiciously distributed.

Pakistan desires positive and constructive relations with all the countries of the world, especially with its neighbours on the basis of sovereign equality. The people of South Asia have suffered enormously in the last fifty years due to the festering conflicts. Until and unless those conflicts are resolved amicably the people of the region cannot achieve prosperity and progress.

Our government has invariably made efforts to initiate the process of meaningful dialogue and adoption of peaceful means to resolve the issues but unfortunately the expansionist designs of India have remained the main hurdle in this regard. It is incumbent upon the international community to play its role in the resolution of the regional conflicts, particularly the Kashmir dispute in conformity with the UN Resolutions on the subject with a view to ensuring durable peace in the region.

Terrorism is the biggest challenge confronting the world in the twenty first century. Pakistan has rendered unparalleled sacrifices in the fight against this menace as well as for the world peace. Our armed forces, law enforcing agencies and the people have written imperishable stories of sacrifices in this regard. Now the time has come for the international community not only to acknowledge those sacrifices by rising above their interests in the region but also to fully support Pakistan in taking the fight against terrorism to its logical conclusion.

The younger generation of Pakistan is endowed with exceptional talent and has a burning desire for advancement. They are making admirable contribution in the fields of Information Technology, Engineering, Medical and Management all over the world, in a distinct manner. My government has a vision of accelerating the pace of development and prosperity in Pakistan so that all those professionals can return to contribute to this national effort.

I assure the Pakistani youth that tomorrow's Pakistan will ensure the implementation of guiding principles of rule of law and ascendancy of merit. On the seventieth independence day of the country, I make a solemn pledge that we will not relent until the achievement of those objectives.



President Mamnoon Hussain hoisting the National Flag during a Ceremony to mark the 70th Independence Day of Pakistan at Convention Center, Islamabad.



Long live Pakistan

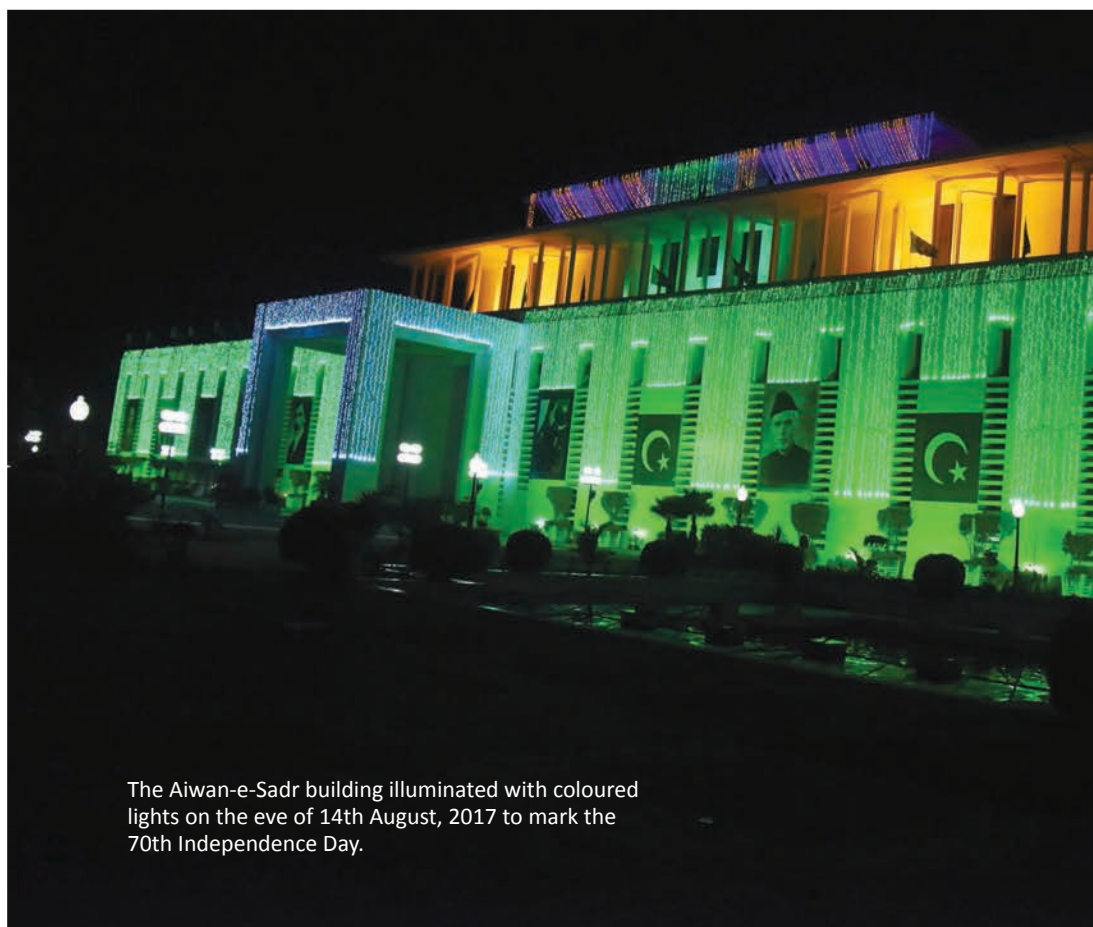
Pakistanis commemorated the country's 70th anniversary since Partition on 14 August 1947.

As government officials participated in flag-hoisting ceremonies and laying wreaths at symbolic monuments across the country, the Pakistan Air Force put on one of its largest air shows in the country's history, with visiting aerobatic teams from Turkey and Saudi Arabia joining in the display in Islamabad. A second air show was held at Karachi's Seaview beach.





Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi along with H.E. Wang Yang, the Vice-Premier of the State Council of People's Republic of China and other dignitaries standing in respect of National Anthem during the Flag Hoisting ceremony at Convention Center Islamabad.



The Aiwan-e-Sadr building illuminated with coloured lights on the eve of 14th August, 2017 to mark the 70th Independence Day.

Chinese vice Premier Wang Yang was also part of the celebrations this year, addressing a crowd of top government and military officials at Islamabad's Convention Centre.

Citizens celebrated the festive occasion with fireworks, face-painting, eccentric get-ups, and other fun and games.





President Mamnoon Hussain addressing on the occasion of Flag Hoisting Ceremony to mark the 70th Independence Day of Pakistan at Convention Center, Islamabad. Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Chinese Vice Premier of the State Council H.E. Wang Yang, Federal Ministers and Services Chiefs are also present on the occasion.



The main ceremony of the day was held at Islamabad's Convention Centre, where President Mamnoon Hussain hoisted the Pakistani flag. Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang — who was the chief guest — and all three chiefs of the armed services attended the ceremony.

The day began with a 31-gun salute in the federal capital along with a 21-gun salute in each provincial capital.



The largest-ever airshow in Pakistan's history was also held at Islamabad's F9 Park. The event, attended by President Mamnoon and Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sohail Aman, featured Pakistan Air Force, Turkish and Saudi jets.

"Solo Turk", the famous Turkish aerobatic team of Turkish Air Force, and the internationally acclaimed "Saudi Hawks" of Royal Saudi Air Force featured in the mega event alongside PAF aircraft.

"Solo Turk", the famous Turkish aerobatic team of Turkish Air Force, and the internationally acclaimed "Saudi Hawks" of Royal Saudi Air Force featured in the mega event alongside PAF aircraft.



President Mamnoon Hussain and First Lady Begum Mehmooda Mamnoon witnessing the spectacular Aerobatic Display and Fly-past of Pakistan Air Force at PAF Complex to mark the 70th Independence Day here in Islamabad. Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sohail Aman is also present.



President Mamnoon Hussain addressing the gathering after Aerobatic Display Fly-past ceremony of Pakistan Air Force at PAF Complex to mark the 70th Independence Day here in Islamabad. Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Shohail Aman is also present.



Flag hoisting ceremonies were held in the provincial capitals and district headquarters, and change of guard ceremonies were held at Mazar-i-Quaid and Mazar-i-Iqbal.

Later, Chairman Senate Raza Rabbani and speaker National Assembly Ayaz Sadiq laid a floral wreath on the memorial of forgotten heroes of democracy inside the Parliament.



Governor State Bank of Pakistan Tariq Bajwa hoisting Pakistan National Flag on the occasion of Pakistan National Day at State Bank of Pakistan Head Office Karachi.



Minister of State for CADD, Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry in a flag-hoisting ceremony with special children at the 70th Independence Day celebration at National Institute of Special Education in Islamabad.



President Mamnoon Hussain addressing on the occasion of Flag Hoisting Ceremony to mark the 70th Independence Day of Pakistan at Convention Center, Islamabad. Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Chinese Vice Premier of the State Council H.E. Wang Yang, Federal Ministers and Services Chiefs are also present on the occasion.



Minister of State for CADD, Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry is cutting cake with special children at the 70th Independence Day celebrations at National Institute of Special Education in Islamabad.



Advisor to PM & President PML-N KP Chapter Engr. Ameer and others PML-N leaders cutting the cake on the eve Independence Day to celebrate the Independence Day.



President Mamnoon Hussain in a group photo with Istanbul Historical Turkish Music Ensemble during the Independence Day Celebration at the Aiwan-e-Sadr in Islamabad.



Over the past 70 years, Pakistan has taken on a new look with much improved infrastructure, leapfrog advances in science and technology and notably enhanced comprehensive national strength: Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang

Chinese VP expressed confidence that Pakistan will have a bright future

By Monitoring Desk, China Agency

Visiting Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang spoke highly of Pakistan's national development over the past 70 years, expressing confidence that the country will have a bright future.

Wang made the remarks in his address at the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the independence of Pakistan. Seventy years ago, the Pakistani people realized national independence through an arduous struggle, putting an end to their suffering under imperialist and colonial aggression and oppression, Wang noted. "This victory completely changed the destiny of the country, giving birth to a brand new Pakistan that stands

firm in the East," he said.

Over the past 70 years, Pakistan has taken on a new look with much improved infrastructure, leapfrog advances in science and technology and notably enhanced comprehensive national strength, he said.

Wang noted that Pakistan has joined the ranks of the top 50 economies in the world with its GDP soaring from some 2 billion U.S. dollars to more than 300 billion dollars, adding that its people have made great leaps from poverty to subsistence and to initial prosperity. Meanwhile, Pakistan has been committed to the path of peaceful development and to pursuing external relations on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, Wang said. The country

has actively participated in international and regional affairs, playing an important role in multilateral organizations and serving as an important force in the international arena, he added.

In recent years in particular, Pakistan has been actively involved in the international fight against terrorism and UN peacekeeping operations, and made enormous sacrifice for and great contribution to world peace and regional stability, Wang said. "The peace-loving people of Pakistan, having endured many hardships, are now making big strides on the path towards a bright future of development and prosperity," said Wang.

"Though there will be twists and turns down the road, the resilient and perseverant people of Pakistan will prevail over any difficulty, and create new miracles and glories in the great cause of national prosperity, unity and people's well-being," he added.

Wang arrived in Pakistan to attend activities marking the 70th anniversary of Pakistan's independence at the invitation of the Pakistani government.

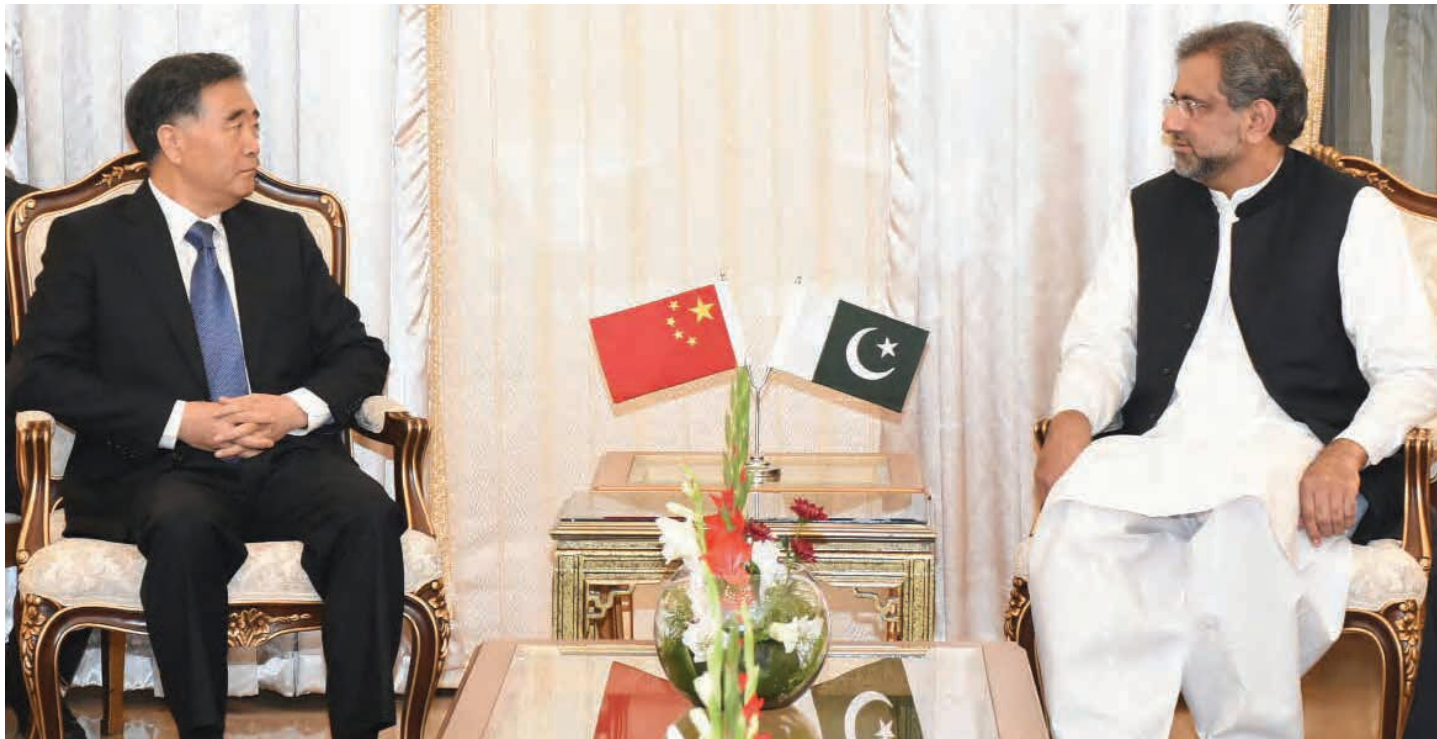


Vice Premier of the State Council of China, Mr. Wang Yang, accompanied by a high-level delegation, participated in the 70th Independence Day celebrations of Pakistan.



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi receive H.E. Mr. Wang Yang, the Vice-Premier of the State Council of People's Republic of China, upon arrival at PM House, Islamabad.





Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in meeting with Mr. Wang Yang, the Vice-Premier of the State Council of People's Republic of China at PM House, Islamabad.

Pakistan and China are all weather friends and strategic partners: PM

By M.Saeed Yousafzai, Agency

H.E. Mr. Wang Yang, the Vice-Premier of the State Council of People's Republic of China called on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbas at PM House, Islamabad.

The Prime Minister, while warmly welcoming Mr. Wang Yang, said that Pakistan and China are all weather friends and strategic partners. Pak-China bilateral ties are time tested; our relationship has attained new heights after the CPEC that is a game changer for the region and beyond, the Prime Minister stated.

Both the leaders held comprehensive discussions on all issues of bilateral, regional and international interest. They expressed satisfaction at the progress in implementation of CPEC projects.

Vice Premier Wang Yang congratulated the Prime Minister on Pakistan's 70th anniversary celebrations and stressed that his visit demonstrated the close strategic relations between the "iron brothers", Pakistan and China, and China's strong support for Pakistan. He thanked Pakistan for its consistent support for issues of core importance to China.

Both leaders agreed to further promote cooperation on all issues of mutual interest.

After the meeting, the Prime Minister and



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.



