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1953?

Kim Jong-un crossed
the military line.....





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10 **25th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2018**

The fifty-three member countries of the Commonwealth met at Windsor Castle London, at the generous invitation of Her Majesty The Queen. Her Majesty enters her seventh decade as Head of the Commonwealth.

28 **North Korea's Kim Jong-un crosses into South Korea**

In a moment rich with symbolism and pomp, South Korean leader Moon Jae-in and Mr Kim shook hands at the border. Mr. Kim said it was the "starting point" for peace, after crossing the military line that divides the peninsula.

35 **Relations with the US were very important for Pakistan**

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry delivered a talk on 'Pakistan's Place in the World' at John Hopkins University Washington.

40 **Abbasi & Ghani agreed Not to allow their soils to be used for anti-state activities against each other**

The two leaders agreed that Afghanistan Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS) provided a useful framework for broad based and structured engagement on all issues of mutual interest and decided to operationalize the five working groups under APAPPS.

Queen Elizabeth II Celebrates 92

Queen Elizabeth II marked her 92nd birthday. The celebrations kicked off at Buckingham Palace during the changing of the guard where the Band of the Irish Guards played "Happy Birthday."



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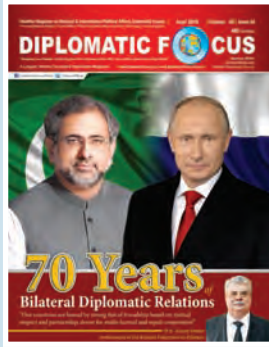
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Mian Fazal Elahi

Relations between Pakistan and Russia have seen an unprecedented improvement during last few years. The two countries, which remained bitter cold-war rivals, have been recalibrating their ties against the backdrop of realignments. While India, Russia's long-standing strategic partner, has joined the US camp, Moscow is also opening up its options that include reaching out to countries such as Pakistan.

Russia was one of the first countries, which publically expressed its solidarity with Pakistan after President Donald Trump unveiled a new strategy for Afghanistan and South Asia. Trump accused Pakistan of supporting and harbouring the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani network. He threatened Pakistan to change that approach or face consequences. The United States is trying its best to get out of the Afghan quagmire with some respect and that cannot happen without full and sincere cooperation of Pakistan. Pakistan has been offering all types of assistance – intelligence cooperation, logistic support and dialogue facilitation – but despite all this Islamabad is blamed for all the ills in Afghanistan. Even failures of the Afghan government and consequences of wrong strategies by coalition forces are being blamed on Pakistan. Russia along with China, however, came to Pakistan's help by suggesting that shifting the blame on Pakistan would destabilise the region and would have negative impact on Afghan security. Pakistan has been pushing for a regional consensus on Afghanistan. Russia, China and Iran have endorsed Pakistan's stance that the use of force will not resolve the lingering conflict in Afghanistan.

All the regional players believe that the only way out to achieve elusive peace in the war-ravaged country can come through Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process.

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-official diplomatic engagements, events, national days, social evenings/gatherings, press conferences/interviews and can be contacted for all kinds of stuff including articles, supplements and advertisements etc). It is requested to all Diplomatic missions and government high officials of UK, please contact with Mr. Mian Assad Ullah on His mailing address, 4 Ipswich Road, SW17 9RH, London. Cell number: +44-7961005954/ 2087694850, Email: uk.diplomaticfocus@gmail.com, assadmian1@gmail.com



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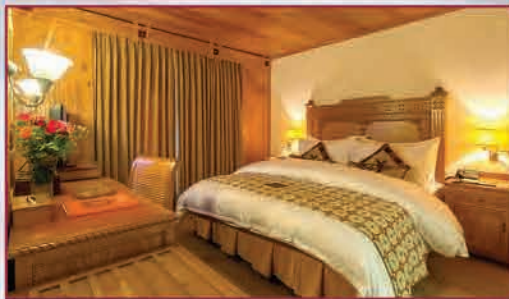
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President Mamnoon Hussain met with H. E. Sheikh Ali Bin Abdullah Al Thani

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

H. E. President Mamnoon Hussain, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, met with H. E. Sheikh Ali Bin Abdullah Al Thani, Executive

Director of Qatar International Islamic Bank and Islamic Insurance Company, the meeting was attended by H. E. Mr. Saqr Bin Mubarak Al Mansouri, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

During the meeting, they reviewed the bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries and exchanged views on means of enhancing them.

