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Chief of the Naval Staff



In the South Asia, Pakistan is the best partner to trade with Nigeria in Africa continent

H.E. Maj Gen (retd) Ashimiyu Adebayo Olaniyi

High Commissioner of Nigeria to Pakistan



We value Denmark's role in promoting relations with Pakistan, especially in the EU fora

H.E. Mr. Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi
Ambassador of Pakistan to Denmark

Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi NI (M)

Reaffirms the resolve of Pakistan Navy to ensure seaward defence of Pakistan & safeguard national maritime interests at all costs

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Trump had threatened to cut off financial aid to countries that voted in favor.**

More than 120 countries defied President Donald Trump and voted in favor of a United Nations General Assembly resolution co-sponsored by Pakistan calling for the United States to drop its recent recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

- 31 1st China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Minister's Dialogue
The three sides reaffirmed their commitment to improving their relations**

Foreign Minister Wang Yi of the People's Republic of China, Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Foreign Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan held the 1st China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue in Beijing, China, says a press release received from Beijing.

- 44 We value Denmark's role in promoting relations with Pakistan, especially in the EU fora, H.E Mr. Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi
Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Denmark**

H.E. Mr. Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi has been a very active and energetic diplomat. He has been appointed as Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Denmark. H.E. Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi presented his credentials to Queen of Denmark Margrethe II in a ceremony at Fredensborg Palace in month of September, 2017.

- 48 In the South Asia, Pakistan is the best partner to trade with Nigeria in Africa continent**

H.E. Maj Gen (Rtd) Ashimiyu Adebayo Olaniyi, the newly appointed High Commissioner of Nigeria to Islamic Republic of Pakistan has presented his credential to President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan H.E. Mamnoon Hussain on November 02, 2017.

- 64 141st birthday anniversary of
Quaid-i-Azam**

"My message to you all is of hope, courage and confidence. Let us mobilize all our resources in a systematic and organized way and tackle the grave issues that confront us with grim determination and discipline worthy of a great nation"

Muhammad Ali Jinnah



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 Chief Editor: Mian Akhtar Hussain
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 Editor/Publisher: Mian Fazal Elahi
 Managing Director: Shahzada Khurram
 Executive Editor: Muhammad Bilal Zafar
 Editor in Chief UK/EU Edition: Mian Assadullah
 Justin Plaza 3, 341London Road, Mitcham, Surrey-CR4 4BE
 Editor Germany, EU Edition: Mian Mubeen Akhtar
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 Web Developer: Liaqat Ali
 Chief Photographer: Sheikh Muhammad Arif
 Ramzan Mughal

Country Director: Fazal Hussain 004540521485
 Copenhagen Denmark: Email: fazal1955@hotmail.com
 Javed Iqbal Butt: Bureau Chief Australia, Newzealand

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Resident Editors
 Eng. Moshin Ali: 1st Floor Office No 50 Gulf Plaza Madina
 Street P.O Box 65454 Jeddah 21556
 Cell: +966-506389895

Bureau Office

Qaisar Masood: Muhammad Athar
 Northern Virginia: Georgia
 Israr Masood: M. Jamil Rathore
 Sydney Australia: Bureau Chief Jeddah KSA
 Shahid Akbar Toor: Cell: +966-502583608
 Vehari

Mr. Muhammad Muzzammilullah Mian

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Roohani Art Press, Chughtai Plaza, Fazal-e-Haq Road,
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Mian Fazal Elahi, House No 263-C, Street 87, Sector E-11/2 Islamabad.
 Tel: +92-51-2163092, 2163070, News Room: +92-51-2163029
 Mobile: +92-345-5565552, +92-322-5565552
 Email: mianfazalelahi@gmail.com, diplomaticfocus.isb.pk@gmail.com
 www.diplomaticfocus.org

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Important Announcement



SAIMA SARFRAZ

It has been announced for the general information that **Ms. SAIMA SARFRAZ** has been appointed as Bureau Chief of the Monthly "Diplomatic Focus" Islamabad for the Multan region. She 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 Multan region. please contact with Saima Sarfraz on her mailing address

Office Diplomatic Focus Near Ali Book Center Chowk Sardarpur Kabirwala city District Khanewal Multan.

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Our previous Issues

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Mian Fazal Elahi

It was predicted upon 2017 events that 2018 will be very crucial and an un-easy year in world relations. But it was not expecting that Mr. Trump will start the New Year with hostile messages against Pakistan and Iran. Mr. Trump in his tweets on 1st January said that "United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid to over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies and deceit..."

Despite Pakistan's cooperative posture in addressing terrorism and regional security issues, the United States is bent upon increasing pressure on the country and the latest tweet of the US President Donald Trump is yet another manifestation of that policy. Apparently frustrated over Pakistan's firm stance that it has done enough and would not do more for the sake of others, the US leader has once again accused Pakistan of providing safe havens to terrorists and that his country foolishly gave more than \$33 billion to Pakistan in 15 years.

Pakistan has promptly protested to the US over highly provocative remarks that are sheer insult to the unparalleled contribution that the country has made in fighting the menace of terror for the sake of regional and global peace. Pakistan achieved more success despite paucity of resources and lack of technology and weapons than what the United States could achieve in Afghanistan with the fullest cooperation of 59 countries that constituted the so-called coalition for Operation Enduring Freedom besides all sorts of arms, ammunition and technologies at its disposal.

It is also a reality that the United States could not bring down the Taliban government in Afghanistan and suffered humiliating losses until Pakistan provided the necessary support that led to its success. It is also because of the Pakistani support that Washington was able to eliminate the threat of Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan.

Mr. Trump policy is against the norms of United States and cannot support his vision to make America great but causing to damage the role of US in world politics, economy and security. Trump policy will lead America to unilateralism and it will provide space to other nations to rise. Recently, 128 countries defied President Trump and voted in favor of a United Nations General Assembly resolution co-sponsored by Pakistan calling for the United States to drop its recent recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Trump had threatened to cut off financial aid to countries that voted in favor.

China policy is example of Multilateralism based on shared cooperation and mutual partnership for the development of humanity. China is trying to play his role for the region stability and peace. The recent trilateral meeting Afghanistan-Pakistan-China is very important in this regard. But on the other side Mr. Trump policy is damaging the efforts for peace and stability of the whole region of South Asia, Middle East and central Asia. Central Asian states' role in new developmental and share cooperation model of China is very important. OBOR and CPEC are like back bone in rising of the whole region and other regions should shoulder the initiatives.

[Signature]

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

Mian Assad ullah

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Chief of the Naval Staff chairs Command & Staff Conference of Pakistan Navy



Command and Staff Conference of Pakistan Navy was held at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad. The Conference was chaired by Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi NI(M). Command and Staff Conference is the apex decision making body of Pakistan Navy in which all Chiefs of Staff, Principal Staff Officers and Field Commanders undertake strategic review of Pakistan Navy's Policies and Plans.

Matters related to operational preparedness, developmental plans of Pakistan Navy, prevailing security situation and training/welfare of troops were reviewed. Detailed briefings on various ongoing and future Pakistan Navy projects and plans were also given to Chief of the Naval Staff.

While making an overall appraisal of the prevalent security environment, Chief of the Naval Staff expressed his utmost confidence

over operational preparedness of Pakistan Navy. The Naval Chief reiterated Pakistan Navy's unflinching resolve to ensure seaward defence of vital maritime infrastructure and protection of the maritime interests of Pakistan against all threats and challenges at all cost.

The Admiral also lauded successful conduct of firing of indigenously developed Harbah Naval Cruise Missile.

Chief of the Naval Staff said that this project is a manifestation of Pakistan Navy's road map towards indigenization, and it will enhance combat potential of PN Fleet manifold.

The Naval Chief also expressed satisfaction over operational readiness of Pakistan Navy in the face of prevalent Maritime challenges including security aspects of Gwadar Port and related Maritime Components of CPEC Project, and lauded the morale and motivation of troops at all levels.

Naval Chief expressed satisfaction over Operational Readiness, Developmental Plans and security aspects of Gwadar Port & related Maritime Components of CPEC Project

Diplomats called on Naval Chief and discussed matters of mutual interest



Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi exchanging views with H.E. Mr Yao Jing Chinese Ambassador at Naval Headquarters Islamabad. Professional matters of mutual interest including Maritime components of CPEC and Gwadar port came under discussion.



High Commissioner of Nigeria H.E. Maj Gen (retd) Ashimiyu Adebayo Olaniyi called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi at NHQ and discussed Professional matters of mutual interests.



Impressive Fire Power Display of INDIGENOUSLY DEVELOPED HARBAH NAVAL CRUISE MISSILE BY PAKISTAN NAVY in North Arabian Sea

PNS HIMMAT is an indigenously built Fast Attack Craft Missile, FAC(M) commissioned in 2017. This is the second in series of AZMAT Class FAC(M) project, which Pakistan Navy has initiated in pursuance of its vision of sustained self-sufficiency through collaboration.

In an impressive fire power display, Live Weapon Firing was conducted by Pakistan Navy's Fast Attack Craft (Missile), PNS HIMMAT in the North Arabian Sea. PNS HIMMAT fired indigenously developed Harbah Naval Cruise Missile, which is a Surface to Surface anti-ship missile with Land Attack capability. The missile accurately hit its target signifying the impressive capabilities of Harbah Naval Weapon System. Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi witnessed the firing while onboard Pakistan Navy Ship ALAMGIR.

The successful live weapon firing has



demonstrated the credible fire power of Pakistan Navy and the impeccable level of indigenization in high tech weaponry achieved by Pakistan's defence industry. This is a clear manifestation of Government's resolve to achieve self reliance in this field.

Chief of the Naval Staff expressed his utmost satisfaction on the operational readiness of Pakistan Navy Fleet units and commended the efforts of all those involved in achieving this significant milestone successfully. He emphasized the need to capitalize on indigenous defence capabilities and reduce reliance on foreign countries.

PNS HIMMAT is also an indigenously built Fast Attack Craft Missile, FAC(M) commissioned in 2017. This is the second in series of AZMAT Class FAC(M) project, which Pakistan Navy has initiated in pursuance of its vision of sustained self-sufficiency through collaboration. The first of these boats was PNS DEHSHAT,



commissioned in 2013. Extremely maneuverable platforms, FAC(M)s, primarily are intended for hit-and-run strike operations. AZMAT Class FAC(M) is also a manifestation of 'Pak-China Friendship' in the true sense, as Chinese yards have not just built one boat in China but helped Karachi Shipyard & Engineering Works to install a complete structure for building up of further FAC(M)s in Pakistan, on the basis of self reliance.

On the occasion of successful missile firing, Chief of the Naval Staff reaffirmed the resolve of Pakistan Navy to ensure seaward defence of Pakistan and safeguard national maritime interests at all costs. Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi also appreciated the efforts made by our engineers and scientists in making Harbah Naval Weapon System project a success.



PAKISTAN NAVY CONDUCTS ANNUAL EFFICIENCY COMPETITION PARADE

Pakistan Navy Fleet Annual Efficiency Competition Parade for the year 2017 was held at PN Dockyard. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi NI(M) graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

The Efficiency Competition Parade is conducted annually by Fleet Command of Pakistan Navy to mark the culmination of its operational year in which efficiency shields are awarded to selected Fleet units based on their overall performance throughout the year. While addressing the officers and men, Chief of the Naval Staff commended Pakistan Navy Fleet on successful accomplishment of operational objectives. The Naval Chief highlighted that Pakistan Navy is entrusted with the sacred duty of safeguarding the

national maritime interests under the challenging internal and external security environment. The Admiral further said that Pakistan Navy is fully cognizant of the challenges in the wake of CPEC and operationalization of Gwadar Port.

He stated that during 2017, besides operational activities, Pakistan Navy Fleet units had actively participated in several major bilateral exercises including Exercise NUSRAT-VII, FREE OSPREY, SEA THUNDER, SEA TRENCH, SEA LION and TADBEER-E-BEHR. Besides, conduct of multi-national exercise AMAN-17 in Pakistani waters, regular participation of Pakistan Navy Fleet units in Coalition Maritime Campaign Plan and Combined Task Forces-150 & 151 and

recently conducted flood relief operation in Sri Lanka has not only augmented Pakistan's maritime relations at regional level but also demonstrated Pakistan Navy's potential and importance with regards to regional peace and stability.

Earlier, in his welcome, Commander Pakistan Fleet highlighted the operational achievements of PN Fleet and presented the resume of Fleet activities undertaken during the year 2017.

Later, Chief of the Naval Staff gave away the prizes to PN units adjudged best in their respective Squadrons. The ceremony was attended by a large number of senior serving and retired naval officers and personnel of Pakistan Navy.





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6-nation speakers' moot adopts 29-point Islamabad declaration for regional peace, development

By Usman Ghani Kharal, Agency, Monitoring

The six-nation Speakers Conference adopted a 29-point Islamabad Declaration of partnership for regional peace, development and connectivity.

The moot, convened on the initiative of Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, was attended by the speakers of Wolesi Jirga of Afghanistan Abdul Rauf Ibrahimji, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey Ismail Kahraman, Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran Dr Ali Ardeshtir Larjani, National Assembly of China, Russian Federal Duma with their respective parliamentary delegations.

They discussed the significance of peace, development and connectivity among the conference participating states and held in-depth and useful discussions to explore ways for forging a partnership in these mutually reinforcing areas.

The conference recognized that peace was a prerequisite for achieving development and promoting connectivity among the countries



President Mamnoon Hussain addressing the 1st Speakers' Conference in Islamabad.



President Mamnoon Hussain in a meeting with the visiting heads of delegation during 1st Speakers' Conference in Islamabad. Chairman Senate Mian Raza Rabbani and Speaker National assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq are also present.



President Mamnoon Hussain in a group photo with the visiting

and respective regions, agreeing on the need for more engagement and dialogue among the Parliaments, government and the people.

The speaker also deliberated on the diversity and interconnectedness of challenges and opportunities at the regional and global levels, besides discussing the transformation of the world into a pluralistic multi-polar world where Asia was leading the march towards globalization through inclusive cooperation with the rejection of hegemonic approach or use of force, promoting equality of opportunities for all nations and peoples.

They exchanged views on entire spectrum of bilateral, regional and international issues in a warm, cordial and friendly manner.

Speakers of the international conference acknowledged the shared bonds of history, culture and values between the peoples of the participating countries, reiterating common resolve to comprehensively the relations across all security, economy and trade.

They noted with concern the increasing links between drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime and terrorism.

The moot desired to maintain the momentum of high level exchanges and consultations, providing impetus for deepening of ties among the countries. The speakers stressed that cooperation among the states contributed to the strengthening of peace, prosperity and stability for the peoples living in the region, expressing satisfaction on multilateral cordial and close cooperation at regional and multilateral fora.

They agreed to further strengthen collaboration within the framework of the United Nations, Shanghai Cooperation Organization and other regional and international organization, reaffirming the sovereignty, territorial integrity,



President Mamnoon Hussain in a group photo with the Heads of delegation during the 1st Speakers' Conference in Islamabad.

political independence and unity among the conference participating states. The conference endorsed that connective was a key priority area of cooperation, together with other agreed priority areas, besides it recognized that enhancing intra-regional connectivity would benefit all participating countries through enhanced trade, investment, infrastructure, tourism, people-to-people linkages and cultural exchanges.

It reaffirmed support for the effective and timely implementation of all the regional connectivity initiatives including infrastructure development, institutional linkages and people-to-people connectivity.

The speakers said they would ensure support and facilitation to further relevant cooperation among the participant countries in mobilizing resources and expertise, information sharing and identifying specific cooperation projects for improving connectivity.

"We will promote greater awareness within the public and private sectors on the benefits of connectivity, including its potential economic opportunities, through the conduct of outreach and advocacy activities such as symposiums, workshops, seminars, business missions and courses," they said.

The speakers said they would encourage greater engagement and cooperation in people-to-people connectivity initiatives, including those relating to education, human resource development, innovation and entrepreneurship, cultural exchanges, and tourism.

"We welcome and support the Belt and Road Initiative, highly commend the success of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation held in May, 2017 by China. We are committed to strengthening dialogue and consultation in order to build synergies in development strategies and deepening practical cooperation in various areas," they said.

Recognizing that terrorism was a common threat to the entire world, including our countries, the participants condemned this phenomenon in all its forms and manifestations. "We recommend that our governments shall take further strong measures and practical steps through devising joint concrete and comprehensive strategies to combat terrorism."

The conference reaffirmed that terrorism could not and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization, culture or ethnic group, underscoring the central role of the United Nations in the field of counter terrorism and calling for full and effective



delegation during the 1st Speakers's Conference in Islamabad



Mr. Vyacheslav Volodin, Chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation along with delegation calls on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in Islamabad.

implementation of relevant, United Nations Security Council Resolutions and Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

“We also underline the primary responsibility of states in combating terrorism at both national and international levels. We spoke in favor of effective cooperation in preventing and countering the spread of terrorist ideology and propaganda, including incitement and glorification of terrorism,” the speaker said.

The moot strongly condemned the acts of terrorism, targeted towards the parliaments and expressed solidarity with the victims as well as the governments and people of the countries attacked. “We express our resolve to stand by the Republic of Turkey in bringing to justice the perpetrators of July 15 terrorist coup attempt and other crimes.”

The conference agreed that for ensuring global and regional peace and stability, the issue of Jammu and Kashmir needed peaceful resolution by Pakistan and India in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions.

The speakers condemned the decisions and actions, which purported to have altered the character, the status of demographic composition of the holy city of Al-Quds, declaring them null and void having no legal effect. “We reaffirm our commitment to the Middle East settlement based on international law.”

They welcomed the recent significant achievements in defeating DAESH in Iraq and Syria, and recognized that DAESH had continued to pose a serious threat to the security and stability of countries of the region and urged for concerted joint efforts to counter this threat.

The speakers also acknowledged the valuable achievement in the framework of Astana process to reduce violence, facilitate humanitarian delivery and provide conditions to find a political solution for Syrian crisis through an inclusive, free, fair and transparent Syrian-



Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq during a meeting Irani Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker of Islamic Consultative Assembly of Islamic Republic of Iran Dr. Ali Larijani in Islamabad.



Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq with Turkish Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey H.E. Mr. Ismail Kahraman at Islamabad.



Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq during a meeting with Russian Parliamentary delegation led by Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation Mr. Vyacheslav V. Volodin in Islamabad.



Chairman Senate, Mian Raza Rabbani meeting with Turkish Parliament Speaker, Ismail Kahraman on the sideline of the 1st Speakers' Conference in Islamabad.

led and Syrian-owned process as envisaged by the UN Security Council Resolution No. 2254 (2015), which preserved political unity and territorial integrity of this country.

"We reject all the unilateral and extra-territorial laws and judicial verdicts by any country against other states, which were in contradiction to international law, United Nations Charter and violate sovereignty and independence of states."

They expressed willingness to help promote dialogue, trust and confidence with a view to addressing the common challenge of terrorism in a unified, coordinated and comprehensive manner.

The speakers reiterated commitment to open, inclusive and transparent international security architecture, based on the principles of international law, indivisibility of security, peaceful settlements of disputes, non-use of force or threat of force, for the benefit of strengthening peace, stability and sustainable development in Asia and beyond.

They encouraged further development of multilateral diplomacy including parliamentary diplomacy and supported efforts aimed at establishing mutually beneficial and mutually enhancing relations among parliamentary organizations in Asia and beyond.

Noting the economic complementarities among the countries and respective regions, they agreed to support the efforts aimed at enhancing connectivity to foster economic growth and bring countries, societies and people closer together.

The speakers and heads of the delegations of the National Parliaments of Afghanistan, China, Iran, Russia and Turkey thanked the host speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq for his warm and generous hospitality extended to them and their delegations during the visit.

The conference agreed to hold the next meeting in Tehran, Capital of Iran, next year.



Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq during a meeting with Afghani Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker of the Wolesi Jirga National Assembly of Afghanistan Mr. Abdul Raouf Ibrahimi at Islamabad.



Group photo of Turkish Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey H.E. Mr. Ismail Kahraman with Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq at Islamabad.



Chairman Senate, Mian Raza Rabbani meeting with Iranian Parliament Speaker, Ali Larijani on the sideline of the 1st Speaker Conference in Islamabad.



World reject

Trump's Jerusalem decision

Trump had threatened to cut off financial aid to countries that voted in favor.

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Monitoring Desk

More than 120 countries defied President Donald Trump and voted in favor of a United Nations General Assembly resolution co-sponsored by Pakistan calling for the United States to drop its recent recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Trump had threatened to cut off financial aid to countries that voted in favor. A total of 128 countries backed the resolution, which is non-binding, nine voted against and 35 abstained. Twenty-one countries did not cast a vote.

Trump's threat appeared to have some impact,

with more countries abstaining and rejecting the resolution than usually associated with Palestinian-related resolutions. Nevertheless, Washington found itself isolated as many of its Western and Arab allies voted for the measure. Some of those allies, like Egypt, Jordan and Iraq, are major recipients of U.S. military or economic aid, although the U.S. threat to cut aid did not single out any country.

A spokesman for Western-backed Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas called the vote "a victory for Palestine." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected the vote.

Earlier this month, Trump reversed decades

of U.S. policy by announcing the United States recognized Jerusalem – home to major Muslim, Jewish and Christian holy sites – as the capital of Israel and would move its embassy there.

Prior to Trump's announcement, Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas said if the American head of state goes ahead and recognises the holy city as Israel's capital, he will break with the decades-long strategic policy with the US as well as the international consensus on the city.

Israel hailed Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as its capital, but the Palestinians condemned the move, saying it diminished Washington's role as a peace mediator. Israel views the city

In 1995, the US Congress passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act, calling on the US to move its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and recognize it as Israel's capital.

The law is binding on the US government but a clause allowed presidents to postpone its application for six months on "national security interests".

Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama re-ratified the clause every six months.

Trump reluctantly renewed it for the first time in June 2017, despite promising during his campaign to move the embassy. Trump, however, recognized the disputed city of Jerusalem as Israel's capital



as its undivided capital, with a statement saying it "is the capital of the Jewish people for 3,000 years and Israel's capital since 70 years".

But Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said Trump's move was "tantamount to the United States abdicating its role as a peace mediator" and declared Jerusalem as the "eternal capital of the State of Palestine".

"With this announcement, the American administration has chosen to violate all international and bilateral agreements and resolutions and it has chosen to violate international consensus," Abbas said.

The move, he said, would serve "the extremist groups which try to turn the conflict in our region into a religious war that will drag the region... into international conflicts and endless wars."

Pakistan:

Pakistan said it was "unequivocally opposed" to Trump's expected move, with the world's

second most populous Muslim country joining a global chorus of alarm.

Pakistan — which does not recognise Israel — called on the US to "refrain" from the move, a statement from Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi's office said.

The change would "constitute a clear violation of international law and UN Security Council resolutions", the statement warned.

"It would also sidestep decades of global consensus on this issue, undermine regional peace and security as well as derail any prospects for a lasting peace in the Middle East," it added.

Turkey;

Turkey's foreign ministry condemned the US' decision as "irresponsible" and called on Washington to reconsider the move.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan asked U.S. President Donald Trump to reverse his decision recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's



Group photo of the leaders at the Extraordinary Summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Al Quds Al Sharif at Istanbul.



capital, after the UN General Assembly rejected the move.

"We welcome with great pleasure the UN General Assembly's overwhelming support... We expect the Trump administration to rescind without further delay its unfortunate decision, whose illegality has been clearly established," Erdogan said on Twitter

EU, UN:

The European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) also voiced alarm at Trump's decision and its repercussions for any chances of reviving Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said there was no alternative to a two-state solution between Israel and the Palestinians and that Jerusalem was a final-status issue that should be resolved through direct talks.

The EU also expressed serious concern, saying it could have repercussions for peace prospects.

"The aspirations of both parties must be fulfilled and a way must be found through negotiations to resolve the status of Jerusalem as the future capital of both states," EU Foreign Affairs Chief Federica Mogherini said in a statement.

OIC:

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has declared East Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine, rejected the US stance as "dangerous" and called on the international community to follow in its footsteps.

At a summit held in Turkey a week after US President Donald Trump declared Jerusalem as Israel's capital, the group of Muslim leaders called on all countries to "recognise the State of Palestine and East Jerusalem as its occupied capital".

In a statement, the OIC added that the 57-member group remains committed to a "just and comprehensive peace based on the two-state solution".

Britain:

British Prime Minister Theresa May disagrees



with the US decision because it is unlikely to help efforts to bring peace to the region, her spokesman said.

Jerusalem should ultimately be shared between Israel and a future Palestinian state, the spokesman said.

"We disagree with the US decision to move its embassy to Jerusalem and recognize Jerusalem as the Israeli capital before a final status agreement," the spokesman said. "We believe it is unhelpful in terms of prospects for peace

in the region."

Germany:

Germany does not support the Trump administration's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said.

"The German government does not support this position because the status of Jerusalem is to be resolved in the framework of a two-state solution," she was quoted as saying in a tweet

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Item 5 Draft Resolution A/E5-10/L.22			
Status of Jerusalem			
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FOR: 108		AGAINST: 0	ABSTENTION: 15

by the government spokesman.

Canada:

The state of Jerusalem can be resolved “only as part of a general settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli dispute”, the Canadian Minister for Foreign Affairs said.

China:

China expressed concern about Trump’s intention to recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and relocate the US Embassy to the ancient city, saying it could spark new hostility.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told a regular news briefing that the status of Jerusalem was a complicated and sensitive issue and China was concerned the US decision “could sharpen regional conflict”.

Russia:

The Kremlin said that Russia was concerned that the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian authorities could be aggravated further by Trump’s plans.

“However, we would not discuss the decisions which have not been taken yet,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told a conference call with reporters.

France:

French President Emmanuel Macron said he did not support Trump’s “unilateral” decision and called for calm across the region.

“This decision is a regrettable decision that France does not approve of and goes against international law and all the resolutions of the U.N. Security Council,” Macron told reporters at a news conference in Algiers.

“The status of Jerusalem is a question of international security that concerns the entire international community. The status of Jerusalem must be determined by Israelis and Palestinians in the framework of negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations,” he said.

Vatican:

Pope Francis, speaking hours before Trump’s announcement on Jerusalem, called for the city’s “status quo” to be respected, saying new tension in the Middle East would further inflame world conflicts.

Egypt:

Egypt refused to accept Trump’s decision, the foreign ministry said, adding that his recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital did not change the city’s legal status.

Lebanon:

Lebanon’s President Michel Aoun said Trump’s Jerusalem decision was dangerous and threatened the credibility of the US as a broker

of the peace process in the region.

He said the decision had put back the peace process by decades, threatening regional stability and perhaps global one as well.

Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri said on Twitter that Lebanon rejected the decision and had the utmost solidarity with the Palestinian people and their right to establish an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Qatar:

Qatar’s foreign minister said Trump’s decision



a state or a president but is determined by its history and by the will and determination in the Palestinian cause,” President Bashar al-Assad’s office said on an official social media feed.

“This is a dangerous initiative by the US administration that clearly exemplifies the United States’ contempt for international law,” a foreign ministry official quoted by the official SANA news agency said.

“The US president and his regional allies will bear responsibility for this decision’s dangerous consequences,” the official said.



was a death sentence for all who seek peace, Qatari-owned Al Jazeera television reported.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani called the move “a dangerous escalation”.

Morocco:

Morocco’s foreign minister “reiterated the constant support and full solidarity of the Kingdom of Morocco towards the Palestinian people so that they can recover their legitimate rights,” a statement carried by MAP said.

Jordan:

Jordan rejected the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel saying it was “legally null” because it consolidated Israel’s occupation of the eastern sector of the contested city in the 1967 war.

The announcement by US President Donald Trump violated past U.N. Security Council resolutions that “stipulated the non-recognition of the Israeli occupation” of the West Bank and the eastern sector of the city, government spokesperson Mohammad al-Momani told state news agency Petra.

The kingdom also considered “all unilateral moves that sought to create new facts on the ground as null and void”, the government spokesman added.

Syria:

The Palestinian cause will stay alive among Arabs until the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, the Syrian president’s office said in response to US President Donald Trump’s Jerusalem decision.

“The future of Jerusalem is not determined by

Iran:

Iran “seriously condemns” the US decision to move its embassy to Jerusalem and its recognition of the city as Israel’s capital, read a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs carried by state media.

The move violates international resolutions, the statement said.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said earlier the US was trying to destabilize the region and start a war to protect Israel’s security.

Iraq:

Iraq is opposed to the US’ decision to recognise Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and moving its embassy there, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said, warning that such a decision would negatively affect Middle East stability.

“The Iraqi government received this news with the utmost worry and warns about this decision’s ramifications on the stability of the region and the world,” the Iraqi cabinet said in a statement.

Saudi Arabia:

Saudi Arabia’s King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud has reiterated the Kingdom’s stated commitment to a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. Palestinians have the right to Israeli-annexed East Jerusalem as their capital, Salman said.

Salman said US President Donald Trump’s decision “represents an extreme bias against the rights of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem that have been guaranteed by international resolutions”



China to continue putting Pakistan at its priority in neighbouring diplomomacy: Chinese Envoy



By Mian Fazal Elahi

Newly appointed Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Yao Jing said the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) had achieved tangible results leading to a new economic miracle and China would continue to put Pakistan at its priority of neighbouring diplomacy.

After assuming the charge of his new assignment in Pakistan and presenting his credentials to President of Pakistan Mamnoon Hussain the other day, he, in his message, said “China will continue to put Pakistan at its priority of neighbouring diplomacy. China’s development will bring more benefit to friendly countries like Pakistan.”

He said China was willing to work with Pakistan to step up policy synergy and conduct all-round pragmatic cooperation to strengthen people-to-people ties enabling this region to better benefit from China-Pakistan relations.

“We will continue to work together to build a China-Pakistan Community of Shared Future, leading the trend of the new type of international relations in the new era,” said a press release issued here by the Chinese Embassy.

At this historical starting point, as China’s Ambassador to Pakistan, he said, “I have deeply felt the heavy responsibility on my shoulders. I look forward to working closely with friends from all circles in Pakistan to bring more fruits in our relations in the new era.”

He said, “I am very honored to be appointed as the 17th Ambassador of China to Pakistan. I started my diplomatic career here and have a soft corner for Pakistan. For the past two decades, I was posted here twice, and had spent eight years here, I witnessed tremendous changes, development and consolidation of China-Pakistan friendship.”

The envoy said especially when he came here this time, he noticed remarkable improvement in the social environment and people’s livelihood with constant progress of the country. As a Chinese diplomat who always cares and loves Pakistan, “I feel truly delighted.”

He said since the establishment of Pakistan and China’s diplomatic ties 66 years ago, the two countries have always been together through thick and thin.

In China, he said, “We call Pakistan an “Iron Brother” reflecting the unique place Pakistan has in our hearts. Our relations always stand at the forefront of times as a model for state-to-state relationships.”

In 2015, the diplomatic said, President Xi Jinping paid a historic state visit to Pakistan and the visit further enriched the two countries’ traditional friendship, made new breakthroughs in both countries practical cooperation, and lifted relations to a new height.

Currently, relations of China and Pakistan were facing new important opportunities. In October this year, the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China was successfully convened in Beijing. The highlight of this Congress was the establishing of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. On the road to development, China and Pakistan were always firm partners. Our engineers and technicians joined hands on high mountains and cliffs to build the Karakorum Highway. “Our friendship created a miracle across the top of the cloud. Today, following the principle of achieving shared growth through discussion and collaboration, we are unswervingly cooperating on the Belt and Road Initiative,” he said.

He said over the past five years, China had made historic achievements in its reform, opening up and modernization drive.

China’s Gross Domestic Product growth has surpassed 12 trillion US dollars, with an average annual growth of 7.1 percent. China now performs as the main impetus and stabilizer for the world’s economy.

China’s development now stands at a new historical starting point. Socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era.

“In this new era, China will adhere to the concept of innovation, coordination, greenness, openness and shared development. We will continue to promote the coordinated development of economy, politics, culture, society and ecology. By 2020, China will fully develop into a moderately prosperous society.

From 2020 to 2035, he said “we will basically realize socialist modernization. From 2035 to the middle of this century, we will build China into a great modern socialist country which is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, harmonious and beautiful.”

He said the most prominent and important concept at the core of China’s diplomacy was to foster a new type of international relations and build a community with a shared future for mankind. This was the direction in which we hope to work together with all nations, he added.

This new type of international relations could be explained as “mutual respect, fairness and justice, and win-win cooperation.” These three key phrases show that China has abandoned the traditional law of the jungle by bullying the weak.

The envoy said China would further carry forward its good diplomatic traditions that countries remain equal regardless of their sizes. Building a community with a shared future for mankind is to build a world of “lasting peace, universal security, common prosperity, openness and inclusiveness, cleanliness and beauty,” he remarked.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Outgoing Ambassador of Kazakhstan Bakhitbek Shabarbayev paid a farewell call on President Mamnoon Hussain at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.



Mr. Bakhitbek Shabarbayev, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan paid a farewell call on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at PM Office Islamabad.



Ambassador of Republic of Uzbekistan to Pakistan Mr. Furkat Sidikov calls on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at PM Office in Islamabad.



Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman Al Sheikh Mohammed Omar Ahmed Al Marhoon called on Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Parliament House.



Chairman Senate, Mian Raza Rabbani exchanging views with Palestinian Ambassador Mr. Walid Ahmed Mahmud Abu Ali at Parliament House Islamabad.



Chairman Senate, Raza Rabbani exchanging views with Monarch of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, His Majesty King Abdullah-II in Jordan.



National Security Adviser, Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nasser Khan Janjua in a meeting with Vladimir Norov Director, Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies along with the Ambassador of Uzbekistan, Furqat A. Sidikov at his office in Islamabad.



H.E. Takashi Kurai, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan called on the Federal Minister for Commerce and Textile, Mohammad Pervaiz Malik in Islamabad.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Ambassador of Pakistan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Khan Hasham Bin Saddique called on His Excellency Dr. Ahmed Al-Essa, Minister for Education of Saudi Arabia, in Riyadh



Deputy Defence Minister of Saudi Arabia H.E. Muhammad Bin Abdullah Al-Ayesh along with his delegation called on Federal Minister for Defence, Engr. Khurram Dastgir in Ministry of Defence, Rawalpindi.



H.E. Babur Girgin, Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan paid his Farewell visit to Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Sartaj Aziz in Islamabad.



Chairman Board of Investment, Naeem Y. Zamindar in a meeting with Ambassador of Qatar Saqr Bin Mubarak Al-Mansouri in Islamabad.



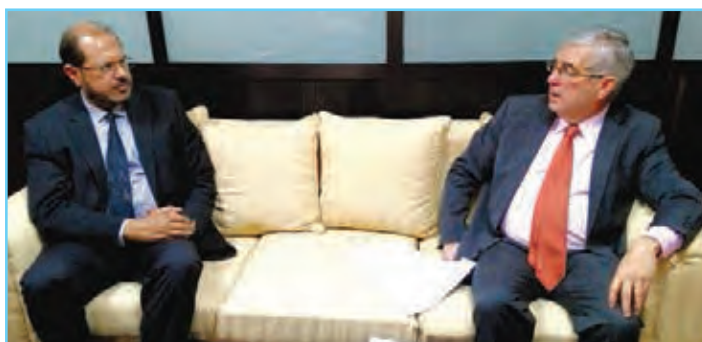
Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, H.E. Takashi Kurai called on National Security Adviser Lt. Gen (Retd) Nasser Khan Janjua in Islamabad.



Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Girgian called on Interior Minister Professor Ahsan Iqbal in Islamabad.



Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Sadiq Babur Girgin paid a farewell call on Federal Minister for Defence Production Rana Tanveer Hussain in Rawalpindi.



Charge d' Affairs of Portuguese Republic (Portugal), Joao Sabdo Costa called on Federal Secretary for NH&LH, Engineer Aamir Hassan and Discussed promotion of cooperation in culture and Heritage between the two countries at National History and Literary Heritage Division in Islamabad.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Ambassador of Yemen to Paksitan, Mohammed Motahar Alashabi called on Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination, Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada in Islamabad.