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi along with Mr. Wang Yang, the Vice-Premier of the State Council of People's Republic of China unveiling the plaque for the inauguration of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) energy and infrastructure projects at PM House, Islamabad.

Pak-China bilateral ties are time tested; our relationship has attained new heights after the CPEC that is a game changer for the region and beyond: PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi

the Chinese Vice Prime Minister witnessed the inauguration ceremony of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) energy and infrastructure projects and the signing of bilateral MoUs/Agreements between the two countries.

Chinese Vice Premier was assisted by Chinese Ambassador Mr. Sun Weidong and other senior officials from the Chinese side. Minister for Foreign Affairs Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Federal Minister for Interior Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, Minister of State for Information Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, Foreign Secretary Tehmina Janjua and other senior government officials were also present during the meeting.

The Prime Minister also hosted a dinner in honour of the Chinese Vice Premier and members of the visiting delegation.



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and Mr. Wang Yang, the Vice-Premier of the State Council of People's Republic of China witnessing the signing of MoUs between Pakistan and China at Islamabad.



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.



Pakistan and China will continue for regional peace, progress and stability

By Mian Fazal Elahi

President Mamnoon Hussain and Mr. Wang Yang Vice Premier of the State Council of China have agreed that cooperation between Pakistan and China will continue for regional peace, progress and stability adding that both countries will continue to work together for development and prosperity of humanity. The two leaders also emphasized on early completion of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The consensus between the two leaders was reached during a meeting at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad which was also attended by delegations from both sides.

Extending gratitude to the visiting dignitary for participation of a high level delegation from China to mark the 70th Independence Day celebrations of Pakistan, the President said that this reflects that both countries enjoy cordial relations. He stated that both countries stand

by each other in hours of happiness and sorrow which is an example for the world.

Expressing concern over recent violation of territorial integrity of China by India, the President noted that the patience demonstrated by China is commendable. The President underlined that Pakistan supports China on all important issues including Taiwan, Tibet, Xianjiang and South China Sea.

The President said that Pakistan will continue to work for elimination of terrorism with the cooperation of China. He praised the role of

that Pak-China friendship is above political considerations and interests. He stated that

The patience demonstrated by China is commendable over recent violation of territorial integrity of China by India: President Mamnoon Hussain

Both countries stand by each other in hours of happiness and sorrow which is an example for the world: President Mamnoon Hussain

President Mamnoon Hussain and Mr. Wang Yang Vice Premier of the State Council of China emphasized on early completion of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

China for peace in Afghanistan. We expect that these efforts will bear positive results and the issue will soon be resolved. He underscored that Pakistan desires to resolve all outstanding issues with India through dialogue including the issue of Jammu & Kashmir. He said that he was looking forward to an early visit by Prime Minister of China to Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Wang Yang, Vice Premier of State Council of China said

Pakistan has done well in fight against terrorism according to its circumstances due to which the situation of Pakistan is much better than other countries of the region. He stressed that China will continue to extend cooperation to Pakistan in this regard. He commended the speech of President Mamnoon Hussain during the flag hoisting ceremony and said it will promote national unity and expedite the pace of national progress. The visiting dignitary added that increase in economic cooperation between the two countries is encouraging and hoped that the volume of bilateral trade will continue to enhance steadily. Noting the existing imbalance in trade between the two countries, he stated that Pakistan's exports to China will be enhanced. Terming the cooperation of Pakistan to China on various international and regional matters a valuable asset, he said that Pak-China friendship is an example for the world.



Chinese Embassy in Pakistan celebrates 90th anniversary of PLA establishment

A grand gala was held here for celebration of the 90th birthday of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), highlighting the role of Chinese army in promoting regional peace, stability and development. Pakistan's army Chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa as chief guest, Chinese Ambassador Sun Weidong, Chinese Defense Attache Chen Wenrong were among over 600 people who attended the reception.

"Islamabad and Beijing are important strategic partners and Pakistan Army is proud of its friendship with China,"

COAS Gen.

Qamar Javed Bajwa



PM Pakistan & the Saudi Crown Prince reaffirm strong bilateral ties



The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, called on Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman in Jeddah in a day-long visit to Saudi Arabia. The Crown Prince is the Vice Custodian of the two Holy Mosques and holds the key portfolios of Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

This was the Prime Minister's first foreign visit after his election on 1 August, and signifies the importance attached by Pakistan to its relationship with Saudi Arabia. The Prime Minister was accompanied by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif.

During the meeting with the Crown Prince, the Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's continued and steadfast support for the Kingdom and its leadership. He lauded astute leadership of

This was the Prime Minister's first foreign visit after his election on 1 August, and signifies the importance attached by Pakistan to its relationship with Saudi Arabia.

the Crown Prince, in particular his Vision 2030 for Saudi Arabia's development. The Prime Minister assured the Crown Prince of continued cooperation and collaboration to the benefit of both countries. The Prime Minister recounted the huge sacrifices and extraordinary efforts being made by Pakistan as a nation to root out terrorism and bring peace and stability. He also expressed solidarity with Saudi Arabia

Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's continued and steadfast support for the Kingdom and its leadership.

and reaffirmed Pakistan's pledge to support Saudi Arabia's sovereignty. Acknowledging the sentiments of the Government of Pakistan reflected in the Prime Minister's maiden foreign visit, the Crown Prince warmly welcomed him and his delegation. He acknowledged Pakistan's efforts and sacrifices in its resolute fight against terrorism. The Crown Prince hoped that fraternal ties between the two countries will further prosper in future and underscored the importance Saudi Arabia attaches to a strong and stable Pakistan. He also hoped that Pakistan



The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, called on Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi received by Deputy Governor of Makkah Region, Prince Abdullah Bin Bandar Bin Abdul Aziz upon arrival at Jeddah.

would overcome all challenges and continue its journey towards progress and prosperity.

The two leaders also exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual concern and the issues faced by Muslim Ummah. They agreed to continue dialogue and cooperation

towards their shared goal of peace, security and development in the region and beyond. During the visit, the Prime Minister was also briefed about the arrangements for Pakistani pilgrims for this year's Hajj.

The Prime Minister of Pakistan assured the Saudi Crown Prince of continued cooperation and collaboration to the benefit of both countries.

Saudi Crown Prince acknowledged Pakistan's efforts and sacrifices in its resolute fight against terrorism.

Pakistan rejects Trump's allegations of duplicity

By Monitoring Desk

Pakistan rejected outright US President Donald Trump's allegations and insinuations ignoring its sacrifices in the war against terrorism and belittling its efforts for peace in Afghanistan, and warned that it wouldn't help stabilise Afghanistan.

The National Security Committee (NSC) made Islamabad's position known in a four-hour huddle at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) chaired by Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi. Abbasi returned about midnight from a whirlwind visit of Saudi Arabia.

The extensive statement on the nation's resolve issued at the conclusion of the NSC meeting was also read out in the Senate by Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif as a policy statement. The committee discussed the US administration's South Asia strategy at length following Donald Trump's remarks in which he accused Pakistan of harbouring terrorists through its "safe havens".

It was observed that scapegoating Pakistan will not help in stabilising Afghanistan. In fact, being its immediate neighbor, Pakistan has an abiding interest in peace and stability in Afghanistan.

The committee observed that Pakistan had to manage the blowback of a protracted conflict in Afghanistan that resulted in deluge of refugees, flow of drugs and arms and more recently in the shape of terrorist safe havens in eastern Afghanistan from where anti-Pakistan terrorist groups continue to operate and launch attacks inside Pakistan.

The fact remains that complex issues and internal dynamics inside Afghanistan pose a grave challenge not only to Pakistan, but also to the broader region and the international community.

Noting the US commitment to continue to shoulder the burden of Afghanistan and reverse the expanding ungoverned spaces in the country, the committee observed that Pakistan had consistently supported all international efforts for a stable and peaceful Afghanistan besides committing more than \$1 billion dollars for infrastructure and social development in that country.

The committee was of the view that over the years, Pakistan had worked with both the United States and Afghanistan to promote peace through a politically-negotiated outcome which, in Pakistan's view, remains the best option to bring stability to this war-torn country. A prolonged military campaign in Afghanistan has resulted in destruction and killing of hundreds of thousands of Afghan civilians.

Pakistan has also endorsed and supported all Afghan-owned and Afghan-led initiatives for peace.

It is Pakistan's expectation that any strategy adopted to stabilise Afghanistan will succeed to end this protracted conflict and usher in an era of peace in the country paving way for dignified return of millions of Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan for which it was willing to extend all possible cooperation.

More specifically, we would like to see effective and immediate US military efforts to eliminate sanctuaries harboring terrorists and miscreants on the Afghan soil including those responsible for fomenting terror in Pakistan.

The Afghan war cannot be fought in Pakistan. On its own part, Pakistan has taken indiscriminate actions against all terrorist networks and sacrificed tens of thousands of troops and civilians in this fight.

The demonstrated security improvement inside Pakistan would not have been possible without eliminating all terrorist hideouts. Moreover, successful cooperation with the US in the past against the common enemy, terrorism, reflects Pakistan's unflinching commitment to eliminate this menace.

The committee stressed that instead of any financial or material assistance, there should be an understanding and recognition of our efforts, contributions and sacrifice of thousands of Pakistanis and over \$120 billion economic losses.

We consider the lives of the citizens of other countries as sacrosanct as those of our own and, therefore, Pakistan is committed to not allowing its soil to be used for violence against any other country.

We expect the same from our neighbours. The claims of billions of dollars in aid to Pakistan are also misleading to the extent that reimbursements to Pakistan since 2001 only account for part of the cost of ground facilities and air corridors used by the United States for its operations in Afghanistan, rather than any financial aid or assistance.

Pakistan's effective counter-terrorism operations have clearly proved that tide of terrorism can be reversed and we are willing to share our experience with both the US and Afghanistan. This would require working together and focusing on core issues of eliminating safe havens inside Afghanistan, border management, return of refugees and reinvigorating the peace process for a political settlement in Afghanistan.

The committee stressed that India cannot be a net security provider in South Asia when it has

conflictual relationships with all its neighbours and is pursuing a policy of destabilizing Pakistan from the east and the west.

The committee expressed deep concern over the Indian policies inimical to peace in the region including interference in the internal affairs of neighbouring countries and using terrorism as an instrument of state policy.

It condemned the state-inflicted repression on the people of Indian Held Kashmir (IHK) and reiterated Pakistan's continued diplomatic, political and moral support for their struggle for self-determination.

The committee reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The committee underscored that as a responsible nuclear power, Pakistan had in place a robust and credible command and control system which has been universally recognized and appreciated.

Pakistan will continue to extend all possible cooperation to the international community for achieving the common objectives of peace and stability in Afghanistan and in the broader region.

Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi directed Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif to immediately undertake a visit to regional capitals to gain support in the aftermath of consequences for Pakistan in the recently announced US policy for Pakistan and South Asia.

Asif has already visited Saudi Arabia this week though details of the views of Washington's strong ally on Trump's policy and its fallout on Pakistan have not been made public by the government.

"Yes, visits by the foreign minister to Beijing and Moscow are very much on the cards but right now there are no dates for a meeting in Washington", senior officials told The News. Asif will first undertake visit to Moscow. Amongst others Senate Chairman Raza Rabbani has asked Asif to cancel his visit to Washington.

The meeting was attended by federal ministers Engineer Khurram Dastagir Khan, Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Ahsan Iqbal, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC) General Zubair Mahmood Hayat, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Muhammad Zakauallah, Chief of Air Staff (CAS) Air Chief Marshal Sohail Aman, National Security Adviser (NSA) Lt. Gen (R) Nasser Khan Janjua, Director General ISI Lt. Gen. Naveed Mukhtar and senior civil and military officials.

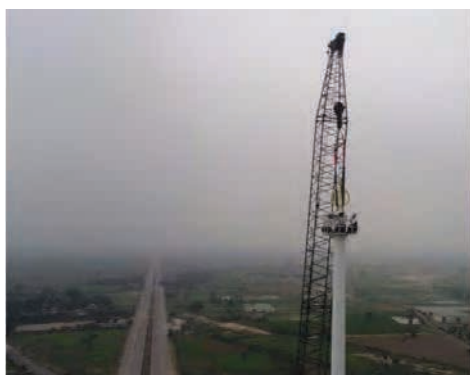
Courtesy to The News



By Monitoring Desk

Our will to fight is unbreakable, says COAS

Security institutions will not disappoint people of Pakistan: Army chief



We have rendered many sacrifices and we will never forget our martyrs. We will execute each and every terrorist in Pakistan: COAS



Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa said that the Security institutions will not disappoint people of Pakistan.

The army chief said that our enemies would run out of their bullets but not the chests of our soldiers who will continue to offer sacrifices for the country. During his speech after flag-hoisting ceremony at the Wagah border, General Qamar Javed Bajwa said that the security agencies are working to restore peace in the country and added that the terrorists would be eliminated.

General Bajwa said that the country is progressing on the path of the law and the constitution today and all the institutions are

“We shall restore peace, rule of law whatever sacrifices it may cost. No threat can deter resolve of a united and resilient nation”, COAS

working properly. “We will make Pakistan the country of Quaid-e-Azam and Allama Iqbal”, he said. The army chief said that the country founded on the 27th of the Holy month of Ramazan could not be defeated. “We shall restore peace, rule of law whatever sacrifices it may cost. No threat can deter resolve of a united and resilient nation”, COAS said.

General Bajwa said that we have rendered many sacrifices and we will never forget our martyrs. We will execute each and every terrorist in Pakistan.

Earlier, Pakistan Army Chief hoisted the world’s eighth highest and South Asia’s highest flag at Wagah border to kick off the festivities of Independence Day across the country.

Made in Pakistan national flag was hoisted on a 400-foot pole and 120 feet by 80 feet in size.



Pakistan wants recognition for contributions, COAS tells US Amb

We are not looking for any material or financial assistance from USA but trust, understanding and acknowledgement of our contributions: COAS

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Agency

Mr. David Hale, US Ambassador to Pakistan called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at GHQ today. The Ambassador briefed COAS about new US Policy.

The Ambassador said that US values Pakistan's role in the war against terror and is seeking cooperation from Pakistan to resolve the Afghan issue.

COAS said that peace in Afghanistan is as important for Pakistan as for any other country. We have done a lot towards that end and shall keep on doing our best, not to appease anyone but in line with our national interest and national policy. COAS said that we are not looking for any material or financial assistance from USA but trust, understanding and acknowledgement of our contributions. Collaboration and synergy of effort between all stakeholders is the key to success to bring this long drawn war in Afghanistan to its logical conclusion, COAS concluded.



Pakistan highly valued its bilateral ties with Jordan: President Mamnoon

By Mian Fazal Elahi

President Mamnoon Hussain said Pakistan will play its role for the unity and solidarity of the Muslim Ummah and would fulfill its expectations for peace and stability in the Middle East.

The President was talking to Jordanian Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Lt. Gen. Mahmoud Freihath who called him at the Aiwan e Sadr.

The President said Pakistan highly valued its bilateral ties with Jordan and said cooperation between the two countries in defence and other sectors would continue.

He said Pak Jordanian defence cooperation was based upon mutual interest and for global peace. The president expressed his concern over the grave situation in Syria and observed that it was affecting Ummah's unity and solidarity.

He said Pakistan had been pursuing a policy of being non-partisan over the issue of Syria and Yemen. Pakistan wanted a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan.

It wanted peace in the region but permanent peace in the South Asia could not be achieved till resolution of the Kashmir issue, he noted



The President also stressed upon further strengthening of the bilateral cooperation in different sectors and offered training of the Jordanian youth in different training institutions of Pakistan. He also expressed his good wishes for King Abdullah II and lauded his leadership role for the prosperity and development of Jordan.

Jordanian chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Mahmoud Freihath appreciated the professional capabilities of Pakistan armed forces and said Jordanian people had deep affection for Pakistan. President Mamnoon Hussain also conferred Nishan e Imtiaz (Military) upon him in a ceremony which was attended by senior military and civil officials.