EAA & ARC inked an Agreement to educate 1 million Pakistani Children

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

The Qatari Foundation "Education Above All" and the American Refugee Committee signed an agreement to support the Federal Ministry of Education and Vocational Training of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to educate one million children outside school throughout Pakistan. The agreement was signed at the headquarters of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) in Paris on 1 March. With the signing of the agreement, Pakistan has become the largest recipient of the State of Qatar's commitment to educate 10 million children around the world under the "Educate a Child".

"Education Above All" and its executive partners in Pakistan have tried to overcome the challenge of primary education. Through the implementation of eight projects at a cost of over US \$ 170 million, 1.6 million children will be enrolled in different schools.



Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Engr. Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman witnessing signing of MOU between American Refugee Committee (ARC) and Government of Punjab in Islamabad.



Primer Minister Shahid Khaqasn Abbasi along with other Common Wealth Heads of Government in a Group photo with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at the Formal Opening of CHOGM-2018 in Buckingham Palace, London.

Towards A Common Future

25th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2018 concludes in London

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Monitoring, Agencies

The fifty-three member countries of the Commonwealth met at Windsor Castle London, at the generous invitation of Her Majesty The Queen. Her Majesty enters her seventh decade as Head of the Commonwealth.

The 25th meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Governments (CHOGM) commenced, with Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi led Pakistan's delegation.

The premier, along with other heads of government of commonwealth states, was welcomed by British Prime Minister Theresa May, Queen Elizabeth II and members of the royal family at the Buckingham Palace.

Earlier, upon arrival at the airport, the PM was received by the Special Representative of the British Foreign Minister, Pakistan High Commissioner to the UK Syed Ibne Abbas, together with officials of the high commission.

The main theme of the meeting was 'Towards A Common Future'.

During his stay in London, the prime minister

attended the reception hosted by Queen of Wales. Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Elizabeth II. He also called on the Prince Abbasi said that Pakistan greatly values



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi being received by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at the Dinner Reception hosted by HM the Queen for Commonwealth Heads of Government and Spouses in Buckingham Palace.

Commonwealth provides a market of over 2.2 billion people, spread across all six continents, covering nearly a quarter of the world's land mass and a combined of \$9.8 trillion.

Commonwealth cooperation. Prime Minister congratulated Prince Charles on organising 25th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2018.

He appreciated the royal family for its supervision of global charity works. The Prince of Wales appreciated Pakistan's participation and services in the Commonwealth meeting.

Earlier, PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi met with British Prime Minister Theresa May amongst other Commonwealth leaders.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Ali Jahangir Siddiqui and Pakistan High Commissioner to UK Syed Ibne Abbas were also present during the meeting.

Earlier, PM Abbasi held meetings with the teams of Peek Vision, a world leader in smartphone technology and training healthcare workforce in developing countries to eliminate preventable blindness and poor vision, and CBM, an NGO working in the field of disability globally for over 100 years with a major focus on eye care.

During the meeting, the premier invited Peek Vision to Pakistan and expressed the Governments clear commitment to eliminate preventable blindness in Pakistan. He committed the full support of the Government for a national program in this regard.

An estimated 5,000 delegates from every continent arrived for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), brought their cultures, languages, perspectives and range of colourful flags that represent the vast diversity of our 53 countries.

The Queen officially opened the meeting of



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi being received by British Prime Minister Theresa May upon arrival at the Official Welcome Reception hosted by the British Prime Minister and the Secretary General Commonwealth during CHOGM-2018 in London.



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi being received by Secretary General Commonwealth Rt Hon Patricia Scotland upon arrival at the Official Welcome Reception hosted by the British Prime Minister and the Secretary General Commonwealth during CHOGM-2018 in London.



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi meets CEO and Co-Founder of Peek Vision Dr. Andrew Bastawrous in London.



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi being received by Special Representative of the British Foreign Minister Mr. David Pearey and Pakistan High Commissioner to the UK Syed Ibne Abbas upon arrival in London.



Delegation of Royal Dutch Shell led by Mr. Ben Van Beurden, Chief Executive Officer, Royal Dutch Shell called on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in London.

leaders. They came from Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, the Americas, the Pacific and Asia, and walked along the red carpet for the formal ceremony at Buckingham Palace. They go back to their countries with a bold consensus on commitments and strategies to protect our ocean, boost trade, tackle cybercrime, empower women and youth, and halt the devastating effects of climate change.