Tariq Azim Khan, High Commissioner exchanging pleasantries with Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada at a Holiday dinner hosted by Chrystia Freeland, Foreign Minister at Ottawa.



Paksitan's Ambassador Javed Malik met with his Highness Sheikh Salman Bin Khalifa Al Khalif, Advisor to the Prime Minister of Bahrain to discuss bilateral relations in Bahrain.



UAE Ambssador to Pakistan H.E. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al Zaabi giving souvenir to Interior Minister Professor Ahsan Iqbal in Islamabad.



Federal Minister for Defence, Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan, presenting a shield to H.E. Mr. Muhammad Bin Abdullah Al-Ayesh, Deputy Defence Minister of Saudi Arabia, in Ministry of Defence, Rawalpindi.



Federal Minister for Defence Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan, presenting a shield to Mr. Saqr Bin Mubarak Al-Mansour, Ambassador of Qatar, at Ministry of Defence, Rawalpindi.



Federal Minister for Defence Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan, presenting a shield to Mr. Sherali Jononov, Ambassador of Tajikistan, at Ministry of Defence, Rawalpindi.



Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engineer Iqbal Zafar Jhagra talking to a Eurpean Union Ambassador to Pakistan, Jean Francois Cautain at Governor's House, Peshawar.



Climate change had become one of the biggest challenges for mankind and had united all international community at one platform for action against its hazards: PM Abbasi

Pakistan spends 8% of budget on climate: PM

By Monitoring Desk, Agency

Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Monday said that Pakistan was fully cognizant of its commitment towards the challenges of environment and was effectively dealing with the phenomenon of greenhouse effect.

Addressing at the Science Policy Conference on Climate Change, the Prime Minister said Pakistan had only one percent of the greenhouse footprint.

Prime Minister Abbasi said Pakistan had a National Environment Policy and had also allocated eight percent of its budget to fight the effects of climate change.

He said the Parliament had also taken action and the two institutions namely National Climate Change Authority and National Climate Change Council had been created.

He said the government was committed to manage national disasters and mentioned the roles of Pakistan Meteorological Department to provide related information, Global Change Impact Studies Centre to conduct research and National Disaster Management Authority for the response. Abbasi said investment in reduction of climate change's effects was important being the global citizens.

He said Pakistan had ratified the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in 2015 and was following the principles therein to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent.



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi addresses science-policy conference on climate change at Islamabad.

He said the former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had focused on the issue with much commitment, which needed to be carried forward with swift action.

The Prime Minister said climate change had become one of the biggest challenges for mankind and had united all international community at one platform for action against its hazards.

He mentioned the recent prevalence of smog in the country and said it should serve as an eye-opener to be more serious about the issue of environment.

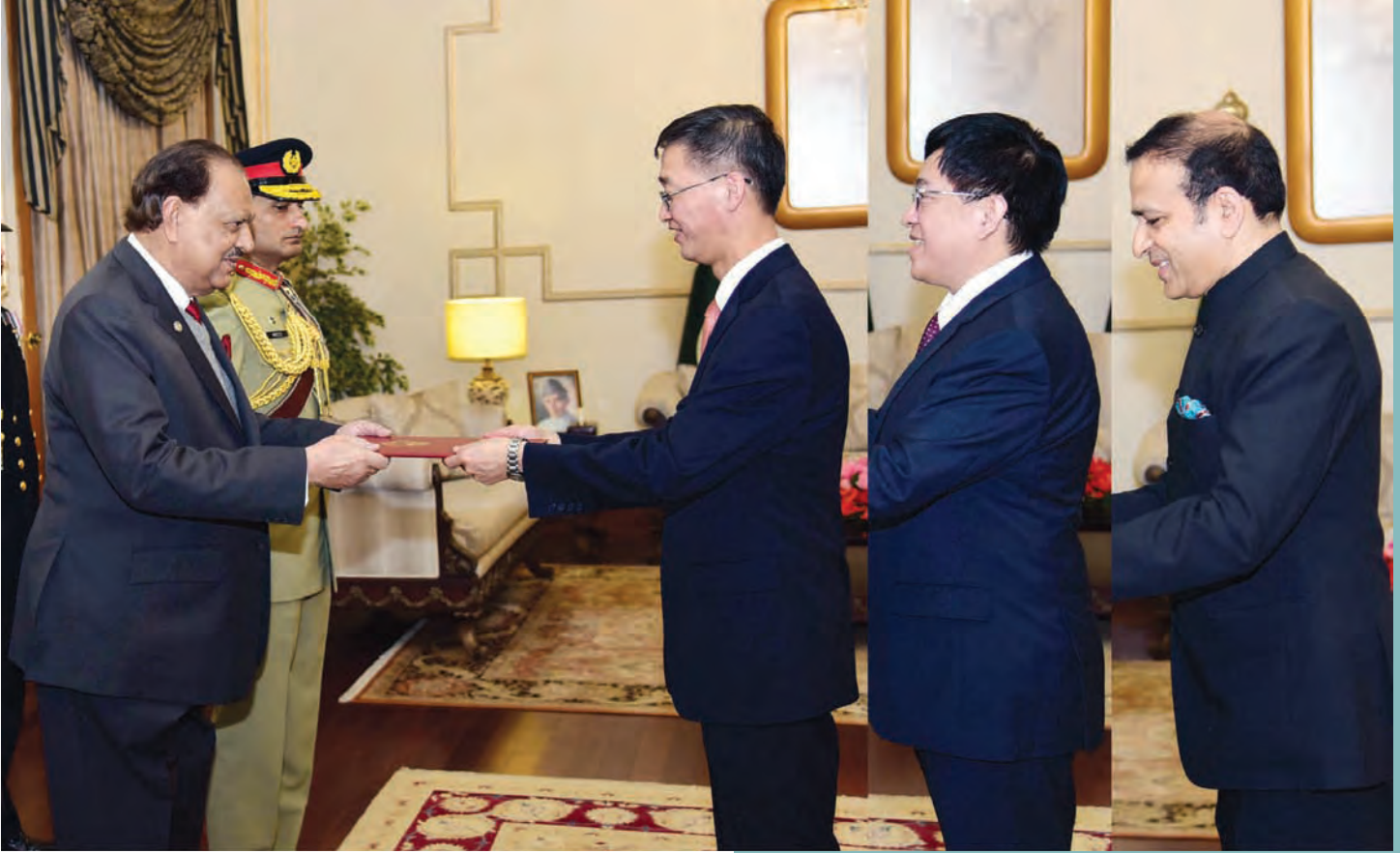
He said Pakistan fortunately had a very clean energy niche with its 50 percent of primary energy coming from gas and another 20 pc from hydropower and other renewable resources.

He said Pakistan had a zero import of furnace oil and was running the related power houses on imported liquefied natural gas.

He expressed confidence that in near future, all the furnace oil-based power plants of the country would no longer be running on furnace oil, adding that Pakistan was already utilizing the Euro-II diesel and petrol.

He said the shift away from furnace oil would mitigate the negative effects of fuel. The Prime Minister said the government's emphasis was three-pronged, i.e. to protect population, promotion of economic growth and reduction of poverty and to meet financial commitments.

He hoped that the conference would lead to more interaction among the experts to share information and knowledge on climate change.



Three envoys designate present credentials to President

Pakistan desired to further enhance bilateral relations with all friendly and neighbouring countries for peace, stability and prosperity in the region:
President Mamnoon Hssain

By Mian Fazal Elahi

The envoys designate of China, Vietnam and India presented their credentials to President Mamnoon Hussain in a ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The envoys who presented their credentials included Yao Jing Ambassador-designate of China, Pham Hoang Kim Ambassador-designate of Vietnam and Ajay Bisaria High Commissioner-designate of India to Pakistan.

During the separate meetings with the envoys, the president said that Pakistan desired to further enhance bilateral relations with all friendly and neighbouring countries for peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

He underlined that the landmark project of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would not only result in the progress and development of Pakistan and China but it would also be a game-changer for prosperity of the entire region.

He stated that the policies and initiatives taken by the incumbent government had resulted in strengthening the economy of the country.

President Mamnoon underscored that Pakistan offered great investment and business opportunities and international investors should avail these by investing in different sectors.

The president felicitated the newly appointed ambassadors and a high commissioner to Pakistan hoping that they would work for further strengthening the bilateral ties of their respective countries with Pakistan.

The president also wished the newly appointed envoys a comfortable and pleasant stay in Pakistan.



PRIME MINISTER SHAHID KHAQAN ABBASI IN A GROUP PHOTO WITH THE REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL PAKISTAN NEWSPAPERS SOCIETY (APNS) AT PRIME MINISTER HOUSE IN ISLAMABAD

APNS & CPNE highlighted various issues pertaining to media industry

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Delegations of All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) and Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE), separately called on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at Prime Minister House Islamabad.

The APNS delegation comprised of Mr. Sarmad Ali, Mr. Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Shami, Mr. Hameed Haroon, Ms. Rameeza Nizami, Mr. Mehtab Khan, Mr. Umar Shami, Mr. Waseem Ahmed,

Mr. Munir Gillani, Mr. Khushnood Ali Khan, Mr. Javed Shamsi, Mr. Haroon Shah, Syed Mumtaz Ahmed, Mr. Mumtaz Tahir, Mr. Ali Hasan, Mr. Humayun Gulzar and others.

The CPNE delegation consisted of Mr. Zia Shahid, Mr. Shaheen Qureshi, Mr. Imtiaz Alam, Mr. Ikram Sehgal, Mr. Aijaz-ul-Haq, Mr. Jameel Ather, Mr. Arif Nizami, Dr. Jabbar, Mr. Wamiq Zuberi, Mr. Kazim Khan, Mr. Anwer Sajdi, Mr. Tahir Farooq, Mr. Rehmat Razi, Mr. Ayaz Khan and Mr. Ghulam Nabi Chandio.

The delegations highlighted various issues pertaining to media industry. Issues of national importance also came under discussion.

The Prime Minister assured that the issues raised by the media organizations would be duly considered. He said that the government would continue to provide every possible facilitation to the media in discharge of its professional duties.



A DELEGATION OF COUNCIL OF PAKISTAN NEWSPAPER EDITORS (CPNE) CALLED ON PRIME MINISTER SHAHID KHAQAN ABBASI AT PRIME MINISTER HOUSE IN ISLAMABAD



Media in Postmodern Times AIOU holds first national media conference

The media needed to contribute more actively in bringing positive change in the society, and help to improve the living standard of the people



By M. Saeed Yousafzai

Speakers at the two days conference called for having strong partnership and regular interaction between the media and the academia to address the future challenges, particularly in the education sector. The media needed to contribute more actively in bringing positive change in the society, and help to improve the living standard of the people. While deliberating upon the theme of the two-day conference, 'Post-Modern Times: Challenges & Prospects', the speakers hoped that such type of events can help the young researchers to interact with senior ones to understand their future responsibilities towards the society.

The First National Media Conference titled 'Media in Postmodern Times', arranged by Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), with interactive sessions between the media and the academia to see how the stipulated educational targets could be achieved. The AIOU is a long distance learning institution providing



affordable education to all segments of society at door-steps through media outreach. The theme of the conference was to develop and strengthen a collaborative partnership between press and academia.

The speakers including renowned columnists, Sajjad Mir and Khurshid Nadeem, besides the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Shahid Siddiqui highlighting the responsibilities of journalists in post-modern era, asserted that the media should address the ground realities, keeping in view the cultural and social needs of the society.

Sajjad Mir presided over the inaugural session while Khurshid Nadeem was the keynote speaker. According to the chairman, Department of Mass Communication Dr. Saqib Riaz, the conference was aimed at developing academic-media linkages to serve the society through educational pursuits. They called for having strong partnership and regular interaction between the media and the academia to address the future challenges,



particularly in the education sector.

The conference's participants from various parts of the country appreciated the Vice Chancellor for developing the AIOU as a vibrant educational institution, efficiently providing academic and literary support to its 1.3 million students across the country.

Dean Social Sciences Dr. Samina Awan in vote of thanks said that the university, through such events will continue to provide platform to youth to learn from the experience of their seniors and deliver best their practical field.

During the working sessions, that chaired by eminent working journalists and academicians made insight into the latest trends of communication and media. More than 70 participants presented their research work and discussed theoretical as well as empirical methodologies to devise appropriate strategies for policy makers so as to find workable solution to address the challenges being faced by our society.

The world economy in 2018

All major macroeconomic indicators—growth, unemployment and inflation—suggest that 2017 will be the US economy's best year in a decade. And the global economy is enjoying broad, synchronized growth beyond what anyone expected. The question now is whether this strong performance will continue in 2018. The answer will depend on monetary, fiscal, trade and related policies in the US and around the world.

It is hard to predict what policy proposals will emerge in 2018. There are relatively new heads of state in the US, France and the UK; German leaders still have not formed a governing coalition since the general election in September; and the US Federal Reserve has a new chair awaiting confirmation. Major changes in important developing economies such as Argentina and Brazil have made the future outlook even murkier.

Still, we should hope for the best. First and foremost, we should hope that synchronized global growth at a rate of just under 4 percent will continue in 2018, as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected in October.

Growth not only raises incomes, but also makes vexing problems such as bad bank loans and budget deficits more manageable. As former US President John F. Kennedy famously said in an October 1963 speech in which he promoted his proposed corporate and personal tax reductions, “a rising tide lifts all boats.”

I predict that the global recovery will continue, but at a slightly slower growth rate of around 3.5 percent. The two most obvious risks to keep an eye on will be Europe, where a cyclical upturn could stall, and the oil-rich Middle East, where tensions could flare up once again.

Second, let us hope that the Fed, guided by the steady hand of its new chair Jerome Powell, will continue or even accelerate its monetary-policy normalization, both by raising its benchmark federal funds rate and by shrinking its engorged balance sheet. And we should hope that economic conditions allow the other major central banks, especially the European Central Bank, to follow suit.

On this front, I predict that the major central banks will continue to normalize monetary policies more gradually than is necessary. The biggest risk here is that markets may try to test the Fed under its new leadership, for example, if inflation rises faster than anticipated.

Third, let us hope that the Republican tax package will deliver on its promise of increased investment, output, productivity and wages over the coming decade. I predict that investment in the US over the next few years

will be relatively higher than if no action had been taken.

Whether investment will rise from its currently subdued level will depend on many other factors than the corporate tax rate. But the tax package can still be expected to boost output, productivity and wages. The question is not if but when.

If the full effects of the legislation are not felt before the 2018 or 2020 elections, that lag could prove politically consequential. The biggest danger is that its benefits will be delayed, and that its key provisions will be reversed whenever the Democrats are back in power.

Fourth, let us hope that governments everywhere begin to address the looming crisis in public pension and health care costs, which have been rising for decades. As social programs become costlier, they crowd out government expenditures on necessities such as defense, while generating ever more pressure to impose higher growth-suppressing taxes.

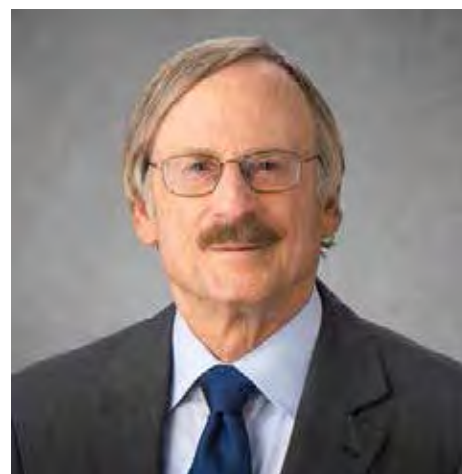
Europe in particular must not let its cyclical rebound lull it into complacency. Many EU member states still need to reduce their government debt, and the euro zone needs to resolve its “zombie bank” crisis. Beyond that, structural labor-market reforms of the kind French President Emmanuel Macron is pursuing would be most welcome.

I am afraid that progress on structural reforms will be sporadic at best. The danger is that slow growth will not lead to sufficient wage gains and job creation to defuse the ticking time bomb of high youth unemployment in many countries. Another risk is that reform attempts could provoke a political backlash that would be harmful to long-term investment.

Fifth, let us hope that the euro zone can avoid a currency crisis. This will depend largely on whether German Chancellor Angela Merkel can form a coalition government and restore political stability to Europe's largest economy.

Sixth, we should hope that the EU and the UK can agree on a reasonable Brexit deal that will preserve fairly strong trade relations. The main risk is that localized declines in trade could spill over and cause broader harm.

Beyond Europe, let us hope that negotiations between the US, Canada and Mexico over the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) will result in an arrangement that still facilitates continental trade. For trade generally, the biggest risk is that the Trump administration could start a lose-lose trade dispute due to its understandable eagerness to help American manufacturing workers.



By Michael J. Boskin

Seventh, let us hope that new policies targeting information and communication technology (ICT) strike the right balance among all stakeholders' competing and legitimate concerns. On one hand, there is reason to worry about certain Internet companies' concentration of market power, particularly in online content and distribution, and about the effects of new technologies on personal privacy, law enforcement and national security. On the other hand, new technological advances could deliver immense economic gains.

It is easy to envision a scenario of too much or too little regulation. It is also easy to envision a large-scale public backlash against the major technology companies, particularly if poor self-policing or a refusal to cooperate with law enforcement leads to some horrible event.

Here, I predict that achieving an appropriate policy balance will take years. If some future event strikes an emotional chord, the public's mood could swing dramatically. Ultimately, however, I suspect that competition and innovation will survive the forthcoming regulations.

Finally, and most importantly, let us hope that terrorism is thwarted everywhere, conflicts subside, democracy and capitalism regain some momentum, and greater civility and honest dialogue return to the public domain. Should that happen in 2018, it will be a very good year indeed.

Michael J. Boskin is professor of economics at Stanford University and a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution. He was chairman of former US President George H. W. Bush's Council of Economic Advisers from 1989 to 1993, and headed the Boskin Commission, a congressional advisory body that highlighted errors in official US inflation estimates.

London Mayor is on first ever visit to Pakistan with the message ‘London is Open’

By Mian Asadullah



London Mayor Sadiq Khan stayed at Pakistan on a one-day visit to promote his ‘London is Open’ campaign.