70 years of Pakistan's parliament



To commemorate the celebrations of 70 years of the parliament, a two day conference was inaugurated at Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS). The institute is organizing the first ever anniversary of the parliament to commemorate the first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan session on August 10, 1947.

Enlightening and insightful reflection upon the history of parliament was shared by the speakers who included National Assembly Speaker of the Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and former speakers Fakhar Imam and Gohar Ayub. PIPS Executive Director Zafarullah Khan reflected upon the historic moments of parliament. Fakhar Imam shared a 300 years old precedent in the UK House of Commons which applied right of governance lies with the elected parliament.

Gohar Ayub underlined the historical background of first Constituent Assembly highlighting the principle of will of the people being the citadel of nations' aspirations.

Speaker Ayaz Sadiq deliberated the hurdles and challenges a speaker has to face during his time as the custodian of house. He also shared his initiative for introduction of parliamentary studies in 17 universities to promote education of the ideals of the Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.



Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with UAE: Pakistan

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

President Mamnoon Hussain has said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with UAE and there is a need to further the legacy of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan in this regard.

The President said this while talking to outgoing Ambassador of UAE Essa Abdullah Al Basha Al-Noaimi who called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

The President stated that Pakistan was the biggest target of terrorism in the region but by the grace of Almighty Allah this menace has been largely overcome. He added that this will speed up the economic activity in the country.

The President said that the burgeoning Pak-UAE

ties are a result of the vision of the founder of UAE Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and emphasized the need to further enhance bilateral relations by seeking guidance from his vision. He stated that Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan was a sincere friend of Pakistan and noted with pleasure that his successor Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed al Nahyan is further bringing the two countries closer to each other by following in his footsteps. Commending the services of the outgoing Ambassador, the President said that he has worked for further deepening the relations between the two countries. The President hoped that his successor will also work on the same lines. The President conveyed his goodwill message and best wishes for the leadership of UAE.

He [Ambassador Essa Abdullah Al Basha Al-Noaimi] has worked for further deepening the relations between the two countries: President Mamnoon Hussain

The President appreciated that both countries were cooperating with each other in different areas and called for further enhancing this cooperation to benefit from the capability and expertise of each other.

Additional Secretary (Europe) Ambassador Zaheer Janjua hosted farewell lunch for Ambassador of the Netherlands H.E. Jennette Seppen.





Pakistan & Afghanistan agreed that Lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan was critical for regional stability

Foreign Secretary's Visit to Kabul for Bilateral Consultations

Foreign Secretary Tehmina Janjua visited Kabul for bilateral political consultations with her Afghan counterpart Deputy Foreign Minister Hekmat Khalil Karzai.

The two agreed that lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan was critical for regional stability. The Foreign Secretary emphasized that there was no military solution to the Afghan conflict and the focus should be on evolving a credible political settlement.

The two sides agreed that terrorism was a common challenge and there was a need to strengthen institutional cooperation between the two countries to effectively combat this menace. The Foreign Secretary underlined the need of strengthening border management and early humane repatriation of Afghan refugees.

Emphasizing the importance of regional connectivity, Foreign Secretary reiterated Pakistan's desire to expedite transit facilitation and infrastructure connectivity projects



between the two countries. During the visit, Foreign Secretary also called on Afghan President, Mr. Ashraf Ghani, National Security Advisor, Mr. Haneef Atmar, NDS Chief Mr.

Masoom Stanikzai, former President Hamid Karzai and Hizb-e-Wahdat leader, Ustaad Muhammad Mohaqiq.



National Security Council meeting reviews situation on eastern, western border

By Monitoring Desk

Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Wednesday chaired a meeting of the National Security Council (NSC) and reviewed security situation along the Line of Control (LoC). This was the first meeting of the country's top security body headed by the new Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi.

Participants of the NSC urged Afghanistan to stop infiltration of militants from their side of the border into Pakistan and incidents of cross-border firing.

According to sources, the NSC also discussed the country's internal security situation and it was decided to continue security operations till elimination of terrorism from the country. In addition, it also reviewed the progress made in

restoration of peace in Karachi through targeted operations. The military's ongoing Operation Raddul Fasaad and Operation Khyber-4 also came under discussion.

In her briefing to the council, Tehmina Janjua said the Afghan government was informed of Pakistan's point of view with regards to the regional security situation. The foreign secretary apprised the council members of reiteration of Pakistan's demand to Afghanistan to act against terrorist sanctuaries on its soil, sources stated further.

The meeting was also told that Pakistan reiterated the resolve to play a due role in restarting the Quadrilateral Afghan Dialogue.

Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Zubair Mahmood Hayat, Chief of Army

NSC urged Afghanistan to stop infiltration of militants from their side of the border into Pakistan

Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sohail Aman, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Zakaullah and Inter-Services Intelligence Director General Lt Gen Naveed Mukhtar, among others, were in attendance. Defence Minister Khurram Dastagir, Interior Minister Ahsan Iqbal and other senior officials were also in attendance.

Pakistan's Ambassador Javed Malik is joined by Vice Admiral Kevin Donegan Commander US 5th Fleet Admiral Naveed Rizvi, Captian Imtiaz Ali, Commander PNS Alamgeer, and other dignitaries at an On-Board Reception on PNS Alamgir in Bahrain.



Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Ambassador of Switzerland, Mr. Marc Pierre George paid a Farewell call on President Mamnoon Hussain at the Aiwan-E-Sadr, Islamabad.



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Sun Weidong calls on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in Islamabad.



US Centcom Commander General Joseph L. Votel calls on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in Islamabad.



Ambassador of Turkey H.E. Mr. S. Babur Girgin called on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at PM Office in Islamabad.



US Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. David Hale calls on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at PM Office in Islamabad.



Chairman Senate Mian Raza Rabbani called on President Dr. Hassan Rouhani of Islamabad Republic Iran in Tehran.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Speaker of the National Assembly of Korea H.E. Mr. Chung Sye-Kyun called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Parliament House.



Ambassador of Qatar Mr. Saqr bin Mubarak Al-Mansouri called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Parliament House.



Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq during a meeting with Korean Parliamentary Delegation led by Speaker of the National Assembly of Korea H.E. Mr. Chung Sye-Kyun in Parliament House.



Mr. Takashi Kurai, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, paid a courtesy call on the Foreign Minister, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad.



The US Ambassador David Hale paid a courtesy call on the Foreign Minister, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad.



Federal Minister for Interior, Professor Ahsan Iqbal in a meeting with US Ambassador H.E. David Hale in Islamabad.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Ambassador of Rwanda, Lt. Gen. Charles R. Kayonga Charles called on Additional Secretary Defence, Maj. General Muhammad Abid Nazir at Ministry of Defence in Rawalpindi.



Advisor to the Prime Minister on Aviation Sardar Mahtab Ahmad Khan talking to the Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan, Mr. Sherali Jononov, who called on him here at Aviation Division in Islamabad.



Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Sadik Babur Girgin called on Federal Minister for Commerce, Mohammad Pervaiz Malik in Islamabad.



Mr. Takashi Kurai, Ambassador of Japan called on Federal Minister for Defence, Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan, in Ministry of Defence, Rawalpindi.



Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, H.E. Takashi Kurai paid a courtesy call to Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Mushahidullah Khan in Islamabad.



Ambassador of Afghanistan, Hazrat Omar Zakhilwal called on Finance Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar in Islamabad.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, H.E. Takashi Kurai calling on Finance Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at Ministry of Finance in Islamabad.



Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Engr. Iqbal Zafar Jhagr talking to Ambassador of France to Pakistan Marine Dorance here at Governor's House, Peshawar.



Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan H.E. Mehdi Honardoost called on Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb Minister of State for IB&NH in Islamabad.



Interior Minister Prof. Ahsan Iqbal in a meeting with Ambassador of Bosnia H.E. Dr. Nedim Makarevic in Islamabad.



Foreign Secretary MS Tehmina Janjua in a meeting with Chinese Minister Wang Yi at Beijing, China.



National Security Adviser Lt. General (Retd) Nasser Janjua in a meeting with Japanese Ambassador Mr. Takashi Kurai in Islamabad.



Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Ambassador H.E. Nawaf Said Ahmad Al-Malkiy & Minister for Religious Affairs Sardar Muhammad Yousuf

handing over gifts to intending Hajj pilgrims during a sending-off ceremony for the Pakistani Hujjaj organized here at Serena hotel, Islamabad by Saudi embassy. Charge d'Affaires of the Saudi embassy Jassim M al-Khalid and Director of the Office of Advocacy Sheikh Mohammed bin Saad Al-Dosari are also present on the occasion







FO Officials hosted a Farewell for Adviser Sartaj Aziz & welcomed FM Khawaja Asif in Islamabad. Members of Diplomatic Corps were invited.



M. Nafees Zakaria
Spokesperson Ministry
of Foreign Affairs
Pakistan Presenting
books on 'Discovering
Pakistan' & 'Churches
of Pakistan' to MP
Andrew Gwynne



Warm farewell given to outgoing Ambassadors

H.E. Atadjan N. Movlamov Ambassador of Turkmenistan on the behalf of Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Kazakhstan Bakhitbek Shabarbayev, hosted a farewell reception to acknowledge the meritorious services of outgoing ambassadors. The outgoing Ambassadors are Ambassador of United Arab Emirates, Essa Abdulla Al Basha Al Noaimi, Ambassador of French Republic, Mrs. Martine Dorance, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Mrs. Jeannette Seppen and Ambassador of the Swiss Confederation, Mark George. All Ambassadors and Heads of International Organizations and newly appointed envoys of different countries also attended the event.





More than 700 alumni of a variety of the U.S. government-sponsored exchange programs participated the annual reunion of Pakistan-U.S. Alumni Network's (PUAN) Islamabad/Rawalpindi Chapter. The theme of the year's reunion was the "celebration of the 70th Anniversary of Pakistan-U.S. Relations". Through the PUAN Distinguished Alumni Award, Young Emerging Leaders Award, and appreciation certificates, the chapter also recognized the efforts of over 20 alumni who had contributed to the cause of strengthening people-to-people ties between the U.S. and Pakistan.





No other country has more interest for peace in Afghanistan than Pakistan: COAS

By Monitoring Desk

The Pakistan Army reaffirmed its commitment to cooperating with the US-led coalition forces in Afghanistan and the Afghan security forces for peace in the region.

This resolve was expressed by Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) Gen Qamar Bajwa during a meeting with a visiting United States military delegation led by Gen Joseph Votel, Commander of the Central Command (Centcom).

The COAS was assisted by Inter-Services Intelligence chief Lt Gen Naveed Mukhtar, Director General of Military Operations Maj Gen Sahir Shamshad Mirza and some other generals.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations statement issued after the meeting, the army chief COAS highlighted the importance Pakistan accords to its relations with US, particularly



“More than financial or material assistance, we seek acknowledgement of our decades-long contributions towards regional peace and stability, understanding of our challenges and most importantly the sacrifices Pakistani nation and its security forces have rendered in fight against terrorism and militancy,”
COAS

security cooperation and efforts towards regional stability. COAS said that Pakistan has undertaken operations against terrorists of all hue and colour. He reiterated his commitment to work in close coordination with Afghan security forces and US-led Resolute Support Mission (RSM) for improved security environment in Pakistan-Afghanistan border region.

While referring to Afghanistan and Pak-US relations, COAS said that no other country has more interest for peace in Afghanistan than Pakistan.

The meeting at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi took place on the day when US President Donald Trump was meeting his senior aides at the Camp David presidential resort to finalise his strategy for Afghanistan.

US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis said that the Trump administration had almost reached a decision on a new approach for fighting the 16-year-old war in Afghanistan. He gave no hint of what the strategy would look like, but told reporters that the Camp David talks “will move this [review process] toward a decision” after months of heated debates.

The Trump administration has said its Afghanistan strategy will be informed by a review of its approach to the broader region, including Pakistan and India. There is a perception in the US that not enough had been done to uproot the Afghan Haqqani network and Taliban sanctuaries from Pakistani soil because of which the militants were sustaining the insurgency in Afghanistan.

Gen Bajwa dispelled the impression and noted that “Pakistan has undertaken operations against terrorists of all hue and colour”.

He emphasised that no other country had greater interest in peace in Afghanistan than Pakistan.

Gen Bajwa recalled that Pakistan attached a lot of importance to its relations with the US, particularly their security cooperation aspect.

Notwithstanding the misgivings, Pakistan has always emphasised the strength and resilience

of ties with the US. Earlier, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson called the Foreign Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif to felicitate on the 70th Independence Day anniversary of Pakistan. He conveyed the best wishes on behalf of the US Government and the American people to the Government and people of Pakistan. He also congratulated the Foreign Minister on assumption of office as Foreign Minister of Pakistan and expressed his desire to work with him for achieving common objectives.

The Foreign Minister thanked Secretary Tillerson and said that the call on the 70th anniversary of Pakistan’s Independence Day was an apt reminder of the long history of relations between the two countries. He added that the United States had been a partner in Pakistan’s journey of development, both in the socio-economic and defence sector.

The Foreign Minister said he would strive in his new capacity to strengthening partnership with the United States. He added that the current leadership of Pakistan was committed to establishing Pakistan’s vital relations with the US. He underscored the need to build a dynamic and diverse relationship underpinned by mutual trust, sincerity and confidence.

The Foreign Minister said that Pakistan would benefit the most if peace and stability was achieved in Afghanistan as the success and sustainability of Pakistan’s economic reforms depended upon a peaceful and stable Afghanistan. He expressed Pakistan’s willingness to work with the US once the policy review on Afghanistan is unveiled. He

emphasized the political settlement for conflict to the Afghanistan as common objective of Pakistan and the US.

Secretary Tillerson extended an invitation to the Foreign Minister to visit the United States to carry on the conversation. The Foreign Minister also invited Secretary Tillerson to visit Pakistan. Secretary Tillerson accepted the invitation.

Foreign Office spokesman Nafees Zakaria had said in his weekly media briefing a day earlier that relations with the US were “longstanding, multidimensional and diverse”.

The army chief said Pakistan only expected



US delegation appreciated efforts and sacrifices of Pakistan Army and local tribes for re-establishing peace and order in the area.

the US to be more respectful towards and acknowledge its sacrifices in the fight against terrorism. “More than financial or material assistance, we seek acknowledgement of our decades-long contributions towards regional

peace and stability, understanding of our challenges and most importantly the sacrifices Pakistani nation and its security forces have rendered in fight against terrorism and militancy,” he maintained.

United States Delegation headed by General Joseph L. Votel, Commander United States Central Command (US CENTCOM) visited North Waziristan Agency. The delegation was briefed about Pak Army’s operations in NWA and about Pak-Afg border security mechanism through enhanced surveillance measures. The delegation was also briefed about progress on the socio-economic developments including return of Temporarily Displaced Persons (TDPs).

The delegation appreciated efforts and sacrifices of Pakistan Army and local tribes for re-establishing peace and order in the area. The visiting dignitary also realized the importance of Pak-Afg bilateral border security coordination.

Later the delegation visited APS Miran shah and interacted with students.

Earlier, upon arrival at North Waziristan Agency, the delegation was received by Commander Peshawar Corps, Lieutenant General Nazir Ahmad Butt. Lt Gen Bilal Akbar, Chief of General Staff accompanied the delegation.

Courtesy to The NEWS

America’s strong friendship with Afghanistan based on their mutual dedication to “helping the Afghan people secure a safe and prosperous future: US Secretary of State

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson assured the people of Afghanistan in his message on the Afghan Independence Day that the United States would continue to work for a safe and prosperous future for the war-torn country.

“The Afghan spirit of resilience and courage in the face of adversity continues to guide the people of Afghanistan toward a better future,” he said.

“Afghanistan has made significant economic,

political and social progress in the last 16 years, and we bear witness every day to the Afghan people’s dedication to building a more democratic and peaceful country,” he said.

Secretary Tillerson said that America’s strong friendship with Afghanistan was based on their mutual dedication to “helping the Afghan people secure a safe and prosperous future”.