Heads of government had the rare opportunity to have in-depth discussions about shared concerns during roundtable meetings and at their retreat at Windsor Castle. The result

was consensus on major global issues and big announcements. The heads decided that Prince Charles should be the next Head of the Commonwealth and that Rwanda should host the next CHOGM in 2020. Earlier in the week, the Queen appointed Prince Harry as Commonwealth Youth Ambassador.

Commonwealth Heads of Government discussed how the Commonwealth can contribute to a future which is fairer, more sustainable, more secure and more prosperous. Given that 60 percent of the Commonwealth's population are under the age

of 30, Heads of Government affirmed that youth empowerment, as well as gender equality, are critical in realising the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the aspirations of the Commonwealth Charter. Considering that small states constitute over 60 percent of the Commonwealth's membership, Heads recognised that the Commonwealth has always been a strong advocate for the causes of small states, and has consistently raised international awareness of their inherent vulnerabilities. Heads recognised that the strength of the Commonwealth lay in the collaboration among its member countries,



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi interacting with Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull While arriving at the Executive Session of CHOGM-2018 in London.



PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi shaking hands with HRH the Prince of Wales Charles Philip at Clarence House in London.

people-to-people organisations and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

All the heads of government praised Queen Elizabeth, who has been serving as head of the Commonwealth for 66 years. The British Prime Minister, Theresa May, paid tribute to her “vision, duty, steadfast service and nurturing growth of the Commonwealth”.

At the final press conference, Prime Minister May stressed the importance of the Commonwealth. “This week we have demonstrated that the Commonwealth is united, not only by a common history, but by a common future,” she said. “A future in which we work together for the benefit of all our citizens and the wider world.

“For when many of the greater challenges we face are global in nature, the breadth of the Commonwealth, spanning six continents and a third of the world’s population, offers a unique perspective in helping to forge the global

solutions we need.”

At the final press conference, other leaders also reinforced its relevance. We are very satisfied, Ghana’s president, Nana Akufo-Addo, declared, that the Commonwealth continues to be a relevant organisation. Grenada’s prime minister has been attending CHOGMS since 1997. Keith Mitchell described this year’s meeting as the most productive he’s ever attended. Samoa’s Prime Minister, Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi welcomed the Commonwealth’s focus on its most vulnerable members.

Secretary-General Patricia Scotland spoke about the renewed commitment of member countries to the organisation, including ensuring its financial stability.

She announced the adoption of the Commonwealth Blue Charter by all 53 governments, laying the foundation for strong collaboration on action to protect our ocean from the effects of climate change, pollution

and over-fishing. A range of member countries have pledged to lead on specific issues such as coral reef regeneration, mangrove restoration and ridding the ocean of plastic.

“This landmark decision to adopt a Commonwealth Blue Charter,” the Secretary-General said, “will affect one third of the world’s national coastal waters, helping to sustain livelihoods and ecosystems globally”.

The Secretary-General also announced a multi-year agreement between the Commonwealth Secretariat and Bloomberg Philanthropies to explore mutually supportive initiatives to boost international trade, innovation and sustainability.

Heads committed to increasing intra-Commonwealth trade to \$2 Trillion by 2030, and expanding intra-Commonwealth investment. Their commitment will be achieved through the Commonwealth Connectivity Agenda for Trade and Investment declaration, adopted at the meeting.





PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi with PM of New Zealand Jacinda Ardern at Commonwealth Leaders Retreat in Windsor Castle UK.

Leaders also agreed on revised guidelines for Commonwealth election observations to ensure the on-going integrity, value and impact

of Commonwealth observer groups.

In addition, they adopted the Commonwealth Cyber Declaration, agreeing to work together to evaluate and strengthen their cybersecurity frameworks and response mechanisms. The UK government pledged up to £15 million to help Commonwealth countries strengthen their cybersecurity capabilities and 'tackle criminal groups and hostile state actors who pose a global threat to security, including in the UK'.

Many of the CHOGM's outcomes are a product of three days of deliberation at forums for women, young people, businesses and civil society. Protecting the environment dominated the agenda at the youth forum, while the women's forum called on governments to abolish laws that allow discrimination and replace them with legislation that protect women's rights. The business forum focused on free trade describing it as 'the engine for global prosperity'. On Thursday they submitted recommendations and issues to foreign ministers to consider during their sessions.