The London mayor was on a goodwill trip to South Asia, where he promoted ties of South Asian cities with the British capital.

He reached Pakistan from his earlier visit to India via the Wagah Border Crossing and was received on the Pakistani side by Lahore Mayor Colonel (R) Mubashar and senior government officials.

Sadiq Khan met with political and business dignitaries during his visit to Pakistan.



“I am passionate about showing that my city will always be open to engaging with partners from around the world,”

Sadiq Khan





Ambassador of Somalia H.E. Khadija Mohamed Almakhoumi and Executive Director COMSATS Dr. S.M Junaid Zaidi are exchanging MOU at the reception to celebrate Somalia's Membership to COMSATS.

Somalia joins COMSATS as its 26th member state

Somalia has signed an accession international agreement to join the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South at Islamabad Serena Hotel.

On behalf of the Somali government, Minister for Education, Ministry of Education, Culture, and Higher Education, Somalia, Abdi Dahir Osman, signed the agreement, while from COMSATS the signatory was the organization's Executive Director Dr. S. M. Junaid Zaidi. The Somali Minister was accompanied by the Ambassador of Somalia to Islamabad, Pakistan, Khadija Almakhoumi; First Secretary, Embassy

of Somalia, Ali Sheikh; and Advisor to the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Higher Education, Mohammed A. Nur. Senior officials from COMSATS also witnessed the ceremony.

During the ceremony, Dr. Zaidi thanked the Minister and the Ambassador for making the efforts which led to the signing of accession agreement. He also briefed about COMSATS, its statutory bodies, its international programmes and activities and considered this agreement a new chapter of science-led collaboration for achieving sustainable socio-economic development. The minister showed pleasure on reaching this agreement and hoped to benefit

from COMSATS' membership in academics as well as research and development.

The Minister expressed gratitude and appreciated the Ambassador of Somalia in Islamabad for her efforts to realize Somalia's membership to COMSATS, calling her a strong bridge between COMSATS and Somalia. He will now serve as the Focal Point of COMSATS with a representation at its Consultative Committee meeting. The accession is a result of earlier consultations and meetings with the Somali Embassy and COMSATS' officials held earlier during the year.



A group photo of Foreign dignitaries, representatives of international organizations and government officials with Ambassador of Somalia Khadija Mohamed Al Makhzoumi and Executive Director COMSATS Dr S.M Junaid Zaidi at the reception to celebrate Somalia's Membership to COMSATS

1st China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Minister's Dialogue

The three sides reaffirmed their commitment to improving their relations



By Mian Fazal Elahi, M.Saeed Yousafzai

Foreign Minister Wang Yi of the People's Republic of China, Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Foreign Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan held the 1st China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue in Beijing, China, says a press release received from Beijing.

Afghanistan and Pakistan congratulated China on the successful conclusion of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, and fully supported the initiative proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping to build community with a shared future for mankind. The three sides reaffirmed their commitment to improving their relations, deepening mutually beneficial cooperation, advancing connectivity under the Belt and Road Initiative, and fighting terrorism in all its forms

and manifestation without any distinction. The three Foreign Ministers agreed to jointly work together on political mutual trust and reconciliation, development cooperation and connectivity, security cooperation and counter-terrorism as three topics of the trilateral cooperation.

The three sides reaffirmed that a broad-based and inclusive peace and reconciliation process, which is "Afghan-led, Afghan-owned", and fully supported regionally and internationally, is the most viable solution to end the violence in Afghanistan. In this regard, they call on the Afghan Taliban to join the peace process at an early date.

The three sides agreed to conduct win-win trilateral economic cooperation, with an incremental approach, starting from the easier initiative to the more difficult ones. The three sides agreed to continue economic development cooperation in areas of mutual

interest, and expressed willingness to strengthen people-to-people contacts. The three sides reiterated their firm resolve to fight the menace of terrorism. They expressed their strong determination not to allow any country, organization or individual to use their respective territories for terrorist activities against any other countries. The three sides agreed to strengthen counter-terrorism coordination and cooperation in an effort to combat all terrorist organizations and individuals without any discrimination. The three sides will communicate and consult on developing of the Memorandum of Understanding on Counter-Terrorism Cooperation. The Afghan and Pakistani sides thanked the Chinese side for the successful holding of the 1st China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue and its warm hospitality, and three sides agreed that the 2nd China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue will be held in Kabul in 2018.



Tribute

Benazir Bhutto!

21 June 1953 - 27 December 2007

A name of an institution

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Benazir Bhutto was the first lady to rule any Muslim country in this world. She was also one of the most influential leaders of south Asia.

Benazir, unlike any other politician of the country, is an institution, one who carried

forward the mission of her father diligently, hailing from a family which has lost almost all its members to the brutality of Pakistani politics. However, Benazir did not step back to take a safer route. The Peoples Party might have lost the path, Benazir Bhutto paved for. But the generation which has seen her struggle

must carry forward her mission by making the younger lot aware of the sacrifices of the slain leader made to uphold the rule of democracy in the country. Benazir continues to serve as the perfect role model for younger generations as a wife, a mother and most importantly, as someone sincere to her people and the land.

Benazir Bhutto was born in Karachi, Pakistan to a prominent political family. At age 16 she left her homeland to study at Harvard's Radcliffe College. After completing her undergraduate degree at Radcliffe she studied at England's Oxford University, where she was awarded a second degree in 1977.

Later that year she returned to Pakistan where her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, had been elected prime minister, but days after her arrival, the military seized power and her father was imprisoned. In 1979 he was hanged by the military government of General Zia Ul Haq.

Bhutto herself was also arrested many times over the following years, and was detained for three years before being permitted to leave the country in 1984. She settled in London, but along with her two brothers, she founded an underground organization to resist the military dictatorship. When her brother died in 1985, she returned to Pakistan for his burial, and was again arrested for participating in anti-government rallies.

She returned to London after her release, and martial law was lifted in Pakistan at the end of the year. Anti-Zia demonstrations resumed and Benazir Bhutto returned to Pakistan in April 1986. The public response to her return was tumultuous, and she publicly called for the resignation of Zia Ul Haq, whose government had executed her father.

She was elected co-chairwoman of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) along with her mother, and when free elections were finally held in 1988, she herself became Prime Minister. At 35, she was one of the youngest chief executives in the world, and the first woman to serve as prime minister in an Islamic country.

Only two years into her first term, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dismissed Bhutto from office. She initiated an anti-corruption campaign, and in 1993 was re-elected as Prime Minister. While in office, she brought electricity to the countryside and built schools all over the country. She made hunger, housing and health care her top priorities, and looked forward to continuing to modernize Pakistan.

At the same time, Bhutto faced constant opposition from the Islamic fundamentalist movement. Her brother Mir Murtaza, who had been estranged from Benazir since their father's death, returned from abroad and leveled charges of corruption at Benazir's husband, Asif Ali Zardari. Mir Murtaza died when his bodyguard became involved in a gunfight with police in Karachi. The Pakistani public was shocked by this turn of events and PPP supporters were divided over the charges against Zardari.

In 1996 President Leghari of Pakistan dismissed Benazir Bhutto from office, alleging



mismanagement, and dissolved the National Assembly. A Bhutto re-election bid failed in 1997, and the next elected government, headed by the more conservative Nawaz Sharif, was overthrown by the military. Bhutto's husband was imprisoned, and once again, she was forced to leave her homeland. For nine years, she and her children lived in exile in London, where she continued to advocate the restoration of democracy in Pakistan. In the autumn of 2007, in the face of death threats from radical Islamists, and the hostility of the government, she returned to her native country.

Although she was greeted by enthusiastic crowds, within hours of her arrival, her motorcade was attacked by a suicide bomber. She survived this first assassination attempt,

although more than 100 bystanders died in the attack. With national elections scheduled for January 2008, her Pakistan People's Party was poised for a victory that would make Bhutto prime minister once again. Only a few weeks before the election, the extremists struck again. After a campaign rally in Rawalpindi, a gunman fired at her car before detonating a bomb, killing himself and more than 20 bystanders. Bhutto was rushed to the hospital, but soon succumbed to injuries suffered in the attack. In the wake of her death, rioting erupted throughout the country. The loss of the country's most popular democratic leader has plunged Pakistan into turmoil, intensifying the dangerous instability of a nuclear-armed nation in a highly volatile region.



Pakistan cannot accept the unilateral decisions taken by the Trump Administration: NSC

By M. Saeed Yousafzai

The sixteenth meeting of the National Security Committee was chaired by Prime Minister Mr. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in Islamabad. Prof Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Interior, Lt. General (Retd.) Nasser Khan Janjua, National Security Advisor, General Zubair Mehmood Hayat, Chairman JCSC, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of the Army Staff, Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi, Chief of the Naval Staff, Air Chief Marshall Sohail Aman, Chief of the Air Staff, and senior civil and military officials attended the meeting.

The National Security Committee condemned the terrorist attack on the Bethel Memorial Methodist Church in Quetta on Sunday, terming it to be against the fundamental tenets of peace and tolerance taught by Islam.

The Foreign Secretary briefed the meeting on the OIC Extraordinary Summit and Council of Foreign Ministers Meetings on Al Quds Al-Sharif held in Istanbul on 13th December 2017, following the decisions taken by the Trump Administration to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital and its announcement to shift US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Observing that these two decisions had created an incomprehensible situation not just for the Muslim Ummah but also for the international community in general, the Committee emphasized that the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian State remained a major objective of the Muslim Ummah, that Pakistan cannot accept the unilateral decisions taken by the Trump Administration, and that it would continue to impress upon the United States its moral and political responsibility towards a just and fair resolution of the issue, and the need to revoke the steps taken.

The National Security Committee also reviewed the rapidly evolving security situation in the Middle East as well as the latest developments in Pakistan's relations with the GCC States and Iran. After thorough analysis, the meeting reaffirmed that Pakistan would continue to work for the unity and solidarity of the Muslim Ummah, for which it shall intensify its efforts in view of the growing challenges.

Pakistan would continue to work for the unity and solidarity of the Muslim Ummah: NSC

The Secretary Interior apprised the Committee of the progress made in each of the twenty areas of the National Action Plan (NAP). The Committee observed that while fair progress had been made in the implementation of the NAP, certain areas, such as policy and institutional reform, needed more commitment and

attention. The Committee also observed that as a responsible member of the International community, Pakistan would continue to fulfill its obligations under the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) framework, which would be shared in due course with the FATF.

Finally, the National Security Committee tasked the National Security Advisor to finalise the National Security Policy at the earliest after taking all stakeholders on board.

Earlier in a statement by PM office said "It is deeply regrettable that pleas from states across the globe not to alter the legal and historical status of Al-Quds Al-Sharif have been ignored, more out of choice than necessity".

The decision represents a serious violation of the international law and the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, the statement said. "It is a serious setback to the rule of law and international norms. It signals a severe blow to the Middle East peace process as well."



Never a technocratic government

There can be no two opinions that Pakistan's democracy is highly fragile. Its fragility is manifest in most government decisions, in unbalanced civil-military relations and lack of interest of parliamentarians in legislating laws, policymaking or building national consensus on vital issues. The list is long and unending, and causes enormous suffering especially to the poor on whose votes the politicians comes to power.

But the answer to these weaknesses certainly is not a technocratic government or any other variant of military rule as some proponents of it keep suggesting. Surprisingly, we conveniently forget that we have tried these experiments of trampling democracy for nearly half the life of Pakistan's existence. Despite the hindsight of four highly damaging martial laws there are misguided voices that would like to drag the nation once again into a few years of so-called technocratic governance.

Ayub's and Yahya's eras ended in the catastrophic break-up of Pakistan. The military aid that we received for being a part of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation, the Central Treaty Organisation or the Baghdad Pact did give an artificial boost to the economy and the political support to dictatorial regimes. But invited the wrath of the Soviet Union and at the domestic level strangled the development of democratic institutions. Similarly, Pakistan pays a heavy price for Gen Zia's and Musharraf's periods even now.

Zia totally changed the character of the Pakistani state by using religion for political purposes and committing the country to Afghan jihad. Musharraf's total surrender to American dictates after the events of 9/11 did earn him the legitimacy for which he was desperately looking for but cost the nation heavily. The blunder of Kargil haunts the nation to date. Hundreds of soldiers were martyred and Pakistan's international credibility suffered a serious blow. The tragic death of Benazir Bhutto occurred under his watch. And the lawyer's historical movement, triggered by the removal of former chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, was a spontaneous outburst of resentment against the regime. The country continued to drift into further chaos and only through the good offices of a former British high commissioner who mediated between him and the PPP leadership that prevented a total meltdown. Needless to mention how militancy kept expanding and sinking in deep roots, especially in Fata, during this period. If we look back, vested interest groups initially welcomed

military or technocratic takeovers but soon the dark reality emerged. The broad narrative to sell these variants is that larger interest of the country is served; but who defines these interests?

Whereas our experience has been that every time a non-elected government has been installed it has pushed the clock back by several years. And Pakistan had to start the journey towards democracy from basics. What is overlooked is that the policies adopted by military regimes continue to haunt us even today. They take decisions and are answerable to no one. So the whole concept of accountability goes by the board. More significantly, succession becomes difficult. As The New York Times editorial once described: "Democracy is the only form of government that, at least theoretically, contemplates its own demise with equanimity."

A technocratic government is in fact a euphemism or cover for a military government or dictatorship. For who appoints the technocrats, bureaucrats, businessmen or industrialist to run the affairs of the country? It is the choice of the army where the power resides. Thus it would be an indirect if not a direct military rule with which we all are familiar.

The argument that technocratic governments are good for the economy does not hold to scrutiny. For long- and mid-term economic growth, political stability is imperative. At the end of every military rule the treasury has been empty. Moreover, any economic policy that serves the interests of the privileged, which normally is the case during technocratic governments, is unsustainable.

What is needed is to emphasise that the political parties internally become more democratic, transparent and strengthen state institutions. And give high priority to the country's economic development and betterment of lives of the people. The unfortunate distrust between state institutions is taking a heavy toll on the nation and the people. Pakistan has paid a huge price in the past and continues to do so.

Another disconcerting fact is that countries that acquired independence about the same time or later, such as, India, South Korea and Indonesia are now functional democracies. Ironically, we try to compete with India passionately on every major issue but not so when it comes to progress in democratic consolidation.

This is not to deny that civilian rule has not been chaotic and highly inefficient. In fact, it has failed to meet even the minimum



By Talat Masood

expectations of the people. But in case of civilian rule the people have a choice to reject a political party in power or its leader and elect another one, if they so decide. There is no such option to remove a technocratic government that is fronting dictatorship. The turbulence is far greater. As we have witnessed in Pakistan dictators were literary thrown out either as a consequence of a mass movement or national catastrophe.

What we fail to realise is that during an army rule organic development of civilian institutions and especially the political parties is stunted. A country where institutions and political parties are in infancy the impact is manifold. More significantly, a technocratic government serves elitist interests and during its period the distance between power centres and the people widens. Furthermore, with armed forces heavily committed to fighting internal insurgency and guarding the eastern and western borders it is in the national interest that they fully focus on defence and security challenges.

The challenge for the current and subsequent civilian leadership is to regain full control over foreign, security and defence policies. But this would only be possible by taking greater interest and improve performance. It seems they have resigned to the idea of leaving this primary responsibility in many areas to the army leadership. Irrespective of which institution is responsible for these major weaknesses the fact is the country suffers enormously. No responsible nation can allow this to continue.

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

Courtesy to Express Tribune



Af-Pak relations and CPEC

As the traditional proponents of globalisation are slowly and gradually receding, and with the visible shift of power from the West to the East, the role of China in Asia and globally is rapidly becoming prominent. Countries in the region and beyond are increasingly looking to China for guidance and support. As far as South Asia is concerned, peace and stability is a pre-requisite for China to realise its development and leadership roles in the region.

In that context, relations between two key states of South Asia, Afghanistan and Pakistan, is of strategic importance to China. The vision of President Xi for a well-connected world, via sea, road and railway networks, of which the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is an important component, cannot be fully realised without fixing the bilateral relationship. In October this year, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani was reported to have stated in New Delhi that his country will not allow Pakistan access to Central Asia unless the latter provides it land access to India through the CPEC projects.

As we speak, relations between the two countries continue to be characterised by chronic mutual suspicions, with both sides blaming each other for the existing fragile security situation in the two countries, where terrorist groups continue to be active. Both sides blame each other for providing safe havens to these groups. The recent terrorist attack on a university dormitory in Peshawar in which nine students were killed and many others injured, and the subsequent statements issued by the government of Pakistan which said that the attack was handled from Afghanistan, is the latest example of the deplorable state of relations between the two.

CPEC provides a significant ray of hope to the people of Pakistan, which will offer them better

job opportunities and an environment more conducive to economic development. These hopes are not unrealistic. However, without an improved security situation, fears exist that their hopes may be shattered if investors continue to be scared for the safety of their investment. And as Afghanistan and Pakistan have been termed conjoined brothers, security situation in one country has a direct bearing on security situation in the other.

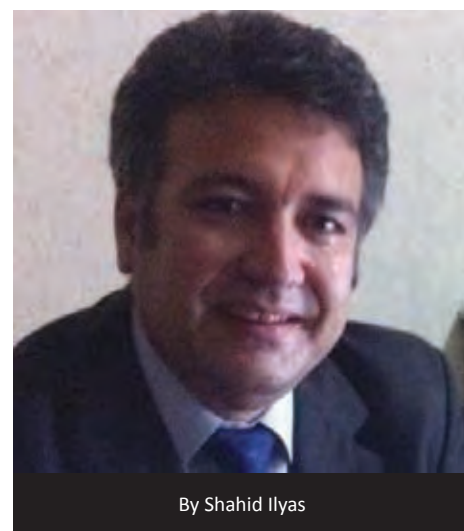
However, not only Afghanistan and Pakistan, but China, Iran and India constitute an essential part in this brotherhood. This is so because without all these actors being in cordial relationship or at least in working relationship, their respective dreams of economic development may remain just dreams for a long time to come. Relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan are intimately connected with their respective relationships with India. Pakistan has legitimate concerns with regard to the massive diplomatic and development presence of India in Afghanistan, with the explicit support of the US. Add to that Afghanistan's reliance on Pakistan for access to the sea and to India by land, and its reluctance to allow a free flow of people and goods between Afghanistan and India, given the fraught nature of Indo-Pak relations.