Pakistan, Afghanistan discuss ways to strengthen ties

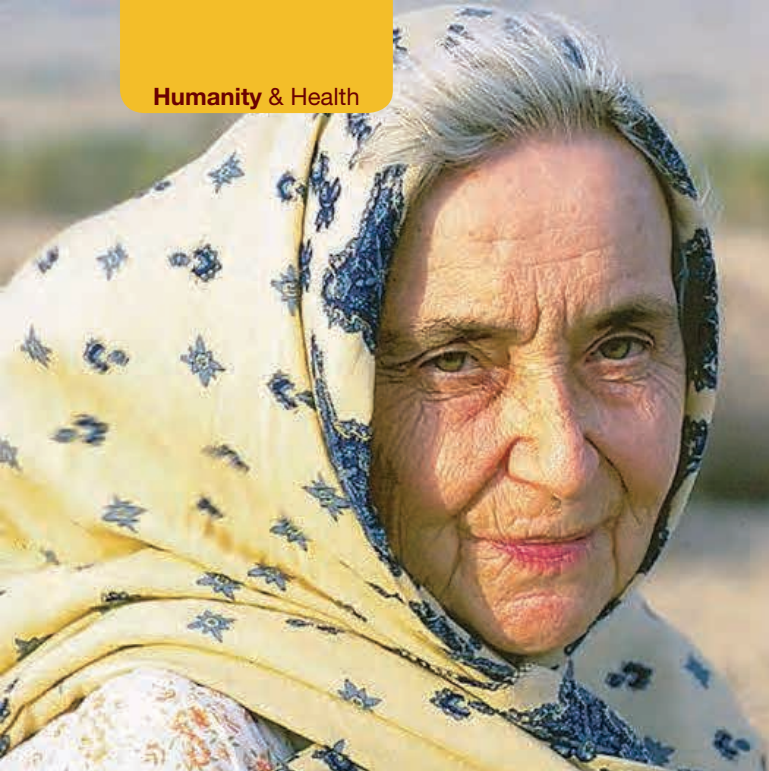
By M.Saeed Yousafzai

The visiting Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister, Nasir Andesha, called on Foreign Secretary Tehmina Janjua.

During the meeting, they discussed ways to strengthen bilateral cooperation in efforts for lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Recognising that terrorism is a common enemy of the two countries, it was agreed to beef up coordination in counter-terrorism efforts with a view to eliminate this menace.

Tehmina Janjua underscored the need for enhancing economic cooperation in diverse fields, including trade transit and connectivity for mutual benefit of people of the two countries.



Savior of Lepers in Pakistan, Dies at 87

Dr. Ruth Pfau, laid to rest in Karachi after state funeral

By M.Saeed Yousafzai, Monitoring desk

A state funeral with full national honours was held in Karachi for Dr Ruth Pfau, a symbol of selflessness and devotion who passed away at the age of 87. Pfau, a German-Pakistani doctor who dedicated her life to helping leprosy patients in Pakistan, was one of the founders of the Marie Adelaide Leprosy Centre (MALC). Armed forces personnel carried her casket into St Patrick's Cathedral in Karachi's Saddar area. The coffin was draped in the Pakistani flag and covered with rose petals.

After her final rites were performed at the church, Dr Ruth Pfau was laid to rest in Gora Qabaristan, Karachi's oldest graveyard.

The burial ceremony was attended by many state dignitaries, including President Mamnoon Hussain, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, Sindh Governor Muhammad Zubair, Chief of Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, Air Chief Marshal Sohail Aman and Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) Vice Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi, each of whom laid floral wreaths on her grave as a mark of respect.

Dr. Ruth Katharina Martha Pfau was born on September 9, 1929 in Leipzig, Germany.

She grew up seeing the horrors of the Second World War (1939-1945) during which her city was bombed and her home destroyed. When the war ended, millions of people had been killed or went missing. Her country, in a state of ruins was finally divided into East Germany and West Germany.

In 1948 she had to cross the demarcation line illegally from East Germany (then under Russian occupation) to West Germany to pursue her education as a medical student.

In the 1950s she studied medicine at the universities of Mainz and Marburg in West Germany.

After her graduation she joined the catholic order of the 'Daughters of the Heart of Mary'.

She left her native country Germany and stopped in Karachi on her way to India on 8th March 1960. She was being sent to a Mission Station in India by her Congregation but due to some visa problems she broke journey in Karachi and here she was introduced to the leprosy work. On her first visit to the Leprosy patient's colony at McLeod Road (now I. I. Chundrigar Road) she got so depressed with the situation that she resolved on the spot to join the group and help the affected Leprosy patients.

In 1961 she went to Vellore, South India to acquire training in the management of Leprosy. She then returned to Karachi to organize and expand the Leprosy Control Programme.

In 1965, she and Dr. Zarina Fazelbhoj, a Pakistani dermatologist initiated the training programme for paramedical workers.

1971, she had, in cooperation with the Provincial Governments, completed the network of treatment and control units in the Leprosy



affected Provinces (Balochistan, Sindh, NWFP), Northern Areas and Azad Kashmir, traveling to every nook and corner of the country.

1979, she was appointed Federal Advisor on Leprosy to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Government of Pakistan.

In 1996, she managed to control Leprosy in the country.

In 2006, she gave over to her successor, the Chief Executive Officer of MALC.

She has authored four books in German about her work in Pakistan and neighbouring Afghanistan, where she first went in 1984. One of these books, 'To Light a Candle' was translated into English in 1987.





Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi writing his remarks in the visitors' book during visit to Marie Adelaide Leprosy Centre Karachi to offer condolences on the sad demise of Ruth Pfau.

“Dr. Ruth came to Pakistan here at the dawn of a young nation, looking to make lives better for those afflicted by disease, and in doing so, found herself a home,”

PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi

Awards Achieved

1968: The Order of the Cross from Germany.

1969: Sitara-e-Quaid-e-Azam from Government of Pakistan

1979: Hilal-e-Imtiaz from Government of Pakistan

1985: The Commanders Cross of the Order of Merit with Star from Germany

1989: Hilal-e-Pakistan from Government of Pakistan

1991: Damien-Dutton Award from USA

1991: Osterreichische Albert Schweitzer Gesellschaft from Austria

2002: Ramon Magsaysay Award from Government of Philippines

2003: The Jinnah Award from the Jinnah Society Pakistan

2003: In The Name of Allah Award by Idara Wiqar-e-Adab Pakistan

2004: Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science (D.Sc.) from Aga Khan University

2004: Life-time Achievement Award from the Rotary Club of Karachi

2005: Marion Doenhoff-Prize, Germany

2006: Life-time Achievement Award

from the President of Pakistan

2006: Woman of the Year 2006 Award by CityFM89

2006: Certificate of Appreciation from the Ministry of Health

2009: Nesvita Women of Strength Awards by TVONE

2009: Life-time Achievement Khidmat Award by Al-Fikar International.

On 8th March 2010 she completed her 50 years in Pakistan. Her dedicated services and commitment to eradicate Leprosy and uplift of Marginalized groups in Pakistan gratefully acknowledged and honoured by both her national and international friends and by patients and staff at MALC.

19th February 2010 – The Hamdard University Karachi organized a grand function in honor of Dr. Pfau at their University Campus which attended by renowned celebrities.

6th March 2010 – The Consulate General of Germany in Karachi organized a music concert by Carolina Eyck and her ensemble in honour of Dr. Ruth Pfau at his residence.

7th March 2010 – Patients and Staff celebrated an evening with Dr. Pfau

8th March 2010 – Supporters and well wishers celebrated the day with Dr. Pfau

10th March 2010 – The Health Minister Sindh hosted a lunch and presented a shield

19th February 2010 – Hamdard University (Madinat-al-Hikmah) to acknowledge her lifetime selfless services to the people of Pakistan.

11th March, 2010 – Shield presented by Dr. Saghir Ahmed, Minister Health, Government of Sindh for completion of 50 years of Selfless and Meritorious Service for the Patients of Leprosy.

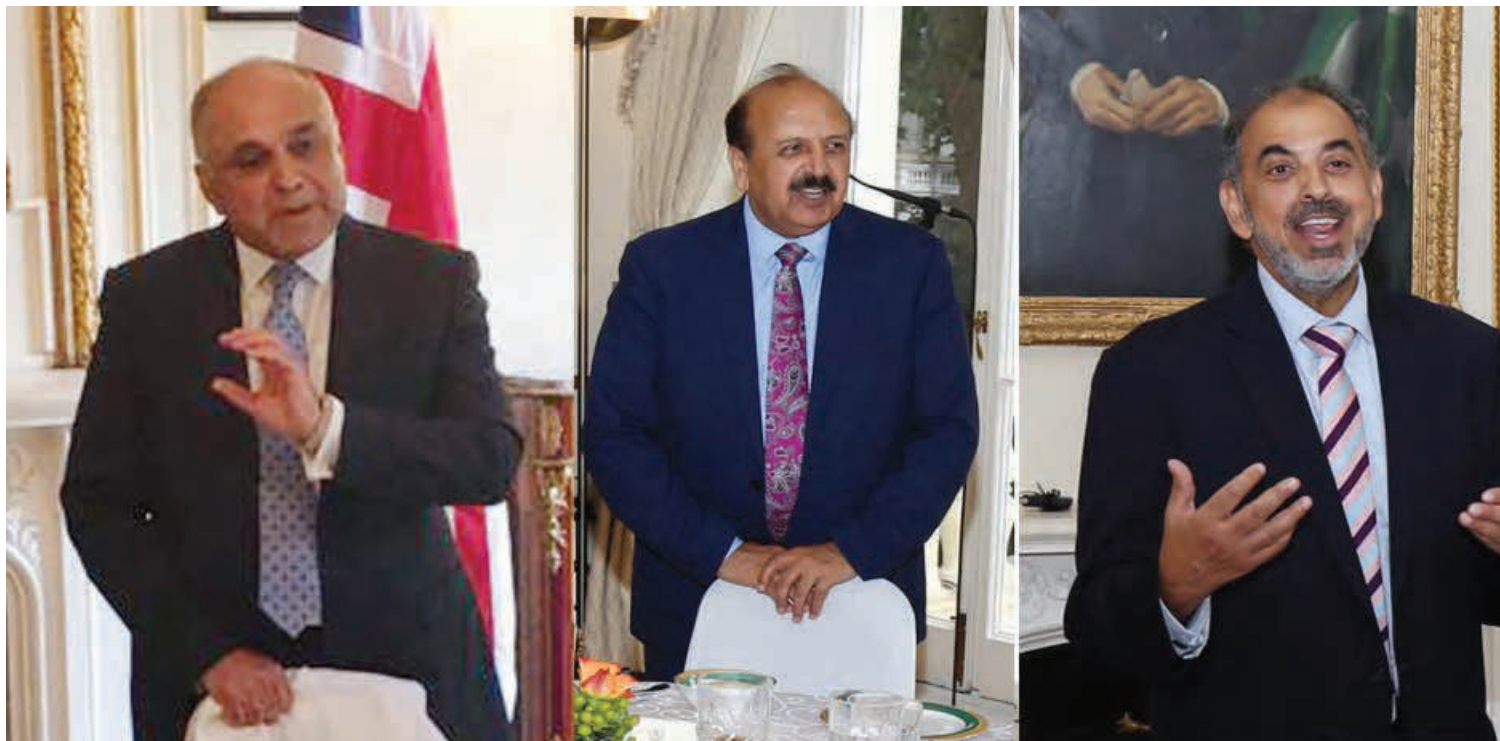
12th March, 2010 – Shield presented by Staff & Students of Happy Home School in appreciation of 50 years of meritorious services for the Eradication of Leprosy in Pakistan.

12th March, 2010 – Shield presented by Dawood Capital Management Limited on winning the LADIESFUND Woman of the Year Award.

2nd February, 2011 – Lifetime Achievement Award 2011 presented by the International Schools Educational Olympiad, organised by Karachi High School.

12th February, 2011 – LADIESFUND woman of the Year Award.

23rd March, 2011 - “Nishan-i-Quaid-i-Azam” Award presented by the President of Pakistan.



British Pakistani Parliamentarians hosted at the High Commission

By Mian Asad

H.E. Syed Ibne Abbas, Pakistan High Commissioner to the UK hosted a lunch in honour of the British Pakistani Parliamentarians, including Lords and newly elected MPs in the recent elections held in June this year. The event was organized at the Pakistan High Commission London.

The purpose was to welcome the Parliamentarians and interact with them on a wide array of issues pertaining to the diaspora and Pakistan-UK bilateral relations, with a special focus on enhancing trade ties between the two countries in post Brexit scenario. Those who attended the event included Lord Nazir Ahmed, Lord Qurban Hussain, Baroness Zahida Manzoor, Nusrat Ghani MP and Faisal Rashid MP. In his welcome remarks, the High Commissioner felicitated the newly elected MPs and reiterated his resolve to keep close liaison with them for common causes of further strengthening Pakistan-UK ties and



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working for the welfare of over 1.2 million strong diaspora. He also briefed them on the High Commission's outreach efforts to connect with the community and the renewed cultural diplomacy initiative in the context of 70th Independence Anniversary of Pakistan and the 70 years of establishment of Pakistan-UK diplomatic relations.

In their remarks on the occasion, the Parliamentarians noted that there was a growing need to reach out to the community for their enhanced socio-economic and political mainstreaming. A detailed discussion on youth, their education and active participation in the mainstream British society also took place. They appreciated the Mission's efforts to reach out to the community.

The event offered a good opportunity to the officers of the High Commission to interact with the Parliamentarians on issues of mutual interest.



Labour can stop Brexit

but only with fresh vote, says Sadiq Khan

London mayor raises hopes of remainers, arguing pledge in manifesto or second referendum would both be legitimate



Photograph: Alicia Canter for the Guardian

By Monitoring Desk

Sadiq Khan has set out the possibility of Britain remaining within the EU, arguing that Brexit could be legitimately stopped if the Labour party included the pledge in an election manifesto or committed to a second referendum.

In a considered and powerful intervention that could raise the hopes of remain supporters, the London mayor described himself as “an optimist” about the possibility of the UK staying

part of the European Union.

But he said it was only possible to “trump the referendum” of 2016 in which 52% opted to leave the EU with a fresh, democratic vote, which could be delivered through the next general election or a national vote on the final Brexit deal.

“For it to have credibility with the British public, there would have to be a Labour manifesto offer, because the public would say, not unreasonably, ‘Hold on a sec, we voted to leave and you’re now sticking two fingers up at us,’”

he said.

“You’d have to spell out, in black and white, what we’d do if we won the general election. What could trump the referendum result is us having a manifesto offer saying, we would not leave the EU, or we would have a second referendum.”

The comments are likely to fuel Labour’s divisions on Brexit, as the leadership is adamant that the party should respect the result of 28 June last year, but some MPs believe Labour should fight for a second referendum.

The party has been pulled in different directions over Brexit by those who warn of the risk of losing working-class voters across the north if there is any loosening in support for leaving the EU, and those who warn of the fiercely pro-EU views of Labour members. The Guardian recently revealed that an overwhelming majority of Labour members support staying in the single market and customs union, and favour a second vote.

Labour’s position has softened in recent days, with Sir Keir Starmer, the shadow Brexit secretary, and John McDonnell, the shadow chancellor, making clear that staying in the single market and customs union should stay on the table, contradicting previous remarks by Jeremy Corbyn and Barry Gardiner, the shadow trade secretary.

But the shadow cabinet is united overall in the view that Labour should be in favour of carrying out Brexit. In response to Khan’s comments, a Labour spokesman said: “Labour respects the

result of the referendum and is making the case for a jobs-first Brexit through securing full tariff-free access to the European single market.”

Angela Rayner, the shadow education secretary, told the Guardian in an interview that there was “absolutely no way you can disrespect the way the people voted”.