"The heads asked for action, concrete action on the ground, which will have the impact which

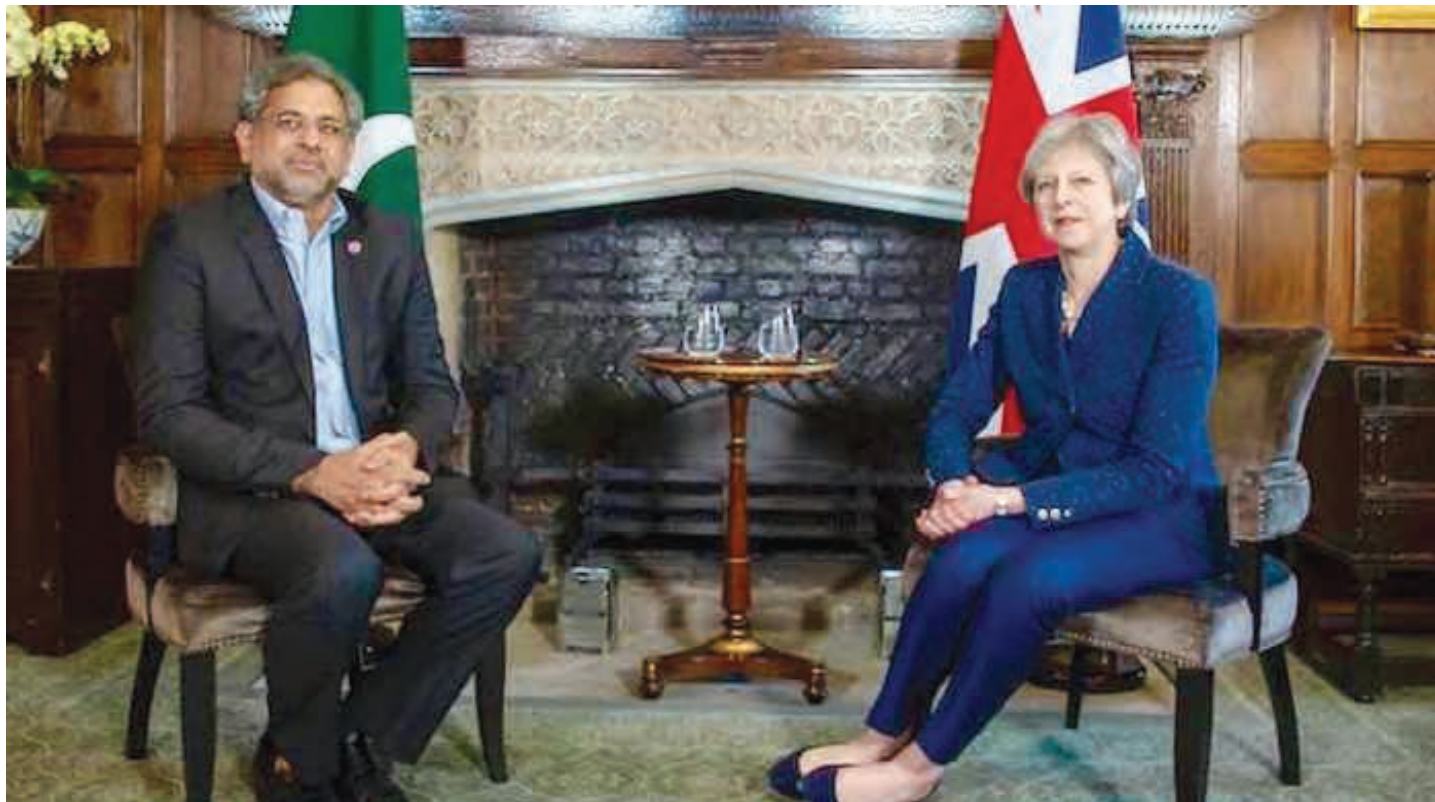


PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi with President of Kenya Uhuru Kenyatta at Commonwealth Leaders Retreat in Windsor Castle UK.

is needed to change the lives of our 2.4 billion people in our Commonwealth," said Secretary-General Scotland. She added, "It was the most extraordinary CHOGM!"

PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi addressing at the High level segment: Ready to Beat Malaria, during "Malaria No More Summit





PM Abbasi urged the international community to respond to the current human rights situation in IoK

By Mian Asad ullah

Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi highlighted the plight of Kashmiri people in a meeting with UK Prime Minister Theresa May in London. The two leaders met on the sidelines of the Commonwealth leaders retreat at Windsor Castle in London.