This is a complex mix of relationships, in which China has to navigate for its own national interests with taking into account the interests of other regional actors. China has in fact an uphill task to fulfill, that is, to help evolve a solution in this twisted environment in which all the aforementioned actors win.

It is time that China provided its leadership for a grand and candid regional dialogue in which the concerns of all regional states, including Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and Iran, are put on the table. Such a dialogue process under the Chinese leadership can go in parallel with the

existing quadrilateral process of which China is already a part, with Afghanistan, Pakistan and the US. This is needed because without a dialogue process under the Chinese leadership, every actor in the region will try to undermine regional projects, such as CPEC. The failure of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation to integrate the region offers a lot of lessons for all of us who seek regional connectivity.

China is in an advantageous position as far as facilitation of a dialogue process between Afghanistan and Pakistan is concerned. It has cordial relations with both countries. Both look towards China for meeting their objectives of economic development. Beijing has secured several key projects in the mining sector in Afghanistan, which remain dormant due to the



By Shahid Ilyas

bad security environment and the consequent bad economic situation in Afghanistan. These raw materials have a significant value for industries based in China as well as the ones planned along the CPEC routes. Moreover, the ambitious goals as set out for CPEC projects will entail the necessity of peace in Afghanistan and access to its market. All these aims are at risk without an improved security situation in the Af-Pak region.

The cooperation which existed in the territories now controlled by Afghanistan, China and Pakistan in ancient times, when the Silk Road connected this region and peoples of the region interacted economically, culturally and socially, needs to be revived. President Xi's vision for One Belt One Road, of which CPEC is an important component, seeks exactly that. But in order for that to truly materialise, a cordial trilateral relationship is a pre-requisite.

The writer is a research officer at the Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad. He can be reached at ilyasakbarkhan@gmail.com

Courtesy to Express Tribune



23 diplomats from 21 friendly countries completed 25th Junior Diplomatic Course

By Monitoring Desk

The Foreign Service Academy, Islamabad held its Passing-out Ceremony of the 25th Junior

Diplomatic Course. A group of 23 diplomats from 21 friendly countries attended the course. A large number of Foreign Ambassadors based in Islamabad, senior officials of the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs, members of the diplomatic Corps, eminent scholars, and educationists as well as the faculty members of the Academy attended the event.

Ambassador of Tajikistan Sherali Jononove, Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada, Director General FSA Ambassador Iftexhar Aziz and others cake cutting during ceremony held at Foreign Service Academy.



CM Shahbaz Sharif meets 16 Diplomates

Punjab Chief Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met with Ambassadors and High Commissioners from more than 16 countries and discussed matters of mutual interests and opportunities related to trade and investment. CM Shehbaz briefed the dignitaries about the developments.

Those who called on CM included Tajikistan's Ambassador and Acting Dean of Diplomatic

Corps H.E. Jononov SherAli Saidamirovich, Kuwaiti ambassador H.E. Nasser Abdul Rahman J.Almutairi, the Ambassador of Azerbaijan H.E. Ali Alizada, Bela Russ Ambassador H.E. Andrei Emolovich, Ambassador of Egypt H.E. Ahmed Mohammad Yaqoob, Ambassador of Nigeria H.E. Adebayo A Olaniyi, Ambassador of Mauritius H.E. Rashid Ali Soobadar, Sudan's Ambassador H.E. Tahir Taha, Ambassador of Tunisia H.E. Adel Elarbi, Sri Lanka's

High Commissioner H.E. Jaya Nath C.P Lokuketagodage, Deputy High Commissioner of Australia H.E. Brek Btlay, Nazim from the Embassy of Libya H.E. Nazir A. M Nabiyah, Turkish Consulate General H.E. Serdar Deniz, US Consulate General H.E. Elizabeth Kennedy Trudeau, Deputy Head Of Mission of Ukraine H.E. Vasyllvashko, Acting Consulate General of China H.E. Wang Daxue and others.



Mr. Shakil Ahmad, Chairman Shakil Express Pvt. Ltd and Mrs. Nargis Shakil hosted a New Year Family Brunch in the honor of Diplomates in Capital at his residence in Islamabad.





Dynamics of OBOR initiative Exploring new economic horizons across the globe



China's Belt and Road Initiative, also known as One Belt, One Road (OBOR), is one of the most ambitious foreign and economic projects. It aims to materialize a grand plan of infrastructure building throughout China's neighboring regions. Many foreign policy analysts view this initiative largely through a geopolitical lens, viewing it as an attempt to engrave the new economic horizons. However, some analysts argue that the key drivers behind OBOR are largely motivated by China's pressing economic concerns.

Beijing hopes its transnational infrastructure building program will boost up the growth in China's underdeveloped regions along with opening the economic opportunities for the other countries. Though the initiative will have a heavy domestic focus, but it will also work as a platform to address the country's excess production capacity. It is more about migrating surplus factories than dumping excess products.

The regional development aspect of OBOR is perhaps one of the most important economic policy objectives. The coordinating government agency heading OBOR is the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the country's premier economic planning agency. It is likely that Chinese domestic components of OBOR projects will be built before any overseas components for the simple reason that Beijing can enforce its plans much more effectively within its own jurisdiction.

In 2014 OBOR was officially incorporated into China's national economic development strategy at the 'Central Economic Work Conference', the annual agenda-setting economic summit for policymakers. Beijing announced three regional development plans, one of which was OBOR. These regional development plans are designed to address the long-standing problem of uneven development in China. Economic inequality between inland western regions and prosperous eastern seaboard states is a huge challenge for the ruling party. For example, the coastal mega-metropolis of Shanghai is five times wealthier than the inland province of Gansu, which is part of the old Silk Road. Beijing has tried to close the gap between these provinces.

Since 1999 the Chinese Government has pursued the so-called 'western development strategy' to revitalize continuously underperforming provinces including the majority Muslim autonomous region of Xinjiang. However,



By Amna Malik

these efforts have produced few tangible results. Despite Beijing's preferential policies, large-scale fiscal injections and state-directed investments, the western provinces' share of China's total GDP increased only marginally from 17.1 percent in 2000 to 18.7 percent in 2010.

One acute side-effect of heavy state subsidies in these western provinces has been a high concentration of state-owned enterprises and low penetration of private firms. For instance, the western regions of Xinjiang, Tibet, Qinghai, and Gansu are the four lowest-ranked provinces on the China Economic Research Institute's Free Market Index. Their average score is 2.67 (0 represents no private enterprise and 10 represents complete privately owned industry) whereas the national average is 6.56.

The world's geo-economic scenario has been undergoing drastic changes since the advent of China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative. A new but crucial dimension was added to this situation when soon after Donald Trump was sworn as the 45th President of the US, he signaled what can only be described as a policy of isolation by adopting the 'America First' slogan. In response to China's OBOR initiative and Washington's America First policy, those countries that felt their economies would be affected one way or the other as a result started calibrating their relation with the two superpowers - one as old as history itself and the other making history as it entered the current century. Therefore, it was only understandable that many old friends of the America started mending their economic ties with China and at the same time de-escalating

decades old economic ties with Washington.

The countries like Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia have already moved closer to China. Japan and South Korea feel uneasy because of North Korea's war like posturing; otherwise these two would have also gone over to China. But if President Trump carries out his 'America first' policy to its logical conclusion then these two countries would also find it impossible to remain within the US camp any longer.

Today, China is Australia's largest market for merchandise exports. Canberra also is in consultation with other nations to forge ahead with Trans-Pacific Partnership. In the same way Europe and the UK seem to be wooing China and cold shouldering the US at least in matters of economy. In South Asia, India perhaps dictated by its pathological hatred of Pakistan and worried about China's strategic ambitions in the wake of its OBOR initiative has gone very close to the US. The recent confrontation between the Chinese and Indian troops in the Himalayas-Doklam plateau at China-Bhutan border has pushed New Delhi further into the lap of United States. It is in this changing geo-economic context that Pakistan also needs to reset its own economic policies by throwing the Washington Consensus book out of the window as a first step.

The initiative of One Belt One Road looms on a scope and scale which is unprecedented in modern history, promising more than \$1 trillion in infrastructure and spanning more than 68 countries and encompassing 4.4 billion people and up to 40% of the global GDP, OBOR initiative is all about changing the economic order of the world.

CPEC indeed the doorway to prosperity

Pakistan's economy has grown at an annual average rate of about 7 percent during last few years, which is why the world is interested to collaborate in several economic and development projects with Pakistan. The \$46 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a reflection of expanding cooperation between the two friendly neighbors and will have a significant economic impact on the region. The CPEC is aimed at promoting connectivity across Pakistan with a network of highways, railways, and pipelines accompanied by energy, industrial, and other infrastructural

development projects to address critical energy shortages needed to boost Pakistan's economic growth.

The CPEC reduces China's route from the Indian Ocean to 3,000km across Pakistani territory from the Gwadar Port and avoids the straits altogether. It facilitates trade by road and rail, while at the same time boosting oil and gas pipelines through infrastructural enhancement.

Gwadar has a 200,000 tonne tanker capacity, which presents unmatched opportunities for boosting global economic interactivity. Pakistan is located strategically at the tail of the corridor, yet at the confluence of most of the world's oil-producing states, Gwadar automatically becomes one of the largest transshipment ports. It is envisaged to have an international airport, crude oil refineries and the ability to dock larger ships, turning it into a robust trade and transportation hub. The power plants in Pakistan, upgrades to a major highway and a \$1 billion port expansion, are a political bulwark.

By prompting growth in Pakistan, China wants to blunt the spread of Pakistan's terrorists across the border into the Xinjiang region, where a restive Muslim population of Uighurs resides. It has military benefits, providing China's navy future access to a remote port at Gwadar managed by a state-backed Chinese company with a 40-year contract. In November 2016, the birth of the CPEC began in earnest when Chinese cargo was transported to the port of Gwadar for onward maritime shipment to Africa and West Asia.

Infrastructure projects will span the length and breadth of Pakistan and will eventually link Pakistani seaports in Gwadar and Karachi to China's northwestern autonomous region of Xinjiang via a vast network of highways and railways. Infrastructure projects will be financed by heavily subsidized concessionary loans via the Exim Bank of China, China Development Bank, and the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China. Over \$33 billion worth of energy infrastructure projects are to be constructed to alleviate Pakistan's unending energy shortages. A network of pipelines to transport liquefied natural gas and oil will also be laid as part of the project, including a \$2.5 billion pipeline between Gwadar and Nawabshah to eventually transport gas from Iran.

Many countries in the program have serious needs. The Asian Development Bank estimated that emerging Asian economies need \$1.7 trillion per year in infrastructure to maintain growth, tackle poverty and respond to climate change. Pakistan achieved a total generation capacity of 1,185 megawatts from renewable energy when the first wind power project under the CPEC was installed in Ghoro. Pakistan is amongst the few countries in the world today producing over 1,000 megawatts of electricity from renewable energy sources and had been

listed 39th in the renewable energy index. The present installed power generation capacity from renewable energy sources stands at 1,135 MW, which includes 590 MW from wind, 400 MW from solar and 145 MW from bagasse. Plans are in progress to increase power generation from solar and wind to 1,756 MW and 1,000 MW respectively within the next two years.

According to a report regarding CPEC, "this is the biggest overseas investment by China announced yet and the corridor is expected to be operational within three years and will be a strategic game changer in the region, which would go a long way in making Pakistan a richer and stronger entity than ever before." When it comes to the stakeholders of the said project, we need to identify primary project stakeholders for the project Pak China Business corridor.

Chinese Government is the financier of this mega initiative and the pivotal partner. With the completion of this project China will reach new horizons of prosperity by the access of new markets to sell their products and buy their desired ones. They have also their stake as customer and the most beneficial end users.

Government of Pakistan has its own concerns as it is a multipurpose project. Economists think that this project will open new doors of prosperity for Pakistan as there are many new assets to be created in Pakistan for the project including Gwadar seaport, airport, railway lines, Karakoram highway, motorway networks and industrial zones near motorway roots etc.

Government of Azad Jammu & Kashmir is also a primary stakeholder because the main supply route network (Roads, railways, pipelines etc) is passing through their territory. So they will be also in legal bindings with the project owners and client countries. Provincial governments of all four provinces of Pakistan will be equally

bonded in the projects for providing different facilities to different entities involved in projects and gaining benefits for that and after completion benefits.

Project suppliers or vendors provide tangible inputs for the project which is acquired through a standard and usually competitive procurement process and same is the case here. Like project contractors, project suppliers/vendors are key stakeholders in construction and many other categories of CPEC projects. Some manufactures perform supply functions, others use distributors.

Various government departments are also the primary stakeholders because they will be in direct or legal bindings to the project. Some of the notable ones are Planning Commission of Pakistan, Gwadar Port Authority, Ministry of Ports and Shipping, WAPDA, OGDCL, SNGPL, SSGPL, Law enforcement agencies and National Highway Authority among others. Trade unions established by the coordination of the traders are also the stakeholders. They are established to run the trade process smoothly and fight for the trader's right and support traders. These are also the entities having no legal but a definite relationship to the project.

World trade organization is also the stakeholders because this project will be a turning point in the world's trade. This will affect the trade in different continents and turn a major part to the china. Apart from these stakeholders the general public of the both countries is the real stakeholder of this forthcoming development and progress. They are all ready to witness the emergence of new economic horizon on the global canvas.

Writer is the President at Center of Pakistan and International Relations (COPAIR) and Founder of Melange Trade & Investment Forum.



MESSAGE



H. E. MR. GABRIEL TIEL CAPOTE,

AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE NATIONAL DAY OF CUBA

On the occasion of the 59th Anniversary of the Triumph of the Cuban Revolution, National Day of the Republic of Cuba, it is an honor for me to address the Pakistani people.

Just a few months ago, the powerful hurricane Irma hit Cuba hard, with the destruction of more than 179,000 houses and damages to health, education, tourism, and communications facilities, and for the first time, the national electric power system was paralyzed. The results achieved in the rapid recovery after the passage of this strong hurricane, especially in the supply of electricity and water, are a sign of our strength and unity.

In the economic field, we have shortcomings, but our people work hard to overcome them. Cuba has today the lowest infant mortality rate in its history, with a prevalence of 4.1 deaths per 1,000 live births. Life expectancy at birth has reached a general average of 78.45 years, it has continued to grow; and now stands at 80.45 years for women and 76.50 years for men. The maternal mortality rate has been reduced from 42.6 to 38.0 deaths per 100,000 live births. Likewise, as a result of the Comprehensive Cancer Control Program, in the last three years the mortality rates due to this disease have stopped growing.

For the year 2018, the plan of our economy has foreseen a growth of 2%, a little superior to 2017. Particular attention will be paid to the investments associated with the development of infrastructures and the strengthening of foreign currency income, among them, tourism, whose activity reached 4 million 700 000 visitors and is expected to achieve 5 million in 2018, works in the Mariel Economic Development Zone, rail transport, renewable sources, support to electricity, food production to meet national demand and for the tourism; as well as the sustainability of the basic sectors to the people such as health, education, culture, passenger transport, among others.

Between 2014 and 2016 it was demonstrated that Cuba and the USA can try to build a new kind of relationship, based on respect and equality, which at the same time recognizes the existing differences, does not make them the center of our links, but rather essentially rests on the benefits they can bring to the two countries and peoples. However, as President Raul Castro said during the tenth regular session of the Eighth Legislature of the National Assembly of People's Power and I quote: "In 2017 we have witnessed a serious and irrational setback in Cuba-US relations, of which our country is not responsible for ". He also referred to the resurgence of the blockade, the application of unjustified measures that affect both peoples and that undermine the rights and freedoms of both Cubans and Americans. He recalled that it is not Cuba that has established restrictions, nor that which has limited trade links, nor that which has damaged the operation of the Embassies, the exchanges and travel between both nations. The policy adopted by the new government of the United States is opposed by the international community and the American people, expressed in the United Nations vote against the Blockade. "Nor does it have the support of Cuban migration that is also affected, these decisions only respond to backward interests and policies," he said. He also confirmed that Cuba is willing to continue negotiating pending bilateral issues, based on respect and independence. "The Revolution has withstood the onslaught of 11 administrations, and here we are and we will be free, sovereign and independent," he said.

Although geographically distant, the bilateral relations between Cuba and Pakistan are based on friendship and mutual aid, which is why they are becoming stronger every day and we try to stimulate and strengthen the still incipient economic-commercial relations, for the benefit of the two countries. Cuba thanks the Government and the people of Pakistan for the constant support received in the vote that is annually held in the General Assembly of the United Nations to demand the end of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America, still in force. and whose negative effects harm our economy and hinder the normal development of our country. On the financial side, Cuba continues to be unable to conduct international transactions in US dollars, which prevents us from advancing multiple and important future businesses.

On November 25, the first anniversary of the physical disappearance of the historical leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz, whose legacy we hold, was commemorated throughout Cuba. We thank all Pakistani friends for the commemorative activities organized in Islamabad and for all the expressions of affection and solidarity towards our Commander in Chief.

I do not wish to conclude without first sending the most affectionate greetings to the Pakistani people who recently celebrated the 70th anniversary of their independence and who are striving every day to advance in their development for the enjoyment of the happiness and prosperity that they deserve in this new year 2018.

A portrait of H.E. Mr. Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Denmark. He is a middle-aged man with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue suit, a light blue and white striped shirt, and an orange patterned tie. He is standing in front of a large Pakistani flag, which features a green field with a white crescent and star. The text "We value Denmark's role in promoting relations with Pakistan, especially in the EU fora" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

**We value
Denmark's role
in promoting
relations with
Pakistan, especially
in the EU fora**

H.E Mr. Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi
Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Denmark

H.E Mr. Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi has been a very active and energetic diplomat. He has been appointed as Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Denmark. H.E. Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi presented his credentials to Queen of Denmark Margrethe II in a ceremony at Fredensborg Palace in month of September, 2017. Before being appointed as Ambassador to Denmark, H.E. was serving as Additional Foreign Secretary (Asia Pacific) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad. In his career of over 30 years, Ambassador Gardezi has dealt with multilateral as well as bilateral diplomacy; he earlier served in Pakistan Missions in the UK (twice), US and India.