“If it was a popular thing on the streets of Britain, there could be another referendum, but until the general public has a change of heart, we’re going to exit Europe,” she said. “The public can make their feelings clear, and there can be a groundswell for it. Politicians are political animals; they’re savvy. That’s why most of them are saying they respect the vote. But MPs haven’t changed their mind on Brexit. Most of them are weeping. They want to stay in Europe because they think this is going to be really damaging. If I got a feeling in my constituency that the public wanted to remain, I’d say: ‘Brake!’”

The government appears also to have softened its position on Brexit over the past week, as Philip Hammond, the chancellor, made clear the cabinet was united on the need for a transitional period maintaining free movement of people and goods for up to three years after leaving the EU in 2019.

However, the Conservatives, like Labour, will not hear any arguments for a second referendum, arguing that the vote is binding and the wishes of the voters must be carried out.

Khan gave his alternative view on the possibility of reversing Brexit as the Guardian shadowed

him over a week, watching him face his weekly question and answer session, share a stage with his mayoral counterpart in Chicago, Rahm Emanuel, and welcome a delegation of EU ambassadors to City Hall in London.

He told the ambassadors that he hoped the EU flag, flying outside the glass-fronted mayoral building on the banks of the Thames, would stay there forever.

The mayor also expressed a belief that the capital’s prospects for business will be hit by the country’s EU exit, which was opposed by a solid majority of Londoners. “It’s illogical to assume we can have a better deal or as good a deal with the EU outside the EU. It wouldn’t happen with a tennis club, or any club.”

Tom Brake, Liberal Democrat Brexit spokesperson, welcomed the mayor’s remarks. He said: “This is an important intervention. There is growing recognition in parliament and beyond that we need a vote on the final deal, as the Liberal Democrats have long argued. Nobody voted to be made poorer, but the extreme that Theresa May is choosing is making Britain poorer already, and that’s even before we leave the single market.

“Moderates such as the mayor now need to persuade Jeremy Corbyn because so far he has been Theresa May’s best friend on Brexit, ordering his MPs into the lobbies to vote for a Conservative-Ukip Brexit.”

Originally published on July 28, 2017 in The Guardian

A former head of the European Commission has said

A second Brexit referendum may be “impossible” for the UK,

despite hopes from some Labour and Liberal Democrat MPs that the decision to leave the EU could still be reversed.

Romano Prodi, who served as president of the Commission from 1999 to 2004, warned that the UK risks committing economic “suicide” unless the Government is prepared to be flexible in its efforts to reach a trade deal with the EU.

Brexit negotiations ‘have not begun well’ - Sir Simon Fraser

By Monitoring Desk

The UK’s Brexit negotiations have not begun well amid “differences” inside the cabinet, a former head of the diplomatic service has said. Sir Simon Fraser, chief mandarin at the Foreign Office until 2015, said the UK side had been “a bit absent” from formal negotiations in Brussels.

Sir Simon, who now advises businesses on Brexit, said he was concerned the UK had not put forward a clear position.

The government is expected to publish “position papers” on key issues soon.

Speaking to BBC Radio 4’s Westminster Hour, Sir Simon said he feared divisions within the cabinet were preventing the government from presenting a united front.

“The negotiations have only just begun, I don’t think they have begun particularly promisingly, frankly, on the British side,” he said.

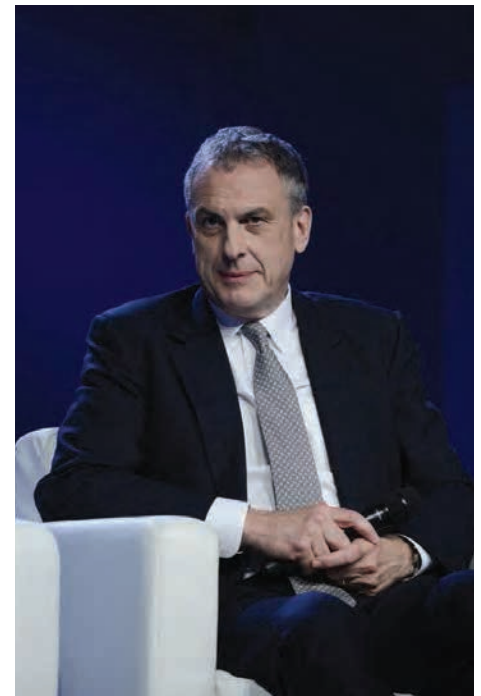
“We haven’t put forward a lot because, as we know, there are differences within the cabinet about the sort of Brexit that we are heading for and until those differences are further resolved I think it’s very difficult for us to have a clear position.” “I think so far we haven’t put much on the table apart from something on the status of nationals, so we are a bit absent from the formal negotiation,” he added.

He called on the government to publish further details about its views on issues, including future customs arrangements and the Northern Irish border in the coming weeks.

“I think we need to demonstrate that we are ready to engage on the substance so that people can understand what is really at stake here and what the options are.”

A spokesman for the Department for Exiting the EU last month said negotiators had already made “good progress on a number of issues”.

“It is important that both sides demonstrate



a dynamic and flexible approach to these negotiations.

Courtesy to BBC News



‘Emerging Pakistan’ branding on London buses

Pakistan High Commission introduced the ‘Emerging Pakistan’ campaign in honour of our country’s 70 years of independence



London's iconic red double-decker buses are carrying brand Pakistan on the roads of Central London, the hub of world tourists. This ultimate branding campaign is running under the theme of "Emerging Pakistan" and will continue for four weeks. Tens of thousands of people is observing the diversity and beauty of Pakistan.

The initiative is a part of celebrations planned by the Pakistan High Commission London for the 70th Independence Anniversary of Pakistan this year. Fully wrapped double-decker buses are showcasing the pristine beauty of Pakistan with its highest peaks, beautiful landscape, rare fauna, monuments representing ancient civilisation, magnificent architecture and rich and diverse culture. The moving buses are creating an unparalleled lasting visual impact on millions of pedestrians and motorists alike,

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especially the tourists. Millions of tourists visit London every year, mainly during summer. The buses decorated in Pakistani colours will pass through the tourist routes covering thousands of miles in total.

The bus wrapping campaign aims to introduce foreign tourists to the beautiful land of Pakistan that still remains unexplored.

Speaking to this correspondent, Syed Ibne Abbas, Pakistan High Commissioner to the UK said: "Pakistan branding on the iconic London buses is projecting the true image of Pakistan in London which is the hub of the foreign tourists. This publicity campaign showcases the beauty of Pakistan, its culture, landscape and people, and will help promote tourism in Pakistan in the most effective way. The recent social uplift and economic prosperity in Pakistan underpins the theme of the campaign i.e. 'Emerging Pakistan' as acknowledged by many independent international organisations."

He said foreigners are always mesmerised when they see the beauty of Pakistan's culture and the richness of colours is appreciated all over the world.





British PM says she looks forward to working with PM Pakistan for building a secure, stable and prosperous Pakistan

By Monitoring Desk

British Prime Minister Ms. Theresa May says the United Kingdom will remain a long-standing and dependable friend of Pakistan.

She said this in a message of felicitation to Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on assuming the office of the Prime Minister. The British Prime Minister said Pakistan and the United Kingdom have deep ties with shared history and future.

She pointed out that as Pakistan celebrates its 70th anniversary, we also celebrate 70 years of our bilateral relationship.

Ms. Theresa May said British High Commission

in Islamabad and the Foreign Office in London have arranged a series of events in the UK and Pakistan to mark this special occasion, which have her full support. The British Prime Minister said she looks forward to working with Shahid Khaqan Abbasi to further deepen historic bilateral relationship, and to build a secure, stable, and prosperous Pakistan.

British PM says Pakistan and United Kingdom have deep ties with shared history and future.

As Pakistan celebrates its 70th anniversary, we also celebrate 70 years of our bilateral relationship: Theresa May

Chairman Nazriya Pakistan Council (NPC) Dr Naeem Ghani, Executive Secretary NPC and Executive Editor Pakistan Observer Gauhar Zahid Malik, Chairperson National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) Razina Alam Khan and others cutting ribbon to inaugurate the painting exhibition in connection with 70th Independence Day celebrations at Aiwan-e-Quaid.



Indonesian Ambassador H.E Iwan S. Amri and Philippines Ambassador Daniel Espiritu at the Blood Donation Camp organized in collaboration with PRCS to mark the 72nd anniversary of Indonesian Independence Day held at the Indonesian Embassy in Islamabad.



Sadiq Khan has declared London is “open to all”



Sadiq Khan has declared London is “open to all” during a speech to open the World Athletics Championship in what has been perceived by some as a criticism of the politics of Brexit and Donald Trump. Speaking to the crowd in The London Stadium in the Olympic Park, the Mayor of London welcome the athletes and fans who had flocked to the city for the tournament and said: “London open to all, no matter colour of your skin, the colour of your passport or colour of your flag”.

“It is fitting that this global event should take place in a city as global as ours. A city with an international heritage and an international outlook. For generations people have flocked to London from every corner of our globe. Enriching our society, our culture and our economy. “This evening we honour that tradition of welcoming talent, hosting the finest anywhere on the planet right here in our city.”

He reflected on the fifth anniversary of London hosting the 2012 Olympic Games and said that “once again the world’s gaze is on our beautiful, diverse, open city”.

He said that the past few months had been “terrible” for the capital due to the string of terror attacks and the Grenfell Tower fire in which at least 80 people died. He continued: “While our city heals tonight we show that in spite of everything we remain united.

“That those who seek to divide us, to destroy our way of life will never succeed and it is impossible to suppress the spirit and soul of this amazing city.

London stands as a beacon of equality and respect. A city admired across the globe for its inclusively and its openness and on this momentous occasion it fills me with immense pride to join you in reaffirming those values.”

His words are likely to be seen as an attack on the current UK government’s policy strategy regarding leaving the EU.

London voted overwhelmingly to remain in the European Union last summer and still remains in favour of free movement.

Courtesy to Independent

That those who
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Sadiq Khan





India's Himalayan folly

India's fatal wish to fight a 'two-and-a-half front' war seems to be coming true as it is getting itself sucked into one. Right when the Indian troops are busy provoking Pakistan along the Line of Control (LoC) and killing Kashmiri freedom fighters at will inside the Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) its troops have crossed into China's Donglang region and, according to Chinese officials obstructed work on a road on the plateau. The two sides' troops then confronted each other close to a valley controlled by China that separates India from its close ally, Bhutan, and gives China access to the so-called Chicken's Neck, a thin strip of land

connecting India and its remote north-eastern regions.

India has said it warned China that construction of the road near their common border would have serious security implications.

Accusing China of 'instigating' the military stand-off in the Himalayas Indian Defence Minister Arun Jaitley had bragged late June this year that India today was very different from what it was in 1962. Next, Indian Army Chief General Bipin Rawat in the same context had boasted that India could take on a "two-and-a-half front war", referring to the possibility

of hostilities breaking out all at the same time between its defence forces and that of China on the one hand, Pakistan on the other and meeting an uprising in the IOK.

China has demanded India to immediately remove troops from the border amid an increasingly tense stand-off in the remote frontier region beside the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan. India's diplomatic efforts to end the seven-week military standoff with China



By M. Ziauddin

have hit a roadblock as China has insisted that India unilaterally withdraw its troops from the remote Doklam plateau claimed by both Beijing and Indian ally Bhutan.

The stand-off ratchets up tension between the neighbours, who share a 2,175 mile (3,500km) frontier, large parts of which are disputed.

"It has already been more than a month since the incident and India is still not only illegally remaining on Chinese territory, it is also repairing roads in the rear, stocking up supplies, massing a large number of armed personnel," said a foreign ministry statement from Beijing.

Indian officials claim about 300 soldiers from either side are facing each other about 150 meters (yards) apart on the plateau. They further claim that both sides' diplomats have quietly engaged to try to keep the stand-off from escalating, and that India's ambassador to Beijing is leading the effort to find a way for both sides to back down without loss of face.

Chinese state media have warned India of a fate worse than the defeat it suffered in a brief border war in 1962. China's military has held live fire drills close to the disputed area. On August 4, 2017 the official China Daily said in an editorial that China was not in the mood for a fight, noting how the stand-off had been "unusually restrained".

"However, if good manners do not work, in the end it may be necessary to rethink our approach. Sometimes a head-on blow may work better than a thousand pleas in waking up a dreamer," the English-language paper added. The standoff, on a plateau that lies at the junction between China, India, and Bhutan, is one of the worst border disputes between the nuclear-armed rivals in more than 30 years.

In a statement to parliament on August 3, Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj urged dialogue based on a written common understanding regarding the border intersection reached in 2012.

"India always believes that peace and tranquility in the India-China border is an important pre-requisite for smooth development of our bilateral relations," Swaraj said, according to a transcript of her remarks released by her office.

"We will continue to engage with the Chinese side through diplomatic channels to find a mutually acceptable solution."

However, it seems China is not interested in talks before the withdrawal of Indian troops from territory Beijing claims to be its own backing which it has produced historical documentary proof. China seems to have decided not to shoot but to stare India down into walking back across the Line of Actual Control. As soon as the confrontation began in mid-June accusing China of 'instigating' the recent military stand-off in

the high Himalayas Indian Defence Minister Arun Jaitley had bragged that India today was very different from what it was in 1962.

Next, Indian Army Chief General Bipin Rawat in the same context boasted that India could take on a "two-and-a-half front war", possibly referring to China, Pakistan and Kashmiri freedom struggle.

In October 1962 the world's largest boundary dispute involving more than 120,000 square miles of territory led to a war in high Himalayas. Within no time Chinese troops cleared all Indian posts on what was their side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

On November 20, 1962 China declared a unilateral cease-fire and withdrawal to 20 kilometers behind what China described as LAC. During the course of the conflict two Indian divisions were completely routed.

This Sino-Indian border had remained hot until 1993 when India in order to focus more on its economy and on Pakistan conceded the Chinese designated LAC signing an agreement under which about 16 or so alignments on the boundary-line were to be settled through negotiations. In effect, the two countries promised not to seek to impose or enforce their versions of the boundary except at the negotiating table.

So, China and the world at large were taken aback when just a week before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US in June this year, the Indian troops violating the 1993 border agreement tried to forcibly stop the construction of a road within the Chinese territory, thus seemingly provoking Beijing to retaliate militarily.

India today, indeed, is not what it was in 1962. But China too is not what it was then. So, militarily India even today is not in a position to force China to agree to New Delhi's version of LAC.

Moreover, India needs China's vote to enter the Nuclear Suppliers Groups (NSG) as well as to get a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Bilaterally, China is now India's largest trading partner in goods. India is also a member of Shanghai Cooperation Council (SCO) and sits with China in an alliance called BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). It is also the second largest contributor to the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and is a member of New Development Bank (NDB) floated by BRICS.

But perhaps India continues to suffer from its self-perceived threat of a non-existent Chinese encirclement strategy. India perhaps sees an endorsement of its encirclement concerns in China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) Initiative as well as in the Chinese built Pakistani port of Gwadar, overlooking the Indian Ocean which is

an essential part of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. That is perhaps why it is opposed to the CPEC and the main reason why it boycotted the OBOR inaugural in mid-May in Beijing.

So, perhaps before leaving for the US, PM Modi had wanted to send a message to President Trump reassuring him of India's willingness to take on China as Washington's proxy in return for the hardware and other material and moral support required to pin China down in a wasteful combat so that it does not challenge the US global hegemony and at the same time US also helps save India from Chinese encirclement threat. Therefore, the deliberate provocation on the Himalayas.

Modi's immediate dash to Israel following his return from the US even at the cost of losing Iran (no more in the good books of US administration) also seems like a desperate attempt by India to win over the US across the political spectrum—both the ruling Republicans and the out of power Democrats—to ensure guaranteed help in encircling China to neutralize its OBOR initiative and snuff out the CPEC project. Iran has reacted promptly by talking about human rights' violations in Indian Occupied Kashmir for the first time in many years. The fate of Indian funded Iranian Chahabhar sea port also appears in jeopardy. The fact of the matter is both China and India are too big to be encircled, no matter how you go about trying to do it.

China has very rightly accused India of using Bhutan as a "cover-up" for the "illegal entry" into Doklam area that belongs to China.

The serious nature of the current crisis, if not carefully handled by India, could lead to a major confrontation in the Himalayas.

The tri-junction in the Sikkim sector is also of strategic significance for New Delhi. The area is not far from the narrow strip of land called the "chicken neck" which connects the Northeast to the rest of India. This narrow strip is the lifeline for the region and the Indian Army in the Northeast gets its supplies through this region. In case of a border war, China can quickly cut off the main supply route to the Northeast and ensure that Indian Army's supplies are stopped. So this does impinge greatly on New Delhi's own security considerations.

Analyzing the comparative hard and soft power strengths of the two the Chinese national media has concluded that India cannot afford a showdown with China on border issues, citing data such as India's economic output, which is one-quarter of China's, and its annual defence budget, which is just one-third of China's.

Courtesy to Pakistan Observer



Pak-Turkey business opportunities conference held in Istanbul

By Monitoring Desk

Leading businessmen of Pakistan and Turkey participated in the Pakistan-Turkey Business Opportunities Conference, organised by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (RCCI) in collaboration with All Industrialists & Businessmen Association of Turkey (TUMSIAD) in Istanbul. Over 700 businessmen from Pakistan and representatives of over 150 Turkish companies attended the event.

RCCI President Raja Amir Iqbal made a comprehensive presentation about business opportunities in Pakistan. He urged the Turkish counterparts to take advantage of the conducive investment and business environment in Pakistan. "Pakistan has over 185 billion tons of coal reserves which is equivalent to 618 billion

barrels of crude oil reserves in terms of energy output, while the country has 31.3 trillion cubic meters of natural gas reserves," informed Iqbal.

He urged the businessmen of both countries to play their role to enhance bilateral trade, which was about \$610 million in 2016. Raja Amir Iqbal also briefed the Turkish businessmen about the multibillion-dollar China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project which will transform the entire region into a hub of economic activities.

Charge d' Affairs of Pakistan Syed Ali Asad Gilani in his remarks mentioned that the multi-faceted relationship between Pakistan and Turkey is flourishing in diverse fields. "The growing Turkish involvement in socio-economic development of Pakistan is clear manifestation of the desire of the leadership on both sides to transform this strong political and

cultural relationship into a robust economic partnership," said Gilani. He highlighted that symbols of Turkish corporate footprint on Pakistan's economic landscape are emerging fast. Metro buses, solid waste management, Turkish participation in construction of different portions of Motorway, Arcelik's investment of US \$258 million for acquisition of Dawlance, Zorlu's undertaking of 300MW of Solar power generation in Quaid e Azam Solar Energy Park, and Hayat Kimya's plans to invest US \$ 50 million for setting up a diaper manufacturing facility in Pakistan are some of the examples of growing Turkish investment in Pakistan, he added. Charge d' Affairs also lauded RCCI for its initiative and hoped that the two days event would provide an opportunity for business communities of the two brotherly countries to further closer.

Pakistan Development summit & Expo 2017, Islamabad



Interior Minister, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal cutting Ribbon to Inaugurate Pakistan Development Summit and Expo in Islamabad.



Interior Minister, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal visiting the photo gallery at Pakistan Development Summit and Expo in Islamabad.



Afghanistan's largest embassy to be built in Pakistan

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

Construction work for Afghanistan's largest embassy has been launched in Pakistani capital city Islamabad. A leading Chinese company will build the Afghan embassy complex that will cost nearly 17 million US dollars.

Afghanistan's deputy foreign minister Nasir Ahmad Andisha joined the Chinese ambassador to Pakistan Sun Weidong and Afghan ambassador in Islamabad Omar Zakhilwal at the ground-breaking ceremony of the building in the diplomatic enclave.

Andisha said the new Afghan embassy will be his country's biggest embassy in the world which also reflect Afghanistan's quest for good relations with Pakistan. He also thanked China's help in the construction.

Ambassador Zakhilwal told the ceremony that the construction of the embassy is likely to be completed within two years.

An official of the Anhui Construction Engineering Group told the gathering that the new Afghan embassy compound covers a total land area of 23,800 square meters with complete facilities such as ambassador's residence, residential diplomats apartments, consular section and other required buildings.





98th Anniversary of the Independence of Afghanistan celebrated in Islamabad



H.E. Dr Omar Zakhilwal Ambassador of Afghanistan hosted a reception to celebrate the 98th Anniversary of the Independence of Afghanistan at Serena hotel Islamabad. Deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan H.E. Nasir Ahmad Andisha attended the national day reception along with the chief guest and Federal Minister General Qadir Baloch, National Security Advisor General Nasir Khan Janjua, prominent Pashtoon leaders such as Afrasiab Khattak and Mehmood Khan Achakzai. A large number of ambassadors and other diplomats as well as prominent Pakistanis and afghan citizens, Journalists attended the reception.







The beautiful Islamabad Serena Hotel celebrated 14 August

14th August was celebrated with patriotic zeal and spirits at Islamabad Serena Hotel. The day started with a flag hoisting ceremony attended by the GM and the management with all staff. The hotel was decorated with Pakistan themed lights and decor. The day ended with a beautiful weather where the hotel building glistened against the dark blue skies in green lights.



“A very Happy Independence Day. May this country flourish in peace and prosperity for all the years to come. We stand united against all adversities since 70 years, and going strong each passing day.” Serena Hotel



70th Pakistan Independence Day Celebrations in UAE

The 70th Independence Day of Pakistan was celebrated in UAE with national zeal and fervour. Most important events were Flag Hoisting Ceremonies at the premises of the Embassy of Pakistan, Abu Dhabi and Consulate General of Pakistan, Dubai. A large number of UAE-based Pakistanis including women and children attended the ceremonies.

H.E. Moazzam Ahmad Khan, Ambassador of Pakistan hoisted the national flag in Pakistan Embassy, Abu Dhabi. Independence Day Messages of President H.E. Mamnoon Hussain and Prime Minister H.E. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi were read out.

In his address, H.E. Ambassador Moazzam A. Khan, while felicitating the Pakistanis on the auspicious occasion of Independence Day, recalled the great sacrifices rendered by our forefathers 70 years ago for a separate homeland and touched upon the ideals and aspirations which led to the creation of Pakistanis and are still guiding light for the nation's march to peace and progress. The Ambassador said the day was being celebrated with the conviction that it will be a harbinger of political, economic and social stability. He said that the independence should also be considered as a day of introspection and to ponder over as how we can re-direct our energies to the development of Pakistan to be able to stand tall among the comity of nations.

Referring to the role of Pakistani community in UAE, Ambassador appreciated their contribution in the development of UAE. He particularly appreciated the UAE leadership's special affiliation towards Pakistan and said that the leaders of the two countries were keen on further strengthening bilateral relations. Ambassador also lauded the role of the Pakistani community in supporting the national economy and improving ties between Pakistan and the UAE. He urged the community to pledge that they would continue to strive for making Pakistan a strong and prosperous country moving towards the goal of development, with faith and conviction, unity and discipline.

A photographic exhibition by Pakistani artists, Aroosa and Farhad Ally was also arranged (in Embassy) depicting the breathtaking pictures from Northern areas of Pakistan, especially Hunza, as well as the culture and civilization bringing to life trivial phenomenon of the ordinary and unknown which added beauty to the event. Moreover, Children from Pakistani schools and members of the Christian community sang national songs with enthusiasm.

Another flag hoisting ceremony in UAE was held in the premises of Pakistan Consulate in Dubai. Brig (Retd) Syed Javed Hassan, Consul General hoisted the National Flag while the National Anthem was played. The Messages of President and Prime Minister were read out to the audience.

Speaking on the occasion, Consul General Brig (Retd) Syed Javed Hassan extended his warmest felicitations to the Pakistani community residing in the Emirates. He called for fostering unity for development of the country and inculcating a profound sense of solidarity. He said the overseas Pakistani should endeavor to emanate the message to the world that Pakistanis believe in peaceful coexistence and want to progress as a forward-looking nation. He commended the Pakistani community for playing a vital role in the progress and development of the UAE.

H.E. Consul General recalled the excellent fraternal relations between Pakistan and the UAE and stated that the two countries have always stood by each other. He expressed his gratitude to the UAE leadership for their consistent support to the people of Pakistan. He hoped that Pakistan's relations with the UAE will continue to grow from strength to strength under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister, H.E. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, President of the UAE, H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum.

Cake-cutting ceremonies were held at both places to commemorate the Independence Day. Independence Day ceremonies concluded with prayers for progress, prosperity and solidarity of the country.

The Embassy would also be hosting a Grand Reception in the evening at Pakistan



Ambassador Moazzam Ahmed Khan hoisting flag of Pakistan on the eve of 70th Pakistan Independence Day at Pakistan Embassy Abu Dhabi

Association Dubai Auditorium in Dubai. The reception is expected to be attended by a large number of foreign dignitaries and prominent Pakistanis. H.E. Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister for Culture and Knowledge Development would grace the occasion as Chief Guest. The occasion would be used for ground-breaking ceremony of Pakistan Medical Centre at Pakistan Association Dubai (PAD) premises. The medical Centre upon completion would be providing low-cost and free of cost medical facilities for expats in the UAE. In addition, a photographic exhibition titled "Pakistan-UAE Journey of Friendship" highlighting key high-level exchange of visits through 45 years of diplomatic relations will be inaugurated featuring over 50 photographs of historic value. The event will also feature conferment of recognition to prominent Pakistanis in the UAE who have done important work in various fields over the number of years and excelled in their respective fields.

Syed Javed Hassan, Consul-General of Pakistan, with other officials during the cake-cutting ceremony at the Pakistani consulate.





Charge d' Affaires of Pakistan hoisting Pakistan flag on the occasion of 70th Independence Anniversary of Pakistan in Ankara.

70th Independence Day of Pakistan Celebrated in Turkey

The 70th Independence Day of Pakistan was celebrated in Ankara at an impressive ceremony at Pakistan Embassy in Ankara. Charge d'Affaires of Pakistan to Turkey, Syed Ali Asad Gilani, raised the Pakistan flag on the tune of the National Anthem in presence of the

Pakistani community, Pakistani students and Embassy officials and their families, says a press release received here today from Ankara.

The special messages of the President of Pakistan Mamnoon Hussain and Prime Minister

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi were read out on the occasion. Pakistani leadership in their separate messages paid glowing tributes to the sacrifices of our ancestors. They expressed strong resolve to make Pakistan a cradle of peace, brotherhood and a welfare society which will be an example for the world to follow.

In his remarks on the occasion, Syed Ali Asad Gilani paid rich tributes to the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the sacrifices of our forefathers, which resulted in the creation of Pakistan 70 years ago. He said Pakistan's national interests should be above our personal interests. We will not hesitate to make any sacrifice for our motherland, he added.

"Participation of Turkish Air Force's "Solo Turk" in independence day celebrations of Pakistan through its unique performance in air show has won the hearts of the entire Pakistani nation," said Charge d'Affaires Ali Asad Gilani. Solo Turk team pilots, Captain Erhan Gunar and Captain Serdar Dogan are participating in largest ever air show in the country's history, being held at Islamabad and Karachi today. Ali Asad Gilani informed the participants that Pakistan and Turkey would soon issue a joint postage stamp as part of the celebrations of the 70th Anniversary of Pakistan's Independence as well as the 70th Year of Pakistan-Turkey Diplomatic relations.

Afterwards, flanked by Pakistani children, Charge d'Affaires Ali Asad Gilani cut the Independence Day cake.

70th Independence Day of Pakistan celebrated in Beijing

70th Independence Day of Pakistan marked with a flag hoisting ceremony was celebrated at the Embassy of Pakistan, Beijing with great fervor and enthusiasm.

The event showcased patriotic zeal, wherein founding fathers and martyrs of the nation were remembered who had given sacrifices to secure independence from foreign rule.

The event began with the recitation of verses from the Holy Quran. Ambassador then raised the National flag to the mesmerising tone of the national anthem. Ambassador also read out the messages of the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan. The President in his message said "We need to reiterate our strong resolve to always uphold the values of determination and dedication for the objective of development of Pakistan".

Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in his message urged the nation to remember sacrifices of the martyrs as "Millions of Muslims

rendered sacrifices for our as well as the future of the posterity. Today we are treading the path of prosperity and progress in a peaceful and dignified country because of those sacrifices. We may belong to different tribes, fraternities and ethnicities; we may be working in different spheres of national life; our political vision and thinking can be different and our economic vision may have different perspectives but ascendancy of national interests and invincible defense are common objectives of the entire nation, for which we have to make collective endeavours".

Ambassador Masood Khalid congratulated the Pakistani community in China on this occasion and said that Pakistani nation is today fully united and determined to meet all challenges and continue its march towards progress and development. He recalled the sacrifices given by our fore fathers for the creation of Pakistan and urged adherence to Quaid-e-Azam's message of Unity, Faith and Discipline to



promote national unity and cohesion. Pakistani children performed the national songs and a cake was cut on this occasion.

70th Independence Day of Pakistan Celebrated in Belgium and Luxembourg



Pakistan Ambassador to the EU, Belgium and Luxembourg H.E. Naghmana A. Hashmi hoisting National flag on the 70th Independence Day Anniversary of Pakistan in Brussels.

To mark Pakistan's 70th anniversary of Independence, Pakistani community in Belgium and Luxembourg participated in large numbers at the flag hoisting ceremony at the Embassy of Pakistan Brussels and celebrated the day

with full fervour. Pakistan's Ambassador to the European Union, Belgium and Luxembourg Mrs Naghmana A. Hashmi raised the flag while national anthem played in the background. In her address Ambassador Hashmi paid tributes

to the leadership of Quaid-I-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah who led Muslims of Sub-Continent in their struggle for an independent home land. Referring to the huge sacrifices made by the Muslims of Sub –continent for their independence and those of civilians and armed forces of Pakistan in past few decades, Ambassador Hashmi called upon young people to build up nation through hard work and unity among ranks and files.

Ambassador Hashmi reminded of inclusive vision of Quaid-I-Azam that envisaged respect for all the religions and ethnicities in Pakistan. The spirit of unity irrespective of cast and creed was the greatest need of the hour, she asserted.

Messages of President and Prime Minister were read out by Deputy Head of Mission Mr Asif Memon and Minister Economic Mr Omar Hameed, respectively. Poetess Dr Nikhat Iftikhar who had specially flown from the UK rendered poetry recitation on Pakistan and Kashmir. Whereas Farah Khan and a group of students from Ghent led by Saba Kazmi presented national songs.

Community members from different cities of Belgium including Brussels, Ghent, Liege and Leuven as well as Luxembourg participated in the event with full fervour.

Children dressed up in green and white presented national songs. Certificates and prizes were distributed among the participants of national songs and Quiz competition.

70th Independence Day of Pakistan celebrated in Cairo

A flag Hoisting ceremony was held in Embassy of Pakistan Cairo on 14 August 2017, to mark the 70th Independence Anniversary of Pakistan. Pakistani community resident in Egypt and representatives of local print and electronic media participated in the event.

Messages of President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, on the occasion, were read out to the audience. Addressing the gathering, Ambassador Mushtaq Ali Shah shed light on the historical bilateral relations between Pakistan and Egypt. He congratulated the Pakistani community on its 70th independence anniversary.

On this occasion, the students of the Pakistan International School Cairo (PISC) gave a colorful performance of folk dances to the tunes of national songs.

Leading daily newspaper 'Egyptian Gazette' carried special supplements on the occasion.

Later the Ambassador gave interviews to the local print and electronic media, in which he underlined the strong bonds of fraternity and mutually beneficial cooperation that had steadily grown in the past few years in all domains. He expressed his confidence that relations between the two countries would grow more in the years ahead.