The Diplomatic Focus has found the opportunity to talk to His Excellency and learn about his early life, education career, experiences and most importantly his role as Ambassador in bringing Denmark and Pakistan closer in terms of trade, diplomatic, education and cultural ties.

DF: Excellency! First of all, we congratulate you for new assignment and thankful to you for giving time. After that, I would like to learn a bit about your early life and education.

I have been in the Foreign Service of Pakistan

Pakistanis are making valuable contribution to the economy, culture, politics, academic, media and other spheres of life in Denmark.

for over three decades. I belong to the historic city of Multan where the Gardezi family has been living for more than nine centuries. After initial schooling in my hometown, I obtained my Matriculation and Intermediate Degrees from Cadet College Hassanabdal and Bachelors and Masters Degrees from Government College Lahore. I also undertook postgraduate studies at Oxford University, UK.

DF: Pakistan and Denmark are enjoying close cordial relations. How do you see the bilateral ties between the two nations over the years?

Pakistan-Denmark relations were established many decades back and we opened our Embassy in Denmark in the 70's. Despite occasional fluctuations, relations have generally been positive. Presently, bilateral relations are cordial and quite friendly. We value Denmark's role in promoting relations with Pakistan, especially in the EU fora. The two countries also cooperate on the multilateral plane. During my stay in Denmark, it will be my endeavor to deepen



ties and to improve understanding of each other's perspective. This would involve closer Government-to-Government cooperation, greater economic engagement and the welfare of the large Pakistani-origin community here.

DF: Denmark is host to a significant Pakistani diaspora, the second largest in Denmark, who are active contributors to the Danish economy and welfare state. How these active contributions do are seeing by Danish people and government? And what are the statistics numbers of Pakistanis over in Denmark? Furthermore, what is the role playing by Pakistan Embassy for their development and nurturing?

An estimated 25000-plus Pakistani-origin community is living in Denmark. A sizeable portion of them are second generation, whose parents migrated to Denmark in 70's or 80's.

I am especially pleased to share with you that one of my key goals i.e. Dual Nationality facility for Pakistanis living in Denmark has been approved

They are making valuable contribution to the economy, culture, politics, academic, media and other spheres of life in Denmark. A number of Pakistani Associations are active in this country.

The Embassy maintains close liaison with the Pakistani community. It provides consular services to the community like issuance of





passports, visas, attestation of documents, repatriation of deceased Pakistanis etc. We also actively engage with the Pakistani community by holding events for promotion of Pakistani culture.

DF: Excellency! Denmark is one of the important countries of European Union in terms of bilateral trade with Pakistan. Would you like to share the information of volume for trade and the products which are import/export between the two countries? And how do you see the export opportunities for Pakistani businesses to Denmark?

Economic relations which include trade and investment are an important component of Pakistan-Denmark relations. Annual trade

instruments, etc. The trade balance is in favor of Pakistan. However, the potential to expand trade with Denmark, one of the richest countries of Europe, is considerable and this will be priority areas for me.

DF: What are the diverse trading prospects that you offer to Denmark to invest in Pakistan? What are the areas which Pakistan and Denmark can explore to cooperate with each other?

A number of Danish companies have investments in Pakistan. In the trade area, there are many opportunities to capitalize on. For instance, Pakistan's strength lies in textile sector, for which Denmark is an important market. Danish expertise in agriculture and dairy sectors can be an area of collaboration. We could harness expertise for joint collaboration. For instance, Danish design is world famous, while Pakistan has good furniture-making facilities. We can benefit from investment in alternative energy particularly wind power as Danish companies are world leaders in this area. Similarly, cooperation in I.T. and Pharmaceutical has promising prospects.

DF: Is there any high level delegation expected to come to Pakistan from Denmark in near future or vice versa?

It shall be my endeavor to promote exchanges between the two sides. Recently, Danish business people visited Karachi for EXPO



Pakistan. Similarly, in the coming months we will be working to facilitate the visit to Denmark by Pakistani business persons.

At the official-level, we hope to establish Bilateral Consultations Mechanism to explore cooperation in diverse fields in a structured manner. There is academic sector engagement between the two countries. The training institutes of the two countries have exchanged visits from time to time.

DF: As an Ambassador your role is very crucial

The trade balance is in favor of Pakistan. Annual trade last year was around \$250 million between the two countries.

last year was around \$250 million. Pakistani exports to Denmark primarily comprise textile made-ups, garments, hosiery, medical/surgical instruments, sports goods, carpets, etc., while Denmark's exports to Pakistan include machinery and its parts, medical and pharmaceutical products, vegetable fats, chemicals, metals, medical and surgical



Protecting national interests is the foremost responsibility of a diplomat

in the bilateral ties and have keen eye on International relations. My question is that how do you see the current polarization in bilateral ties among the nations?

The international scene is witnessing ever-increasing challenges due to competing ambitions and ideologies. At the same time, increased contacts between societies and countries provide opportunities to learn from each other and to promote shared values and engage in practical cooperation. Protecting national interests is the foremost responsibility of a diplomat. I believe that this can be done by adopting an approach of enlightened self-interest whereby the common good can be promoted while preserving national interest.

DF: Excellency! Denmark every year offered education opportunities for international students. My question is, how Pakistani students can avail and benefits? Would you like to share the agreements in education sector between Pakistan and Denmark government?

Denmark has some of the highest-ranking academic institutions in the world. Some of these offer programmes in English language from which Pakistani students can benefit.

DF: Excellency! What are the facilities and policies you developed in Embassy for the Danish Pakistanis after joining the mission?

The welfare of the Pakistani community abroad is one of the priorities of the Government. I have set this as one of my foremost objectives and have been pursuing it since my arrival here in this country. Therefore, I am especially pleased to share with you that one of my key goals i.e. Dual Nationality facility for Pakistanis living in Denmark has been approved. The Embassy has already initiated this service.

DF: Excellency! Pakistani government announced that Pakistanis settled in Denmark have been allowed to have dual citizenship. But in March 2017, news came that Denmark imposes ban on visit visa for Pakistani residents' relatives. How do you see it?

I wish all your readers and the hardworking staff of the Diplomatic Focus a very happy, productive and peaceful 2018

I have responded to the question of Dual Nationality already. As regards visa regulations for Pakistanis desirous to travel to Denmark, you are right that these have been increased. While it is the prerogative of a state to decide who can or cannot enter in its territory, we have pointed out to the Danish Government that our common desire of closer relations can only be achieved by facilitating travel to each other's countries. Moreover, the additional restrictions do not reflect the improved security and economic situation in Pakistan.

DF: In these modern days, the importance of cultural ties has been increased so much. What do you think what further steps should be taken to enhance and boost cultural ties between Pakistan and Denmark furthermore?

I could not agree more on the need for enhancing cultural ties as these can create better understanding of each other's values and foster goodwill. While Pakistan may be a young country, we are an old nation that is

At the official-level, we hope to establish Bilateral Consultations Mechanism to explore cooperation in diverse fields in a structured manner.

proud of its heritage. Therefore, two factors will underline the Embassy's efforts in this regard - Raise awareness of Pakistani cultural and its values among Danish people and secondly to provide a platform to the Pakistani community in this country to cherish their cultural heritage. The Pakistan Embassy has undertaken activities on these lines. For instance we held Qawali performance to coincide with Pakistan's 70th Anniversary of independence celebrations. A few days earlier, the Embassy participated in an international event at the Town Hall in Copenhagen where Pakistani costumes were on display and the many Danish people attending that event were offered Pakistani cuisine.

DF: Excellency! You have been in the diplomatic field for quite a long time and certainly there would have been some memorable moments as well as some challenging ones. Would you please like to share some of them with us?

While I am at the initial phase of my tour of duty in Denmark, I been in the Foreign Service for three decades, during which I have had some interesting moments indeed. Working in our High Commission in London (twice) was a rich experience; the time spent in Washington D.C. was invaluable. I also spent some eventful years in New Delhi. In some ways this reminds

me of the Charles Dickens' line "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times". However, I would not like to bore your readers with narration of those events during this brief interview.

DF: How do you see the role of 'Diplomatic Focus' in enhancing the bilateral ties of Pakistan with other countries of the world?

In recent years, I have seen Diplomatic Focus evolve to a point where it is now an established magazine which is eagerly read in the diplomatic circles in Islamabad and now abroad also. The magazine with its rich visual content is a good source for promoting the culture of Pakistan. This qualitative improvement owes a great deal to its founder and CEO Mian Fazal Elahi.

DF: Excellency! Any message you want to give to the readers of the 'Diplomatic Focus'? And also you can share anything you think we have missed in the interview?

I consider myself lucky to belong to the Foreign Service of Pakistan as the exposure one receives is unique and unparalleled. Above all, it is an honour to serve my country whose founding father Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah had said: "our objective should be peace within and peace without."

As it is the time of year when the New Year begins, I wish all your readers and the hardworking staff of the Diplomatic Focus a very happy, productive and peaceful 2018.



In the South Asia, Pakistan is the best partner to trade with Nigeria in Africa continent

H.E. Maj Gen (retd) Ashimiyu Adebayo Olaniyi
High Commissioner of Nigeria

Interview by Mian Fazal Elahi

H.E. Maj Gen (Rtd) Ashimiyu Adebayo Olaniyi, the newly appointed High Commissioner of Nigeria to Islamic Republic of Pakistan has presented his credential to President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan H.E. Mamnoon Hussain on November 02, 2017.

H.E. Maj Gen (retd) Ashimiyu Adebayo Olaniyi has been a very active and energetic diplomat. The Diplomatic Focus has found the opportunity to talk to His Excellency and learn about his early

life, education career, experiences and most importantly his role as a high commissioner in bringing Nigeria and Pakistan closer in terms of trade, diplomatic, education and cultural ties.

DF: Excellency! First of all, Welcome to Pakistan and we are thankful to you for giving us your precious time. H.E! It will be worth for our readers to know about your education and professional life, experience and achievements. Would you like to share a bit about these?

Thank you! It is my pleasure having you in my office this morning. I was born on 29th January,

1958 at Ona-Ora Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. I grew up in a village called Kupalo- Jago. I had my secondary education at the Nigerian Military School, Zaria from 1973 – 1977 and proceeded to Nigerian Defence Academy as officer cadet of 23rd Regular combatant course on 9th January, 1978. I was commissioned into the Nigerian Army Engineers on 19th December, 1980 in the rank of Second-Lieutenant. I have Higher National Diploma in Civil Engineering and Post Graduate Diploma in Survey from Newbury United Kingdom in 1989.

I attended several courses which included Anti-

tank Platoon Commanders' course, Surveillance Platoon commanders' course, Engineering young officer's course, Squadron Commander's course, Junior Staff Course, Senior Staff course at Jaji, Kaduna, Nigeria and Senior Executive Course No. 28 at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru, Jos, Nigeria.

I held several appointments which include, Troop commander, Aide-Camp, Military Assistant, Brigade Major, Directing staff at Nigerian Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Commanding officer, Brigade Commander, Commandant, Nigerian Army School of Military Engineering, Commander, Corps of Nigerian Army Engineers and General officer Commanding, 82 Division of the Nigerian Army, Enugu. I voluntarily retired from the Nigerian Army on the rank of Major General in January, 2014.

DF: Excellency! How would you describe Pakistan Nigeria relations?

The relations between Pakistan and Nigeria which are dated back to 1962 (a period of over 55 years) has remained excellent, especially in the area of Defence Cooperation. The trade and investment relations is also good, but could be improved upon.

DF: Excellency! As a new High Commissioner of Nigeria to Pakistan, what are your priorities to strengthen the current bilateral relations in terms of trade, investment, diversification of new sectors of cooperation between the two brotherly countries?

As the High Commissioner of Nigeria to Pakistan, my areas of focus is to ensure the operationalization of the Memoranda of Understanding that have been signed while ensuring that other areas of bilateral trade relations such as oil and gas, mining, small and medium enterprise (SME), agriculture, manufacturing and textile are brought to the front burner. You know, Nigeria and Pakistan have many things in common; culture, population and even the economies of both countries are virtually the same. The process of diversification and rejuvenating the economies are alike, which means that in the South Asia, Pakistan is the best partner to trade with Nigeria in Africa continent.

DF: Excellency! According to media, from US \$5 00 m in 2015, the volume of trade between Nigeria and Pakistan has reached more than US\$900m in 2016. How do you see this improvement in trade and what is the current volume of trade between two countries?

Yes, the volume of trade between Nigeria and Pakistan has grown above US \$ 500 million



unlike what used to be in 2015, but the target is to grow beyond US \$ 1 billion because the two friendly countries have what it takes to achieve this, in terms of available mineral resources, agricultural products and the population. In other words, there are markets for the products being produced by the two countries.

The relationship between Nigeria and Pakistan in terms of Defence Cooperation has remained excellent over the years, unlike the bilateral trade relation which needs some improvement.

DF: Excellency! Couple of week before you visited to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and stressed on the need for developing strong cooperation between the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) of Pakistan and Nigeria. It will be worth to explain it.

Any business delegation wishing to visit Nigeria is assured of speedy issuance of visa within 48 hours of submission of relevant documents

That is true, I visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce a couple of weeks ago. The aim of the visit is to strengthen the trade and investments relations between the various Pakistani Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Nigeria Chambers of Commerce and Industries. Talking about the development of strong cooperation between the small and medium enterprise (SMEs) of the two countries, you know that the SMEs are the bodies which drive the economy of any nation and at the same time provide job opportunities for the teeming youths of any country. In other words, it empowers the youths to be self-sufficient thus allowing for the economic growth.

DF: Excellency! Nigeria had excellent cooperation with Pakistan in the field of defence, but the bilateral trade was not encouraging pointed by you recently. What do you think, how both countries can balance it and especially Nigerian side?

The relationship between Nigeria and Pakistan in terms of Defence Cooperation has remained excellent over the years, unlike the bilateral trade relation which needs some improvement. In order to improve the trade relation, there must be regular exchange of information about the resources; be it mineral, agriculture, oil and gas, textile, manufacturing etc. that are available in the two countries. Secondly, there must be constant holding of Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) between the two countries at governmental levels. Thirdly, the business men of both countries must interact through their various Chambers of Commerce and Industries. In terms of balance of trade, between the two countries, as at today, the balance is tilted in favour of Pakistan, but there is no problem

about this present situation, as this could be adjusted to make the two countries to be at par.

DF: Excellency! Business delegation level visits are very fruitful to explore the sectors having potential of cooperation. Is there any special steps are under consideration? And which type of services your embassy are providing to Pakistani businesspersons?

Any business delegation wishing to visit Nigeria is assured of speedy issuance of visa within 48 hours of submission of relevant documents. Also, any Pakistani business man who wishes to invest in Nigerian economy through registration of company can do so online and within 72 hours such company will be registered through Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC).

DF: Is there any high level delegation expected to come to Pakistan from Nigeria in near future or vice versa?

Yes, Pakistan is expected to host the next Joint Ministerial Commission, (JMC) in Islamabad. High level powered delegation from Nigeria will be arriving in Islamabad in February, 2018 for the JMC.

In a foreseeable future, Nigeria may key into this project [CPEC] since Nigeria – China has bilateral trade agreements, so also Nigeria – Pakistan

DF: What are the diverse trading prospects that you offer to Pakistanis to invest in Nigeria? What are the areas which Pakistan and Nigeria can explore to cooperate with each other? What Nigerian policy is offering for foreign investors?

A lot, quite a lot of diverse trading prospects that Pakistan can invest in Nigeria, such as oil and gas, agriculture, manufacturing, mining, textile. The current Nigeria policy on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) for foreign investors is quite encouraging. For example the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR, has launched an Economic Recovery and Growth

Plan (ERGP) 2017 – 2020 which focuses on three (3) core objectives which are to: Restore and sustain growth, invest in our – people and build a globally competitive economy.

DF: Excellency! Pakistan and China is shaping CPEC which is producing lot of opportunities for not only local investors but also for foreign investors. How you looking this projects in Pakistan Nigeria relations development in terms of investment? What you can suggest for Nigerian investors?

Yes you are right, China – Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a good initiative for a local and foreign investment as it is a framework of regional connectivity, particularly for the Asian countries. This regional linkages having improved roads, rail and air transportation system will certainly increase the activity of higher volume of flow of trade and business amongst the participating countries. And since Nigeria and China have good bilateral trade relations, it means that if air transportation system, which is one of the cardinal focus of CPEC, fully takes off and there is air linkage from Pakistan to Nigeria, it is expected that the trade volume between Pakistan and Nigeria will improve. So, in a foreseeable future, Nigeria may key into this project since Nigeria – China has bilateral trade agreements, so also Nigeria – Pakistan.

Quite a lot of diverse trading prospects that Pakistan can invest in Nigeria, such as oil and gas, agriculture, manufacturing, mining, textile.

DF: Excellency! People to people contacts are a basic developmental element in today's relations. Tourism, culture exchange programs and educational initiatives can close the nations. How do you see it and what are the measures can be taken? Furthermore is any direct flight is operating between the two countries?

I agree with you that people to people relationship is very crucial in today's economic improvement amongst nations. In early 1980s, the people to people relationship between Nigerians and Pakistanis were quite high. In fact, many inter-marriages occurred between the people of the two countries. Similarly, within the same period, Pakistan sent hundreds of teachers, doctors and agronomist to Nigeria



to teach in schools and improve agriculture, particularly in Northern Nigeria. However, the situation is quite different as at today. My focus as the Nigerian High Commissioner is to see how I can maximize Tourism and Cultural exchanges programmes and educational initiatives to close this gap, which will ultimately increase trade investments between the two countries. On the issue of direct flight departing the two countries there has been no agreement for bilateral Air services agreement but since my assumption of office as the High Commissioner in September, 2017, one area I have placed serious emphasis is the issue of Pakistan International Airline (PIA) operating on the Nigeria route; I have mentioned this to all the Presidents of the Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore Chambers of Commerce that I have visited thus far.