The ceremony ended with the customary light refreshments for the participants. The gathering was thoroughly enjoyed by the community and all participants. To celebrate the 70th anniversary a Pakistani movie screening has also been planned in the evening of 14th August 2017 in Cairo Opera House.



Ambassador of Pakistan to Arab Republic of Egypt, H.E. Mushtaq Ali Shah, hoisting flag on the occasion of 70th Independence Anniversary of Pakistan at embassy of Cairo.



70th Independence Day marked in Colombo

The High Commission of Pakistan in Sri Lanka and the Pakistani community celebrated 70th Independence Anniversary of Pakistan in a befitting manner.

The Acting High Commissioner of Pakistan in Sri Lanka, Dr. Sarfraz Ahmed Khan Sipra hoisted the national flag of Pakistan at a colorful ceremony held at the Pakistan High Commission here this morning to mark the occasion. Later, the messages of the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan were read out to the participants.

In his message, the Acting High Commissioner Dr. Sarfraz Sipra said that Pakistan is our identity that we earned through immense sacrifices. He underlined that countless people gave their blood to kindle the light of freedom and millions had to migrate for this purpose. It is a day of happiness and a day of renewing our pledges that we will continue to struggle with unity and oneness for the objectives for which Pakistan was created, he added.

On Sri Lanka-Pakistan relations, Dr. Sipra said that it is a matter of great satisfaction that Pakistan and Sri Lanka continue to maintain their traditionally close and mutually beneficial relations in all fields. The process of bilateral cooperation has been greatly assisted by ever increasing multifaceted interaction both at the level of people and leaders of our two countries. He lauded that the two countries have achieved development, progress and prosperity over

the last 70 years through mutual cooperation and expressed the hope that it will continue in the years to come. On the occasion, Dr. Sipra formally presented the official photograph of the investiture ceremony held at the President office in Islamabad to Mr. Ifthikhar Aziz where he was awarded Tamgha-e-Khidmat in recognition of his meritorious service to Pakistan. Mr. Aziz has the distinguished honor to serve as the President of Pakistan Sri Lanka Friendship, Trade and Investment Association for the 8th consecutive year.

This year, Pakistan is celebrating 70th anniversary of independence. The High Commission of Pakistan has planned a number of activities including launch of a book "An Enduring Friendship: Sri Lanka and Pakistan" today evening. Painting Competition on "Buddhist and Gandhara Art and Cultural Heritage of Pakistan" open for all Sri Lankan citizens, Pakistan Film Festival and many other activities in this regard are also planned.

The flag hoisting ceremony was attended by a large number of participants from various walks of life including members of the Sri Lanka Pakistan Friendship, Trade and Investment Association, Sri Lanka Pakistan Business Council, prominent Sri Lankan personalities and the Pakistani community based in Sri Lanka.

A traditional Pakistani breakfast was also served to the attendees.

Independence Day Ceremony at Pakistan High Commission Islamabad



A dignified flag hoisting ceremony was held at the High commission for Pakistan, Canberra to mark the 70th Independence Day. The ceremony commenced with recitation from the Holy Quran, followed by playing of national anthem. The flag was hoisted by the High Commissioner Naela Chohan.

Messages of the President and the Prime Minister were read out and were also circulated to the participants for their perusal.

Speaking at the occasion, the High commissioner H.E Naela Chohan underscored Pakistan's achievements including the rapid and extensive economic turnaround and successes in the fight against terrorism which have resulted in improved security situation. Continuing growth and reforms have strengthened Pakistan's economy and boosted the investor's confidence, providing a sound and reliable basis for enhanced trade and commerce.

She also highlighted the situation in Kashmir and called upon the international community to play its role in preventing the deteriorating human rights situation in the Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir, which has serious implications for the regional peace and security.

While appreciating the Pakistani community for its positive contribution to the development of Australia, she urged them to continue to play its role in acting as a bridge in fostering closer relations between the two friendly countries.

The High commissioner expressed satisfaction over the status of bilateral cooperation. Special prayers for peace, progress and prosperity of Pakistan were offered. Tribute to beloved homeland was paid by the community members in reciting poetry and Milli Naghma. The community appreciated the improved services at the High Commission and professionalism of the officers. The event was very well attended by Australian parliamentarians, community members from Canberra, Sydney; and undertraining defence forces officers.



70th Independence Day of Pakistan observed in Denmark

The Independence Day of Pakistan was observed with great zeal and fervour in Denmark. The main event of the celebrations was the flag hoisting ceremony held at the Embassy of Pakistan in Copenhagen, said a press release received here. The flag hoisting was performed by Ambassador Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi. The ceremony was attended by a large number of members of the Pakistani community representing various walks of life including professionals, academicians, media men, politicians, poets and students from

Copenhagen and different regions of Denmark. Syed Raza Ali Gillani, Punjab Minister for Higher Education also participated in the event.

Ambassador Gardezi read the messages by the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan on the occasion.

In his remarks, the ambassador highlighted the improved law and order situation in Pakistan and the economic progress which deserved greater international recognition. He highlighted Pakistan's desire for peace in the



region; unfortunately India was using harsh repressive measures to curb the Kashmiri freedom struggle for self-determination. A photo exhibition highlighting the timeline of freedom movement of Pakistan was also displayed on the occasion.

70th Independence Day of Pakistan celebrated in JEDDAH



Shehryar Akbar Khan Consulate General of Pakistan in Jeddah addressing on the occasion of Flag Hoisting Ceremony to mark the 70th Independence Day of Pakistan in Jeddah.

Consulate General of Pakistan in Jeddah celebrated the 70th Anniversary of Independence with national zeal and fervour. The Consul General of Pakistan Mr. Shehryar Akbar Khan raised the Pakistani flag, to mark the day, in front of large number of Pakistani community who had arrived from different part of Jeddah to participate in the event. National Anthem was played while the National Flag was being raised. A smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Army and Pakistan Navy was also

present at the occasion.

Later addressing the gathering, the Consul General said that this day is a reminder of the heroic struggle undertaken by the Muslims of the Sub-continent under the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah for a separate homeland where they could live their lives with freedom and dignity. It is my firm belief that with honesty of purpose and single-minded devotion to the national cause we are bound to succeed in our mission of elevating

Pakistan to its rightful place in the comity of nations, he added.

The Consul General appreciated the role of Pakistani community in development of Pakistan as well as Saudi Arabia. He said that our community is true representatives of Pakistan and they have earned a good name for themselves as well as Pakistan through their hard work. They act as a bridge of friendship between the two brotherly countries, he added. He gave example of Shah Farman who saved lives of about 14 persons in flood before his martyrdom. The Consul general also thanked His Royal Majesty King Salman bin Abdul Aziz and the Saudi Government for hosting a large number of Pakistani community and providing them opportunity to play their constructive role in development of both the countries. Earlier Mr. Saeed Sarwar Head of Chancery read out the message of President of Pakistan and Mr. Shaiq Bhutto (Consul) read out the message of Prime Minister of Pakistan for the occasion. The Consul General, surrounded by children clad in Pakistani dresses and holding Pakistani flags, cut the Cake to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Pakistan. Pakistani children also sang National songs which enthralled the audience.

70th Independence Day marked in Kabul



Governor Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Mr. Iqbal Zafar Jhagra and Ambassador Mr. Zahid Nasrullah Khan hoisting the National Flag on the 70th Anniversary of Pakistan in Embassy of Pakistan, Kabul.

The 70th Independence Anniversary of Pakistan was celebrated in Embassy of Pakistan with great national fervor and enthusiasm. The flag hoisting ceremony commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran followed by the National Anthem and hoisting of Pakistan's national flag by the Governor of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, Mr. Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, who was the chief guest of the ceremony, and Ambassador Mr. Zahid Nasrullah Khan.

Pakistan envoy Zahid Nasrullah Khan welcoming the Special Guest, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, impressed upon the Embassy officials and members of the armed forces that Pakistan has made unprecedented progress in a short span of 70 years and a bright future awaits the country. The Ambassador read out the messages of the President and Prime Minister which were received with applause by the audience.

Speaking on the occasion, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said that Pakistan had made remarkable progress during the last seventy years in the fields of education, defence and science and technology. He congratulated the participants and the people of Pakistan on the 70th Independence Day Anniversary of Pakistan. He underlined the need for closer cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan, saying that Afghanistan is very important neighbor of Pakistan. He paid rich tribute to the security forces of Pakistan who have offered immense sacrifices against the war on terrorism.



Governor Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Mr. Iqbal Zafar Jhagra, Ambassador Zahid Nasrullah Khan, Pir Hamid Gillani and Afghan Minister for Border & Tribal Affairs, Gul Agha Sherzai, are cutting cake on the 70th Independence Anniversary of Pakistan in the Embassy of Pakistan, Kabul.



Ambassador Mr. Zahid Nasrullah Khan addressing the participants on the occasion of 70th Independence Anniversary of Pakistan in Embassy of Pakistan, Kabul.

70th Independence Day marked in Dhaka

Pakistan's 70th Independence Day was observed at the Pakistan High Commission, Dhaka, with a national spirit and enthusiasm, says a press release received here today from Dhaka.

A ceremony was held at the High Commission, where a large number of Pakistani community participated with great fervor.

High Commissioner, Rafiuzzaman Siddiqui, hoisted the flag of Pakistan at the Chancery and messages of the President and Prime Minister were read out by the High Commissioner and the Deputy High Commissioner respectively.

Addressing the ceremony, the High Commissioner felicitated the fellow Pakistanis on the auspicious occasion of 70th Independence Day of Pakistan. He emphasized the need for following the golden principles of Faith, Unity and Discipline laid down by the Father of the Nation, the Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, to make our dear homeland a model for the whole world.

70th Independence Day of Pakistan celebrated in Singapore

The Independence Day, 14th August 2017, was celebrated in Singapore with traditional fervor and national spirit. The day began with the hoisting of the flag by the High Commissioner, Nasrullah Khan. The officers and officials of the High Commission, as well as a cross section of Pakistani community/diaspora attended the ceremony.

The messages of the President and Prime Minister were read out by the Press Counsellor and Head of Chancery respectively. The High Commissioner, in his address, highlighted the importance of the day and the sacrifices made by our fore fathers to attain an independent homeland. He outlined the vision of the Quaid e Azam and Allama Iqbal and emphasized that to ensure Pakistan's outstanding place in the comity of nations, we as a nation need to follow, in letter and spirit, the golden principles of "Unity, Faith and Discipline" in all walks of life, no matter where we are. He stressed that each and every Pakistani is an ambassador of Pakistan. We are all Pakistan. Pakistan is a reflection of all of us.

The High Commissioner also focused on the progress that Pakistan has made over the last 70 years in every field of life. He also complimented the contributions of the Pakistan community to project a positive image of Pakistan in Singapore.



Syed Ibne Abbas, Pakistan High Commissioner to the UK hoisting the National Flag on Independence Day at Pakistan High Commission London.

70th Independence Day marked at the Pakistan High Commission, London

To mark the special occasion of 70th Independence Day of Pakistan, a Flag Hoisting ceremony was held at the Pakistan High Commission, London. The cultural component made the ceremony stunning with the largest gathering ever assembled at the High Commission. The occasion also marked 70th Independence Anniversary of Pakistan, for which the High Commission chalked out an elaborate calendar of events for the whole year to celebrate this milestone in the national history. H.E. Syed Ibne Abbas, Pakistan High Commissioner to the UK, unfurled the Pakistani flag to the tunes of National Anthem. In his address on the occasion, the High Commissioner felicitated the community in the UK and all Pakistanis around the world. He paid glowing tribute to the untiring struggle of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Allama Iqbal and other heroes of the Pakistan Movement.

The High Commissioner said: "Pakistan is moving forward despite challenges. Our economy is on upward trajectory, with 5.4 percent growth this year. All institutions are in place and delivering. We are proud of our armed and civil law enforcement agencies that fought courageously against the extremists and terrorists and restored peace in the country, including Karachi, to a great extent as a result of Operation Zarb e Azb and Operation Raddul Fasad under National Action Plan. Pakistan is the frontline country between the forces of darkness and the civilized world. Today we again pay tribute to all our martyrs who laid down their lives during our fight against terrorism." "upward trajectory, with 5.4 percent growth this year. All institutions are in place and delivering. We are proud of our armed and civil law enforcement agencies that fought courageously against the extremists and terrorists and restored peace in the country, including Karachi, to a great extent as a result of Operation Zarb e Azb and Operation Raddul Fasad under National Action Plan. Pakistan is the frontline country between the forces of darkness and the civilized world. Today we again pay tribute to all our martyrs who laid down their lives during our fight

against terrorism." Speaking about the regional peace, the High Commissioner reiterated Pakistan's policy of peaceful neighbourhood and resolution of all outstanding issues including the issue of Kashmir. He stated that Pakistan would continue its political, diplomatic and moral support to the people of Kashmir till they achieve their right to self-determination as enshrined in the UN resolutions. neighbourhood and resolution of all outstanding issues including the issue of Kashmir. He stated that Pakistan would continue its political, diplomatic and moral support to the people of Kashmir till they achieve their right to self-determination as enshrined in the UN resolutions. The High Commissioner termed the relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom exemplary and productive. He also appreciated the role of the diaspora in cementing these relations.

The High Commissioner also thanked the community for fully participating in the celebrations planned by the High Commission to mark the 70th Independence Anniversary of Pakistan. He said next of the series of events is Anglo Sufi Musical ISHQ, on the theme of folk lore Heer Ranjha, to be staged at London's historical theatre Sadler's Wells from 7-9 Sept. 2017. The Grand Finale of the celebrations, said the High Commissioner, would be installation of Quaid-i-Azam's Bust at his alma mater Lincoln's Inn at the end of this year. The idea of the Bust was much appreciated by the community present on the occasion. Installation of Quaid-i-Azam's Bust at his alma mater Lincoln's Inn at the end of this year. The idea of the Bust was much appreciated by the community present on the occasion.

The messages of the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan for the occasion were read out. In their messages, both the leaders felicitated the nation and emphasized on unity on common objectives of the entire nation.

Many British friends of Pakistan and representatives of the British government witnessed the ceremony.

70th Independence Day Celebrated at Pakistan High Commission, New Delhi



The 70th Independence Day of Pakistan was celebrated with national spirit and enthusiasm at the Pakistan High Commission, New Delhi.

The Pakistan flag was raised by Acting High Commissioner Syed Haider Shah at an elegant and impressive flag hoisting ceremony held on the Chancery's lush green lawns.

Syed Haider Shah, Acting High Commissioner read out the Independence Day messages from the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

A female student of Pakistan High Commission School Ms. Iman Sarwar delivered a speech, while other students of the Pakistan High Commission School presented national songs and tableaux.

Mrs. Palwasha Haider, wife of the Acting High Commissioner, gave away prizes and gifts to the teachers and children of the school.

In the end Acting High Commission & Mrs. Acting High Commission also performed the cake cutting ceremony on 70th Anniversary of Pakistan.

70th Independence Day of Pakistan celebrated in New York



Pakistan's Independence Day was celebrated with traditional fervour and enthusiasm at Pakistan House. The national flag was hoisted by the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi, as the national anthem was played. The ceremony began with a recitation from the Holy Quran.

Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi read out the Independence Day message by President Mamnoon Hussain and Raja Ali Ejaz, Consul General New York read out the message from Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi.

The ceremony concluded by a 'dua' for the prosperity and progress of Pakistan.

The event was attended by officers and staff of the Mission and the Consulate General along with their families, and members of the Pakistani diaspora.

Pakistan Mission to UN marked Pakistan Independence Day with the traditional flag hoisting. Ambassador Maleeha Lodhi cuts the cake at the ceremony in New York.



Pakistan Ambassador to UN, Dr. Maleeha Lodhi hoisting the National flag at the Pakistan Independence Day ceremony held at Pakistan Mission, New York.