DF: Thanks a lot Your Excellency! For giving time out of your busy schedule and of course for your nice talk. Any message you want to give to the readers of 'Diplomatic Focus'? And also you can share anything you think we have missed in the interview?

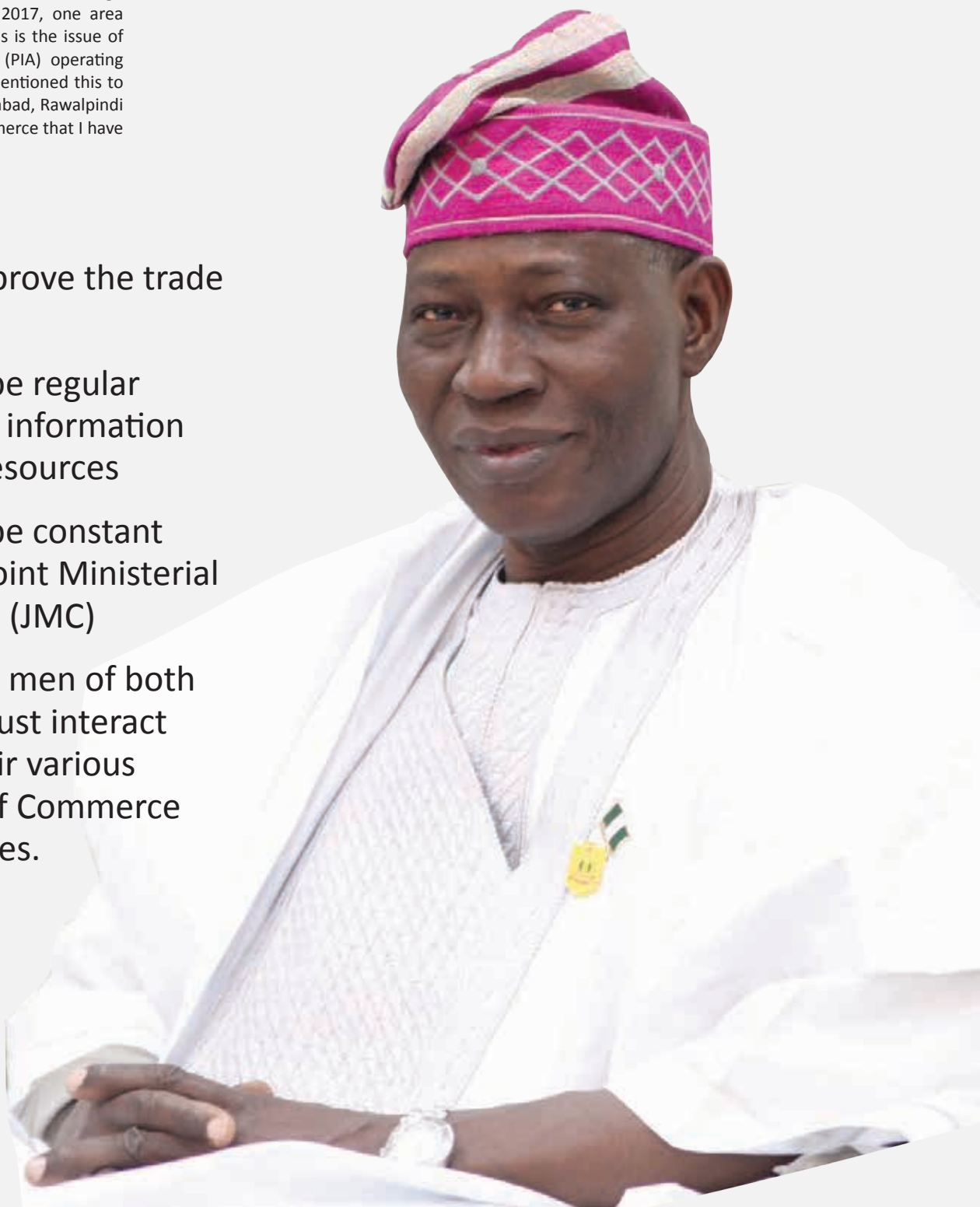
I thank you for given me this opportunity to have this interview with you at this early stage as an Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. My

advice to the teaming readers of Diplomatic Focus is to keep on patronizing this magazine because of its quality and incisive and topical issues, which touch on diplomatic affairs across the world.

Thanks Excellency!

In order to improve the trade relation,

- 1-there must be regular exchange of information about the resources
- 2-there must be constant holding of Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC)
- 3-the business men of both countries must interact through their various Chambers of Commerce and Industries.



100 Years of the Ukrainian diplomatic service

By H.E. Volodymyr Lakomov
Ambassador of Ukraine to Pakistan

This year we in Ukraine celebrate several important anniversary dates linked with the Ukrainian revolution of 1917-1921. Particularly, this year marks the centenary of Ukrainian diplomatic service.

Everybody is aware of the fact that Ukraine is a young state. But Ukrainian statehood has a much longer history. It is comprised of over 1000 years of the battle for freedom. We are the people who built a progressive state of Kyiv Rus' a thousand years ago when present day Moscow did not even exist. We are the people who overcame the Mongol invasion of the 13th century. The Old Rus'-Ukrainian state maintained close ties with Byzantium, the Holy See, the German Empire, Poland, Hungary, France, Scandinavian states.

During the reign of Prince Yaroslav the Wise (1019-1054) the international relations intensified greatly.

He actively used a method of dynastic marriages that was widely spread in the medieval period. Yaroslav's son Vsevolod married the daughter of Byzantine Emperor Constantine IX Monomakh. One of Yaroslav's daughters, Anna, married French King Henry I. Her sister Yelyzaveta, became the wife of Norwegian King Harald the Severe. Prince Yaroslav's third daughter Anastasia married Hungarian King András I. Close relations with Poland were sealed by marriage of Yaroslav's sister Dobroniha and Kasimir the Prince of Kraków.

After the decline and collapse of the Old Rus'-Ukrainian state, the Ukrainian diplomacy reached its significant progress during the Cossack era.

Having started their formation in the first half of the XVI century Ukrainian Cossacks gradually turned into the progenitor of Ukrainian statehood.

At the beginning of the XVII century Zaporizhia Cossacks became a subject of international relations and an influential military and political factor in Eastern

Ukrainian Cossack state was one of the first democracies in Europe of Middle Ages. One of the first written constitutions in Europe was created by Ukrainian Cossack Hetman Pylyp Orlyk.

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army during the II World War has fought to destroy menaces of fascism and communism.

Therefore, it is very important to mark the centennial of Ukrainian revolution of 1917-1921, for this shows the continuity of Ukrainian



state-forming traditions and rejects the claims of propaganda of some hostile countries that independent Ukraine emerged only in 1991.

The Ukrainian revolution and the struggle for independence from 1917-21 are significant events in the history of the Ukrainian nation in the 20th century. The Ukrainian people had a historic opportunity to free themselves from dependence on foreign powers. In spite of the great internal and external difficulties caused by political instability, Bolshevik aggression, and the presence in Ukraine of Austro-Hungarian military formations, the Ukrainian Government - Central Rada was able to achieve major steps in forming a national state. It ratified laws governing the national symbol and flag, citizenship, national currency and a host of other important laws, including land ownership

By building independent state, Ukraine has always stood out internationally as a reliable and constructive partner.

laws and the establishment of an eight-hour working day.

One of the most significant events of the Ukrainian national-democratic revolution was the establishment of the Western Ukrainian National Republic in November 1918. On 22 January 1919, the Act of Unification united the National and Western Ukrainian Republics and realized the longstanding aspiration of the Ukrainian people to live in a single sovereign state.

Those historic events are being echoed today. The Ukraine's independence declared a quarter of a century ago became an expected outcome of our historic development, a joint victory won by multiple generations of Ukrainians,



who fought and died for our national identity. Nowadays, Russian post-imperial chauvinism attacked Ukraine yet again. A three-year-long war with Russia has resulted in the deaths of 10,000 people, the occupation of 7% of Ukrainian territory and the seizure, destruction or theft of 20% of the Ukrainian economy. Today still, thousands of our soldiers stand in Eastern Ukraine like a solid wall to protect us. In order to win the modern Russian hybrid war against Ukraine we need to unite, just as we did 100 years ago.

The Revolution of Dignity has pulled Ukraine from the post-Soviet and Moscow's orbit forever. The national uprising demonstrated that Ukraine would never agree to an archaic despotic regime, but with blood would defend Ukraine's way as a society that profoundly, in action, values human dignity and rights as well as international law as one of the main pillars of modern human civilization.

By building independent state, Ukraine has always stood out internationally as a reliable and constructive partner. Today our efforts and aspirations are undermined by Russian aggression and illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. But despite heavy warfare from the side of Russia, Ukraine reached tremendous successes in reforming the economy, anti-corruption activities, establishment of democracy rule, in progress along the path of euro integration, enhancing living standards.

Diplomacy plays a central role in counteracting

Russian aggression. We are confident that with comprehensive diplomatic, financial and humanitarian assistance of our friends we will overcome today's difficulties.

And now is the time to recollect another anniversary - a hundred years of diplomatic service of Ukraine.

On December 22, 1917, Volodymyr Vynnychenko and Oleksandr Shulhin signed an act on establishing the General Secretariat of International Affairs – Ukraine's first foreign ministry in the 20th century.

By honoring the centennial of Ukrainian diplomacy on the highest governmental level we are sending a distinct and crystal-clear message to the world: Independent Ukraine was not born yesterday and the Ukrainian statehood is based on a great tradition that deserves to be cherished.

There is an uninterrupted continuity of Ukrainian national diplomacy. As 100 years ago, the fundamental principles, guidelines, and the most important goals of Ukraine's diplomatic service mostly remain the same: resisting the aggressor, consolidating efforts to protect international law and a civilized world order and opening up its culture to the world.

This year we celebrate another anniversary, namely the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Ukraine and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Our countries established diplomatic relations on 16-th of March, 1992.

As Ukrainian Ambassador in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, I am very pleased to admit that Pakistan is among our good friends. The bilateral dialogue between both countries have always been friendly and sincere, based upon mutually beneficial cooperation.

The high level of mutual understanding and trust between Ukraine and Pakistan in political and diplomatic sphere has been reached.

In the past 25 years, military-technical collaboration remains one of the main pillars of the Ukrainian-Pakistani relations. The first important contracts between Pakistan and independent Ukraine were concluded in a military-technical sphere in 1996. One of them is the well-known multimillion-dollar tank contract which provided Pakistan with modern tanks, and Ukrainian enterprises with perspective long-term orders.

Our two countries take interest in each other's market and stress their readiness to exploit huge unused potential for economic cooperation. There is a growing economic interaction between the business communities of our two countries. The volume of bilateral trade in the year 2017 reached almost 200 millions US dollars. Cultural heritage of Ukraine



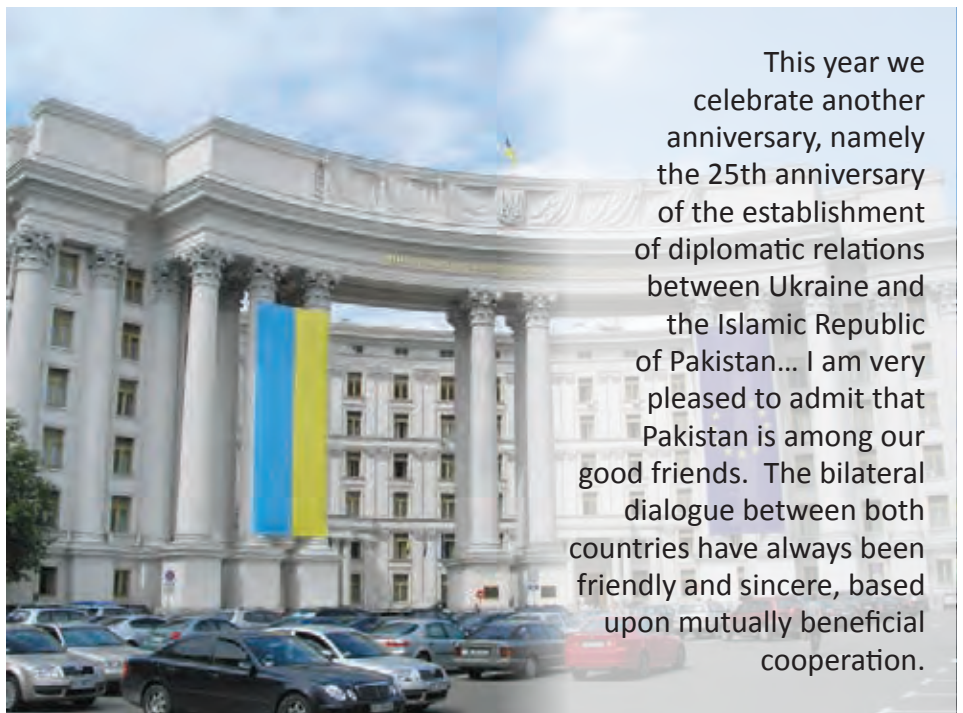
and Pakistan provides good background for cooperation in this field. Ancient civilizations of Hindus valley and Trypillia were one of the first great civilizations in the world. Hence, there is a substantive background for interaction between scholars, joint research and exhibition projects.

In the past 25 years, our people-to-people exchanges flourished as well. Hundreds of Pakistani citizens have received higher education in Ukrainian universities.

The President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko recently admitted that Ukrainian diplomats "fulfill an extremely important function in the history of our state".

While celebrating here in Pakistan the centenary of the Ukrainian diplomatic service I would like to stress that our experience in the

past 25 years tells us that diplomacy plays a crucial role in mutually beneficial and pragmatic cooperation which is the best way for countries to get along with each other.



This year we celebrate another anniversary, namely the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Ukraine and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan... I am very pleased to admit that Pakistan is among our good friends. The bilateral dialogue between both countries have always been friendly and sincere, based upon mutually beneficial cooperation.



Rhythm of Liaohai Gala

at PNCA, Islamabad

An enchanting, musical performance known as 'Rhythm of Liaohai Gala' by Chinese artists mesmerized the audience in Islamabad. The gala was organized by the China Cultural Centre in Pakistan and the Liaoning Song and Dance Ensemble. As a cultural collaboration between the two countries, the gala showcased the dance and music of both Pakistan and China.

The chief guests included the new Chinese Ambassador H.E. Mr Yao Jing, Minister for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage, Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb, and Director General PNCA Mr. Jamal Shah.





Happy Wedding

To New Couple
Mian Mobeen Akhtar & Ayesha Kharal

“Like a candle in the dark,
May both of you find light
with each other. Never give
up and work things out
with a heart filled with love
and understanding”

A large number of politicians, diplomats, officials and prominent citizens attended the Waleema Reception held in Islamabad. Mr. Mian Mobeen Akhtar is Son of Senior Journalist Mr. Mian Akhtar Hussain and nephew of Mr. Mian Fazal Elahi Editor, CEO & Publisher of “Diplomatic Focus”.







National Day of the Kingdom of Thailand, the Birthday Anniversary of His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Thailand's Father's Day



Mr. Surashete Boontinand Minister Counsellor Embassy of Thailand hosted a reception to commemorate the National Day of the Kingdom of Thailand, the Birthday Anniversary of His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej, and Thailand's Father's Day in Islamabad. The event was graciously attended by a Chief Guest, His Excellency Lieutenant-General ® Abdul Qadir Baloch, Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions, high ranking officials from the government of Pakistan, members of diplomatic corps, private sector and academia.





National Day of Qatar celebrated in Islamabad



Ambassador of Qatar, Saqr Bin Mubarak Al-Mansouri hosted a grand reception dinner to celebrate the country's national day at Serena Hotel Islamabad. Federal Minister for Privatization, Denial Aziz was the chief guest on the occasion. Among the prominent personalities and diplomats who had turned up to congratulate Qatari ambassador included Deputy Chairman of Senate Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman Sheikh Mohammed Omar Ahmed Al Marhoon, High Commissioner

of Sri Lanka, Ambassadors of Palestine, Jordan, Yemen, Spain, Ukraine, Romania, Azerbaijan, Iran and Iraq, Senator Lt Gen (R) Abdul Qayyum, former Senator Salim Saifullah, Abdullah Gul, Charge d'affaires of Korea, DHM of Japan embassy Mr. Junya Matsuura, Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Sirajul Haq and PTI leader Dr Shehzad Wasim. Addressing on the occasion Ambassador of Qatar to Pakistan H.E. Saqr Bin Mubarak Al-Mansouri highlighted the brotherly relations between Qatar and Pakistan. In the coming years, we will continue to

strengthen the bonds between our two countries, he added. The Ambassador reassured that Qatar was very well aware of Pakistan's energy woes and economic challenges and would extend all cooperation to help the country resolve these woes. Qatar plays an important role in cooperation with Pakistan in humanitarian fields and indeed in the energy sector, he maintained. The event was attended by diplomats and civil and army officials of Pakistan and diplomatic Defence Corps.





Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah 25 December 1876 - 11 September 1948 Father of the Nation



“ My message to you all is of hope, courage and confidence. Let us mobilize all our resources in a systematic and organized way and tackle the grave issues that confront us with grim determination and discipline worthy of a great nation ”

Muhammad Ali Jinnah



President Mamnoon Hussain cutting the cake of the Birthday celebrations of Quaid-e-Azam alongwith the children at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.



Chairman Senate, Mian Rza Rabbani cutting a cake to mark the 141st birthday anniversary of Quaid-i-Azam during the seminar held at Art Council Karachi.



Ambassador of Pakistan to the UAE, Moazzam Ahmad Khang along with Pakistani community leaders cutting the cake on the occasion of 141st Birth Anniversary of Quaid Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Christmas Day Celebrations in Pakistan Embassy ABu Dhabi.



High Commissioner of Pakistan to Dhaka, Rafiuzzaman Siddiqui, cutting cake of birthday celebrations of the Quaid-i-Azam at Dhaka.



Korean Photo exhibition

Korean Embassy and Rawalpindi Arts Council organized photo exhibition, Colors of Korea that represented the Korean culture. Minister of State for Information, Broadcasting, National History and Literary Heritage Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb along with the Korean Charge d' Affaires and delegation inaugurated the Korean Photo exhibition where visitors from the twin cities enjoyed the diversity of Korean Culture through photos hung on the walls.



Photo by Ramzan Mughal



Korean Film ‘The Front Line’ screened at PNCA



Embassy of Korea arranged Korean Film Show 2017 at Pakistan National Council of the Art (PNCA) for the purpose of entertaining local people. In welcome address, Charge d’Affairs of Korea Kim Jinwook said that his embassy in collaboration with Korea Foundation and PNCA had been hosting an annual Korean film screening for many years. “The Frontline” was Korea’s official nomination for the 2012 Oscars and it has won many Korean and international awards for best film, director, screenplay, cinematography, and art direction. It has a very powerful script and the technical effects are brilliant.



Libyan Ambassador furious with slave auction report



By Mian Fazal Elahi

The Libyan Ambassador in Islamabad Nizar A. Nabiyah condemns the false accusations leveled against Libya by International Media about human trafficking in the context of illegal immigration. He said that it is a false media campaign against Libya while he was talking to media at the embassy of Libya in Islamabad. He said that our interior Minister Al-Arif Al-Khoga clearly said that Libyan government is investigating allegations that hundreds of African refugees and migrants passing through Libya. The ambassador added that we strongly condemned the campaign and that the report was false and intended to tarnish the image of Libya which is struggling to recover from 2011 uprising.

Ambassador Nizar A. Nabiyah said that The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of National Accord, has taken a serious note against the media exploitation of few criminals and the weakening of the souls of illegal immigrants in forced labor. The Government of National Accord criticizes and rejects of such inhumane practices that are incompatible with the culture and heritage of Libya.

The Government of National Accord pledge full and unequivocal commitment on the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirms the application of its national laws and legislation that prohibit human trafficking, slavery and servitude.

Libya understands that it is being targeted from regional parties who plan Libya a heaven for the absorption and resettlement of migrants. Libya warns as has been repeatedly warning, that

superficial and sterile treatment is hampering its efforts to curb this phenomenon, and expresses its deep surprise at their classification by these regional parties as a zone of conflict and instability as they attempt to make it a refuge for large number of immigrants.

The Government of National Accord warns the criminal gangs to avoid creating confusions, and invite the International Community to show responsibility to assist Libya in confronting this imminent threat to its social fabric, cultural heritage and humanity with the intention of effectively addressing the causes of migration rather than exploiting such unfortunate events to pour Libya's name on behalf of some

parties in order to cover up its inability to deal with this phenomenon. Stressing that the Government and People of Libya stand against these inhumane practices, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recalls that for many years it has advocated adopting effective policies against these phenomena by supporting institutional capacity-building and enterprise development in source countries to curb illegal migration, smuggling of migrants and human trafficking. As stipulated in the Tripoli Declaration (Africa-European Union) 2006 and calls on its regional and international partners and friends to cooperate positively and constructively in addressing these negative phenomena with responsibility, wisdom and courage.



Speaker of Iran Parliament: America is playing with terrorism

KSA is misguided and we have no animosity with KSA

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Iran Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani said that the America is playing with terrorism. He was responding to a media question during his press briefing here in Islamabad on Monday. He viewed that Americans are creating differences among Muslim countries because they want to sell their weapons to the Muslims countries by creating phobias.

Ali Larijani visited Pakistan to attend six-nation Speakers Conference on terrorism, regional peace, development and connectivity.

Ali Larijani stated that “we are very good relations will all Muslims countries and we also attach to value and believe in good relations with KSA”. He further added that “We however believe that, they are not on right path and they have been bombarding Yamen for many years”. In response to question about the statement related to Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Juberi “seeking normalization of ties with Israel” which was denied latter, Ali Larejani said that “this act will influence the credibility of Saudi Arabia”. The parliament speaker said that Iran never liked any Islamic country to have relations with the Zionist Regime. “We pray that have good relations with KSA and among all Muslim countries and this is our wish” Added by Speaker Irani Parliament. He further added that “we are telling KSA not to attack on Yemen, not to kill people of Yemen”. Ali Larijani said “we consider that KSA is misguided and we have no animosity with KSA”. “They are motivated by the US and Zionist governments,” said by Ali Larijani. The parliament speaker viewed point that America raised \$500 billion from Riyadh Summit 2017, UAE and other countries. If they [USA and Zionist] not fabricated phobia and fear then countries will not buy weapons instead to reconstruct and build their countries”.

In response to question on Al-Quds, Ali Larijani said that Americans are definitely trying to create a division among Muslim states. Larijani said that the US President Donald Trump has been defeated on Al-Quds issue, adding that the decision of the US to move its embassy to Al-Quds was ill-intended which united all Muslims. The Iranian parliament speaker said that even non-Muslim states denounced the move by voting against it in the UN General Assembly.

“Trump made a big blunder on Al-Quds and failed,” he viewed.

The Iranian Speaker said that Americans are showing some peace of iron and leveling baseless allegations against Iran. He said Iran has never provided missiles to Yemenis; in fact the US is doing all this to divert the attention



of the international community from Al-Quds issue. Larijani said that Yemen has force and can make its own missiles. Larijani said that Iran entered Iraq to fight terrorism at the invitation of the Iraqi government.

“We helped Iraqi forces and achieved success against Daesh,” he said.

Larijani praised Ayatollah Sistani for mobilizing the Iraqi people against Daesh, adding that people of Iraq are now busy in reconstructing their country.

The Iranian Speaker said in Syria there was a plot to disrupt peace and stability of the country in favor of the Zionist Regime and the US. He said that Iran went to Syria at the invitation of the Syrian government and later Russia also joined them to fight terrorism in the country. “But the problem is that Americans have set up bases in Syria which help terrorists,” Larijani said.

He said that Iran is against all kinds of terrorism in Pakistan, Afghanistan or Syria. “We know Americans have created Daesh and they want to exhaust the energies of Muslim states,” the Iranian parliament speaker added.

On issue of Afghanistan he commented that it is complex and needs some time to get resolved. Larijani added that when in 2001 the US attacked Afghanistan they claimed that they were taking the measure to root out terrorism and drug trafficking from the country, but despite their claims the reality is that the poppy production has increased to 45 times in Afghanistan during past 16 years and terrorism is also spreading.

The official responding to a question about Commander kulbhushan jadhav an India Spy arrested in Baluchistan province in 2016 while on visa to Iran and sentenced to death by court in Pakistan, Ali Larijani said that Pakistan is friend of Iran and Iran will never allow any country to use its spoil against Pakistan.

He said that this is matter of surprise for Iranians that such issues are emerging in media of Pakistan. “Our security organizations have already clarify the issue with Pakistani counterparts and Pakistani authorities are well

aware that these issues only covered in some media” Speaker Iran Parliament added.

Ali Larejani said that “this person in chabahar as businessman and we do not have any information or understanding that he was doing the spying activities. This is an issue between India and Pakistan, but not related to Iran”.

Larijani said that nowadays satellite technologies are very advanced and no spy can carry out these activities against any other country very easily. He said that who can assure Iran that CIA agents are not operating in Pakistan.

Speaker Iran Parliament added on a question about seeking the more coalition of these six countries, that it is good time for the countries of the region to discuss terrorism and economic ties. “We decided to form two committees: one for security and one for economy and there is a common understanding in our region that with cooperation we can succeed in eradicating the plague of terrorism”.

He said that the Speakers’ conference was a major step for the peace in the region. He revealed that next Speakers’ conference would be held in Tehran next year.

Expressing his views, Larijani said that Iran and Pakistan are cooperating in all areas, including enhancing cooperation between Chabahar and Gwadar ports.

He said there is a proposal to declare Chabahar and Gwadar as sister ports and for this ‘we need to enhance connectivity between the two ports which would help to the development of Iran and Pakistan’. ‘We have good discussions on Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project with the Prime Minister of Pakistani and baking authorities of the country, hopefully these issues will be resolved,’ the Iranian parliament speaker said.

He said that the visit by Pakistani Army Chief to Iran was very good and helped enhance cooperation between the two friendly neighbors in all areas.

The writer is a freelance media professional, based in Islamabad



Outgoing Ambassador of Lebanon H.E. Ms. Mona Al-Tannir hosted a Farwell reception at his residence in Islamabad. Large number of diplomates and business personalities graced the event.



Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Serena Hotels hosted Championship Dinner of the Chief of Air Staff & Pakistan Open Squash Championships 2017. The event was held at Islamabad Serena Hotel. The Vice Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Farooq Habib was the Chief Guest on the grand event. Also present on the occasion were squash legends Jahangir Khan and Qamar Zaman.

Get together





54th anniversary of Independence Day of Kenya marked in Islamabad

H.E. Prof. Julius Kibet Bitok, High Commissioner of Kenya hosted a reception to mark 54th anniversary of Independence Day of Kenya in Islamabad. Mr. Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training was the chief guest of the eve. The reception was well attended as the government dignitaries, diplomats, businesspersons, politicians and representatives from across the civil society.





Dean of Diplomatic Corps Ambassador of Kazakhstan H.E. Bakhitbek Shabarbayev, hosted a farewell reception in the honor of outgoing envoys H.E. Sadik Babür Girgin Ambassador of Turkey and H.E. Mona el Tannir Ambassador of Lebanon at Serena Hotels, Islamabad. The event was attended by several ambassadors and other diplomats.



Seminar Assessment of Kashmir Tangle and Way Forward



Organized by

Measac Research Centre

Wednesday, 20th December, 2017

MRC



Photos by Ramzan Mughal

Decades have passed but the Jammu & Kashmir dispute remain unresolved: Syed Ali Geelani

By M. Saeed Yousafzai

Syed Ali Geelani said that decades have passed since the illegal occupation of two-thirds Kashmir by India, but the dispute remain unresolved. Speaking to the seminar on video link, organized by Measac Research Centre (MRC) "Assessment of Kashmir dispute and way Forward" in Islamabad. No light is seen at the end of the tunnel due to Indian intransigence, the UN indolence and the world's apathy. There is an urgent need to chalk our well-defined Kashmir policy with clear objectives. Diplomatic front has to be pragmatically activated to sell our narrative and to expose the ugly face of India. Chairman Kashmir Committee Molana Fazlurehman expressed deep concerns over the Indian carnages of innocent civilians. Hapless Muslim Kashmiris confined to biggest open prison of the world continue to groan and shriek under the boots of 750,000 Indian security forces that have been given a license to kill without accountability, he added.

Former British MP George Galloway stressed that the reign of terror have been smoke-screened by India behind a veil of falsehood dubbing Kashmir as an integral part of India, and freedom movement as a secessionist movement waged by a bunch of terrorists. To keep Pakistan on the defensive, it is portrayed as an abettor of terrorism in Kashmir. Senator Sirjaul Haq was of the view that India is resorting to low intensity conflict along the Line of Control, water terrorism, proxy wars to exert pressure on Pakistan and force it to abandon its support to Kashmir cause. Ahmed Bilal Sufi said that the UN and international community have shut their eyes to the wanton barbarities of Indian forces and largely buy the Indian story that UN resolutions have become obsolete, and that elections are a substitute to plebiscite. Encouraged by the US support and disinterest of the world, India has adopted a highly belligerent posture against Pakistan and continues with its human rights abuses unobtrusively. Brig (R) Asif haroon Raja explaining the role of Pakistan expressed that Pakistan have not done enough

to lessen the pain of Kashmiris. Over the years the emotions have mellowed down and squeaks of compromise have become louder. No movement can succeed unless supported by an external power. Future of Kashmir is inextricably linked with Pakistan's destiny. There is a dire need to put our house in order to keep the hopes of Kashmiris alive.

Director General MRC Abdullah Hamid Gul concluded the proceeding by vote of thanks said that one is amazed as to why the champions of democracy and human rights and advocates of human dignity and honor do not notice the record breaking atrocities of Indian brutes against unarmed men, women and children in the most militarized region and have become stone effigies? No one is coming forward to stop the modern-day Holocaust in Kashmir. He appreciated recent two statements by Iran's Supreme leader and Turkish President in favor of Kashmiri people, and urged Islamic world to play a proactive role for the peaceful settlement of the dispute.

Finland celebrates 100 years of independence



Ambassador H.E. Rauli Suikkanen, along with Finland's honorary consul in the capital Asad Ansari, hosted a dinner reception to celebrate 100 years as an independent state at the Serena Hotel, Islamabad. National Health Services Minister Saira Afzal Tarar and Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, the minister of state for capital administration and development, were invited as the chief guests.

The event was attended by several ambassadors and other diplomats, but was otherwise more of a gathering of business partners.





Devastating climate change could lead to 1m migrants a year entering EU by 2100

Researchers plotted temperature rises against the number of asylum applications and are predicting that as the southern hemisphere heats up the number of people migrating to the EU each year will triple

Climate change will drive a huge increase in the number of migrants seeking asylum in Europe if current trends continue, according to a new study.

The number of migrants attempting to settle in Europe each year will triple by the end of the century based on current climate trends alone, independent of other political and economic factors, according to the research. Even if efforts to curb global warming are successful, the number of applications for asylum could rise by a quarter, the authors predict.

Wolfram Schlenker, professor at the school of international and public affairs at Columbia University in New York, and lead author of the study, said: "Europe will see increasing numbers of desperate people fleeing their home countries."

Bob Ward, policy and communications director at the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment, at the London School of Economics and Political Science, who was not involved with the report, told the Guardian the results should be taken seriously by policymakers, though current forecasting models frequently fail to take such factors into account.

He said: "This study shows how Europe will be impacted by one of the most serious impacts of climate change. Hundreds of millions, perhaps billions, of people will be exposed to coastal sea level rise and shifts in extreme weather that will cause mass migrations away from the most vulnerable locations. We know from human history that such migrations often lead to conflict and war, with devastating consequences. The huge potential costs of migration-related conflict are usually omitted from economic models of climate change impacts in the future."

Climate change is predicted to result in more droughts, floods, heatwaves, and other extreme weather, as well as more intense storms and rising sea levels. These effects are likely to render agriculture more difficult, if not impossible, across swathes of the globe, including sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia.

These effects will also be felt in Europe, but its lower base temperatures, relative prosperity and advanced infrastructure mean the damage could be contained, and make it an attractive destination for migrants.

Migration, or attempted migration, to Europe has increased markedly in the last decade,

with leading causes including the war in Syria, turmoil in north Africa and the middle East, and a burgeoning young population with few economic prospects in many regions of Africa and the middle East.

The new study, published in the journal Science, was initiated and largely funded by the EU's Joint Research Centre, with contribution from the US Department of Energy, and led by scientists at Columbia University in New York.

The authors of the study examined asylum applications in the EU from 103 countries between 2000 and 2014, during which time applications averaged more than 350,000 a year. They compared the applications with information on environmental factors, such as temperature and weather, and adjusted the data for factors such as conflict and political turmoil.

In doing so, they spotted a trend correlating weather and changes in the number of asylum applications. For instance, countries with average temperatures around 20C – the optimum for growing many crops – show a higher number of applications, while there are fewer asylum seekers from areas with cooler temperatures.

The data showed that the more temperatures in a country's key agricultural regions rose above 20C in the growing season, the more people left their homes for another country. They recorded increases in the number of migrants from hot places such as Iraq and Pakistan when temperatures rose. However, immigration from colder countries fell when temperatures rose towards 20C.

The scientists posit that as the globe warms, the number of people seeking asylum in Europe will correspondingly rise. Warming of 2.6C to 4.8C, which climate experts say is likely unless stronger action is taken to bring down greenhouse gas emissions, would result in as

many as 660,000 additional asylum seekers coming to Europe each year by 2100, according to the model.

Linking migration to climate change is controversial. Although many scientists, and many studies, are clear that rising temperatures and extreme weather are likely to increase migration, it is difficult to separate this factor from the myriad other factors that drive people to flee their homes. A drought in Syria from 2006 to 2010 was posited, in a 2015 study, as a factor behind that country's civil war, which broke out in 2011 and still rages.

Immigration, especially in the wake of the financial crisis and recessions which crippled European economies a decade ago and whose effects are only now beginning to subside, has become one of the hottest political issues in Europe. It was cited as one of the biggest factors in the UK's referendum on EU membership, and has played a major role in recent elections in Germany and France.

Schlenker said a rise in migration owing to climate change could exacerbate political tensions further. "Europe is already conflicted about how many refugees to admit. Though poorer countries in hotter regions are most vulnerable to climate change, our findings highlight the extent to which countries are interlinked."

Solomon Hsiang, professor at Berkeley, University of California, and author of a previous study linking conflict and climate change, who was not involved with the current research, said the world must prepare. "We will need to build new institutions and systems to manage this steady flow of asylum-seekers. As we have seen from recent experience in Europe, there are tremendous costs, both for refugees and their hosts, when we are caught flat-footed."

Courtesy to The Guardian





Sheikh Sultan Bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, Advisor to His Excellency the President of the UAE meets the Chief Minister of Balochistan Nawab Zehri, and discussed United Arab Emirates - Pakistan bilateral relations and Cooperation



Pakistan's Ambassador to Bahrain H.E. Javed Malik is joined by Commodore Mohammed Al Asam, Captain Ghulam Akbar and Ambassadors US, Italy and other countries at a reception on-board Pakistan Navy Ship ASLAT as it arrived in Bahrain





Christmas cakes at Marriott by Philippe

Executive Pastry Chef Philippe baked scrumptious cakes for Christmas this year. A ravishing display was made right next to the Christmas tree and everyone was mesmerized by the creativity of Pastry Chef Philippe. All the guests in the lobby took hundreds of pictures of the cake display while ordering the same cakes and Philippe became the famous star for his gorgeous cakes.



“75 Years of Banking” celebrated by ABL

Allied Bank of Pakistan is being celebrating its 75 years of banking. In this connection ABL hosted a cake cutting ceremony in its Branch in Diplomatic Enclave, Islamabad. Ambassador of Ukraine H.E. Volodymyr Lakomov along with others graced the event.





Ambassador of Azerbaijan H.E. Ali Alizada and High Commissioner of Kenya H.E. Prof. Julius Kibet Bitok and others enjoying Sindhi culture event organized by Shah Abdul Social and Culture Association (SASCA)



Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Spanish Guitar Concert by Rafael Serrallet organized by Embassy of Spain in Islamabad





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