70th Independence Day of Pakistan Celebrated in Ottawa

High Commissioner Tariq Azim Khan hoisted, the national flag at the High Commission for Pakistan at Ottawa to mark 70th Anniversary of Pakistan's Independence. National anthem was played on the occasion.

While addressing the Independence Day ceremony the High Commissioner said that Pakistan is progressing in all areas of life and we should be proud of our resilient nation. He said that there are areas which need improvement but slowly and steadily we are making progress.

He said that our founding fathers built the Country from scratch at the time of independence, we lacked formal institutional capacity, and we had no real capital. Yet in last 70 years we have progressed and developed to a stage that today we are a nuclear capable missile power, he added. "We have consolidated our heavy mechanical industry and now building state of the art submarines and fighter jets.

Our industry has not only fulfilled the domestic requirements but we are also exporting our products to other countries" he underlined. He urged the community members to work together for building true image of Pakistan which is reflective of our national strides. To commemorate Pakistan's Independence Day at the Canadian Parliament, the Canadian Armed Forces presented ceremonial guard. The High Commissioner Tariq Azim Khan and the High Commission Officials witnessed the Canadian military drill from the VIP section. A huge number of Canadians and community members were also present on the occasion.

It may be mentioned that the Commanding Officer of Ceremonial Guard on behalf of all soldiers extended invitation to the High Commissioner to view the change of guard ceremony on 70th anniversary of Pakistan's Independence.



High Commissioner Tariq Azim Khan hoisting Pakistan flag at High Commission of Pakistan at Ottawa.

70th Independence Day of Pakistan celebrated in Paris

An elegant flag hoisting ceremony was held at the Pakistan Embassy in Paris to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Pakistan's Independence. A large number of Pakistani community along with their families attended the ceremony.

Special messages of the President and the Prime Minister were read out. Ambassador

Moin ul Haque in his address congratulated the Pakistan community and entire Pakistani nation on this historic occasion. He said that 70th Independence Day marks a milestone in our remarkable journey of making Pakistan a peaceful and stronger country. He lauded the untiring efforts and sacrifices rendered by

Muslim of India under the dynamic leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to achieve freedom and a separate homeland for the Muslim of the sub-continent. He expressed confidence that all Pakistanis would work together for the country's growth and development and to realize the vision of our founding fathers for making Pakistan a modern and prosperous state. Young Pakistani girls and boys clad in national dresses and holding national flags sang the patriotic songs.



An elegant flag hosting was held at the Pakistan Embassy in Paris to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of Pakistan's Independence. A large number of Paksitani community alongwith their families attended the ceremony.

70th Independence Day of Pakistan celebrated in Tehran

Pakistan's 70th Independence Day was celebrated with full zeal at the Residence of Ambassador of Pakistan in Tehran. A large number of Pakistani community participated in the celebrations. Ambassador Asif Durrani hoisted the National flag accompanied by the National Anthem. The messages of the President and the Prime Minister were read out on the occasion. The Ambassador, highlighting the historical importance of the day, paid tributes to the founding father of the Nation Qaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and

other leaders of the Pakistani movement whose sacrifices led to the creation of an independent country in South Asia.

While congratulating the Pakistani community on the 70th Independence anniversary of Pakistan, the Ambassador urged them to renew their commitment to serve the country with dedication. "During the past seven decades, Pakistan has faced multiple challenges, but with the grace of Almighty Allah, Pakistan has succeeded in overcoming these challenges and embarked on a journey towards a modern,

liberal, progressive and tolerant democratic society."

Commenting on Pakistan-Iran relations, Ambassador Durrani said that the relations between the two countries have very deep religious, cultural and historical bonds and anchored in strong foundation. He expressed the hope that these relations will grow further under the present leadership of the two countries.

Students from Pakistan International School and College, Tehran in their speeches paid homage to the father of the nation and the leaders of the freedom movement. A group of children presented national songs on the occasion.



Ambassador of Pakistan Asif Durrani hoisting the National flag on Pakistan's 70th Independence Day celebrations in Tehran.

70th Independence Day of Pakistan celebrated in Poland

To celebrate the Independence Day of Pakistan, a graceful flag hoisting ceremony was held in the embassy of Pakistan Warsaw, Poland on 14 August, 2017. The program was attended by community members living in Warsaw, Pakistani students studying in Polish Universities and Embassy officials and their families. The ceremony started with recitation of the Holy Quran. Charge d' Affaires, Shifaat Kaleem hoisted the national flag. Messages of the President and Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan were read out by the

Charge d' Affaires, says a press release received here today from Poland.

Mr. Shifaat Kaleem congratulated the community members on the Independence Day and said that the day reminded us to renew our commitment to serve our country with dedication and play the due role in its progress and development. He emphasized that struggle and sacrifices of our forefather for independence should not be forgotten and we must work hard to achieve the cherished

objectives of our elders to make Pakistan a strong and prosperous country. Charge d' Affaires said that Pakistanis living abroad were a great asset for the country. They are not only playing an important role in the economic development of our motherland, but are also instrumental in projecting the soft and true image of Pakistan and highlighting our rich and diverse culture to the Polish people.

At the end, Pakistani food was served to the guests.



70th Independence Day of Pakistan celebrated in Washington DC



Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry hoisting the National flag at the Pakistan Independence Day Ceremony at the Embassy of Pakistan, Washington DC.

The Embassy of Pakistan, Washington DC commenced 70th Independence Anniversary celebrations of Pakistan by organizing “Open House” at the Embassy of Pakistan. Pakistan Ambassador to the US Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry inaugurated the festivities which will continue during the coming months.

On this auspicious occasion, Ambassador Aizaz Chaudhry congratulated the entire nation on the 70th Independence Day of Pakistan. While speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Chaudhry paid rich tribute to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Founder of Pakistan as due to his relentless efforts, Muslims of the Subcontinent were able to secure a separate homeland for themselves. Ambassador also admired the great Muslim philosopher and poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal who first presented the idea for a separate homeland for the Muslims of the Subcontinent.

Commenting on the tremendous sacrifices rendered by the Muslims of the Subcontinent, Ambassador Chaudhry stated that Pakistan is a home to 200 million people who are blessed with great potential and are firmly committed to the progress and well-being of their country. He urged Pakistani Americans to contribute towards development and progress of the entire nation.

Ambassador Chaudhry underscored that Pakistan despite making a modest start in the beginning after gaining independence, has made tremendous strides in all domains over last 70 years. Pakistan with a passage of time has attained a prominent position in the comity of nations. At present, Pakistan is an atomic power having tremendous resources including a dynamic & intelligent youth.

In the recent years, we have successfully reversed the tide of terrorism where as other countries in the world are still grappling with the scourge of terrorism. Recently, Pakistan has witnessed a tremendous economic turnaround and all fundamental economic indicators are projecting upwards which is a great achievement, he added.

While commenting on Pak-US relations, Ambassador Chaudhry said that Pakistan and the US would be celebrating 70th anniversary of friendship this year. Pakistan attaches great value to its relations with the United States spanning over seven decades and we are committed to further strengthen these bilateral relations. He urged the Pakistani Americans to

act like a bridge between country of their origin and the country of their residence. He further added that Pakistani Americans should actively participate in the mainstream politics and play a constructive role in the peace & prosperity of the US. He emphasized that the second generation Pakistani Americans must stay connected with their motherland while actively participating in all facets of American polity including political & socio-economic sectors.

On the occasion, national songs were played by young Pakistani singers which enthralled the distinguished guests particularly the younger generation. A Group of Pakistani performers presented regional & folk dances. A mesmerizing Tabla performance was given by Nabeel Riaz.

A Cultural Unity Show on the theme of ‘Rhythm of Unity’ was also arranged to pay tribute to the rich cultural heritage of Pakistan.

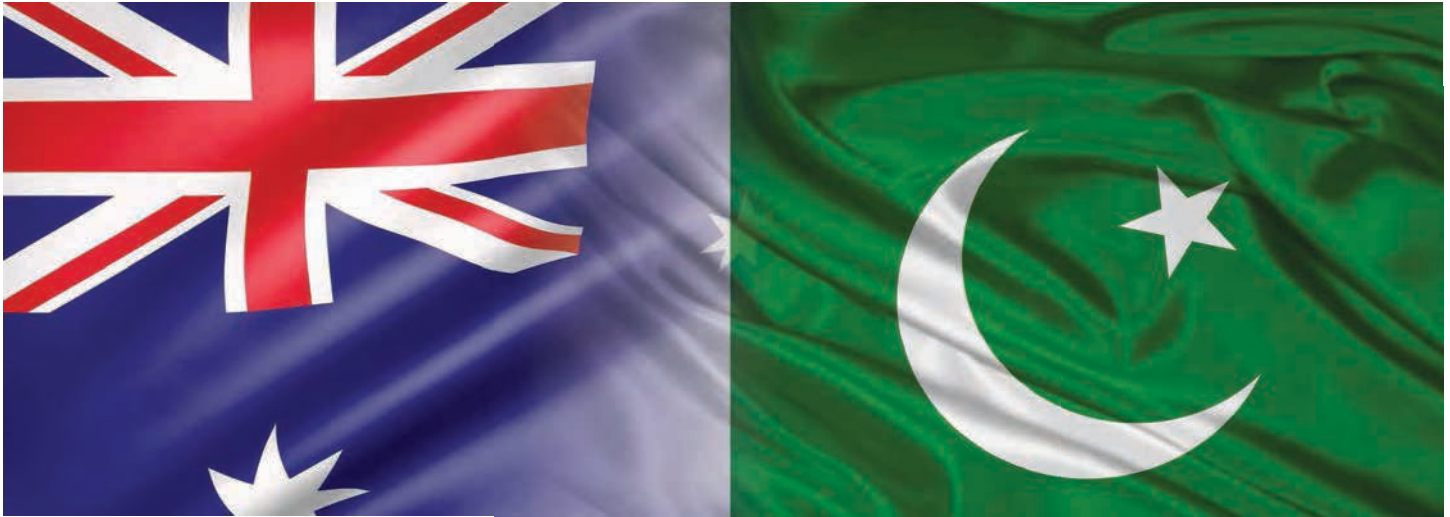
The traditional Pakistani stalls were also setup which attracted many Pakistani American visitors. Young children in traditional dresses of various parts of the country were one of the major attractions of the event.

Towards the end, Ambassador Chaudhry remarked that we should celebrate our successes on the 70th independence anniversary and learn from our mistakes in order to march forward as a great nation. Ambassador prayed that Pakistan may make progress by leaps and bounds.

The “Open House” event was celebrated with traditional zeal and fervor by Pakistani Americans at the Embassy of Pakistan. A large number of Pakistani and American visitors attended the event today which exhibited true colours of Pakistan & deeply appreciated the warmth and hospitality extended by the Embassy officials.



Pakistan Ambassador to the US Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry addressing at the 70th Independence Anniversary celebrations of Pakistan at the Embassy of Pakistan.



Pakistan launching Consulate General at Melbourne

By M.Saeed Yousafzai, Agency

The Government of Pakistan has decided to establish a Consulate General in Melbourne. It was formally launched by H.E. Ms Naela Chohan, on 12 August 2017.

The event coincided with the commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of Pakistan's Independence and the Seventieth year of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Australia.

It was an important occasion to underscore the interest of the Government of Pakistan to further strengthen the relations with Australia and to promote bilateral trade, investment and increased cooperation in education, agriculture and health sectors. In addition to that the Consulate General, once established, would facilitate the ever-growing Pakistani diaspora in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. Currently, more than 40% of Pakistani students in Australia are enrolled in Victorian Institutions.

Hon. Bruce Atkinson, President of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria was the Chief Guest at the event. Hon. Robin Scott MP, Minister of Finance and Multicultural Affairs of the Government of Victoria and Hon. Colin Brooks, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria were the guests of honour. They welcomed the establishment of the Consulate General and congratulated the people of Pakistan on the 70th anniversary of their independence. The importance of promoting bilateral relations including parliamentary exchanges was highlighted and the positive role of Pakistani diaspora in progress and prosperity of Victoria was also appreciated.

The High Commissioner in her address stated that since her arrival in Australia she had been unrelenting in her efforts to fulfil the promise



she had made to the community on opening of Consulate General of Pakistan. She informed them that a very good officer had been nominated as Pakistan's first Consul General in Melbourne Sardar Adnan Rashid, who would be resuming his responsibilities soon. The High Commissioner also highlighted the various areas of cooperation between Pakistan and Australia in general and Victoria and Punjab, in particular. High Commissioner Chohan expressed the hope that Parliamentary Friendship Groups will be established in the Parliaments of the two States and highlighted the fact that currently 40% of Pakistani students in Australia were enrolled in various educational institutions of Victoria. The High Commissioner lauded the community for its positive role in not only progress and development of Victoria but also in acting as a

strong bridge between the two countries.

The High Commissioner also announced that awards would be given to the Pakistanis residing in Australia who had excelled in different fields. In this regard, the High Commissioner requested the community members to nominate those Pakistanis who had attained excellence in different walks of life in Australia for which voting would be done by the Pakistani diaspora across Australia. The successful candidates would be awarded by the High Commission.

It was a very well represented event in which members of the diplomatic corps, Australian parliamentarians, senior officials, representatives of all the major community Associations and media participated.

New building of the Consulate of Pakistan in Bradford, Inaugurated

By Mian Asadullah

Pakistan High Commissioner to the United Kingdom (UK) Syed Ibne Abbas Wednesday inaugurated the new building of the Consulate of Pakistan in Bradford, UK. New building has been rented to provide better consular services to the community, it is on the ground floor and is equipped with all modern facilities.



H.E. Syed Abbas, Pakistan High Commissioner to the UK at Independence celebrations organised by Pakistan Community Centre in Reading.

Ambassador of Turkey H.E. Sadik Babur Girgin, CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Bolani and General Manager Serena hotels Michel A Galopin cutting ribbon during opening ceremony of Culinary Art Festival at Serena Hotels.



Vice Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Asad Abdur Rehman Khan Lodhi, CEO Serena Hotel Aziz Bolani along with spouses pose for a group photo during a premiere of documentary “Dancing with Snow” organized by Ski Federation of Pakistan in collaboration with Serena Hotel.



Attractions of Azad Kashmir

Azad Kashmir is home to places that forces you to marvel in the glory of fascinating natural beauty.

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

Dhirkot is a town in Bagh District, Azad Kashmir, Pakistan. It is located 25 km from Kohala, 15 km from Chamankot, and 132 kilometers from Islamabad.

Dhirkot is a popular tourist resort due to its easy access. Bracing altitude 5,499 feet (1,676 m), mountainous landscape and densely clam forest make its very charming and attractive. The town is linked with all parts of Azad Kashmir by black top roads and direct transport services. A Forest rest house, three Tourist Huts and a Log Hut are located here for tourists stay. Dhirkot is famous for fruits, especially apples and apricots.



Neela Butt is a tourist resort is located 6 kilometers (3.7 mi) from Dhirkot at the height of 6,600 feet (2,000 m). A beautiful tourist rest house is located here for tourists stay. "Neela Butt", a tall majestic hill with a heavenly view. According to legend, this is the place where the initiators of Kashmir's freedom struggle gathered and late Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan (former President and PM AJK), later popularly known as Mujahid e Awal, fired the first bullet. Hence, bestowing this location with deep historical significance for the Kashmiris. It would be no exaggeration to name this location the heart of the freedom struggle.



Ganga Choti is a scenic peak near the towns of Sudhan Gali and Bani Minhasan in Bagh District, Azad Kashmir. It is situated in the Pir Panjal Range and is the end point of the Panjal Mastan National Park which is well known in Azad Kashmir for its scenic landscapes. This national park is spread from Pir Kanthi to Ganga Choti and passes through the villages of Khawaja, Jabbarh Ratnoi and Kotla. Weather is very pleasant in summer with the maximum temperature going to 15 °C (59 °F). There are many tourist places which attract the tourist, Ganga Choti and sudan gali. There are many rest houses and hotels for tourists. There are many waterfalls and fresh water for swimming.





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