Prime Minister Abbasi urged the international community to respond to the current human rights situation in Indian occupied Kashmir. The two leaders discussed matters of bilateral interest in the meeting. Prime Minister Abbasi congratulated Prime Minister May on the efficient steering of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting.

The Pakistani premier informed his British counterpart of Pakistan's efforts in fighting terrorism and extremism. He also underscored the importance of strengthening bilateral relations especially in the context of trade and investment and thanked UK for the work done by its development agency in Pakistan. Abbasi appreciated the appointment of a trade envoy by the UK government to help explore

trade and investment opportunities between the two countries, especially in the post-Brexit context. He also spoke of his visit to Kabul and underscored Pakistan's commitment to peace

Prime Minister May appreciated Pakistan's efforts in fighting terrorism

and stability in Afghanistan.

Prime Minister May appreciated Pakistan's efforts in fighting terrorism and in this context recalled Prime Minister Abbasi's reference to more than 100,000 Pakistanis affected in the country's fight against terrorism over the past 10 years. She appreciated Prime Minister



Abbasi's efforts in reaching out to Afghanistan, especially during his recent visit to Kabul. She added that Pakistan-UK relations are strong and underscored the importance of enhancing trade between the two countries.

In response to Prime Minister May's reference to the recent alleged use of chemical weapons, Prime Minister Abbasi recalled Pakistan's principled position of condemning any use of chemical weapons and upholding the principles of the UN Charter.

Palestinian envoy paid farewell calls on President & PM

President & Prime Minister appreciated H.E. Walid Abu Ali for his services



Outgoing Ambassador of Palestine H.E. Walid Abu Ali paid farewell call on President Mamnoon Hussain at the Aiwan-e-Sadr. The ambassador also briefed the President about Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and atrocities committed against the innocent Palestine people. The President appreciated services of the outgoing ambassador for promotion of bilateral relations. He wished him success for his future endeavors.

Earlier, Ambassador of the State of Palestine, Walid Abu Ali also paid a farewell call on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi. The prime minister congratulated the Ambassador for his achievements during his stay in Islamabad and his contribution towards strengthening Pakistan's relations with Palestine.

He hoped that the bilateral relations will be further strengthened through greater contacts at the governmental and people to people level.

He expressed concern and condemned recent use of force by Israel against defenseless Palestinians resulting in the martyrdom of several Palestinians and injuring many others.

The prime minister reiterated unwavering support for the just cause of Palestine on the basis of the internationally agreed parameters, the pre-1967 borders and Al-Quds Al-Sharif as

its capital, to ensure lasting peace in the region.

The Palestinian ambassador thanked the prime minister, the government and the people of Pakistan for their cooperation during his stay in Islamabad.

He briefed the prime minister on the present situation in Palestine and expressed

appreciation for the strong support extended by Pakistan to Palestine by the government and people of Pakistan bilaterally, as well as within the international fora.

The prime minister also conveyed his greetings and well wishes to the President, Government and people of Palestine, wishing the ambassador success in his future assignment.



Pakistan wants to get out of the Zero Sum dynamics of Cold War era: COAS

By Agency

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on second day of his visit in Russia met General Valery Vasilevich Gerasimov, Chief of General Staff Russian Armed Forces at the defence ministry, Moscow. Matters related to regional security, stability and bilateral security cooperation were discussed.

General Gerasimov appreciated Pakistan's achievements in war against terror. He said that Russia supports Pakistan's efforts towards reconciliation and peace in Afghanistan and is willing to play a role towards that end. General Qamar Javed Bajwa said that Pakistan welcomes any initiative which can bring peace and stability in Afghanistan and the whole region will benefit from it. COAS said that Pakistan wants to get out of the zero sum dynamics of Cold War era that is still prevalent in South Asia. We have no hostile designs towards any country and will keep on working towards a cooperative regional framework based on sovereign equality and mutual progress through connectivity.

Earlier, COAS met Colonel General Oleg Salyukov, Commander Russian Federation Ground Forces at Kremlin Palace. Upon arrival COAS was presented guard of honour who laid wreath at the Tomb of Unknown Soldier. National anthems of both countries were played, ISPR reported.



The Russian Ground Forces Commander acknowledged achievements of Pakistan Army in fight against terrorism and contributions for regional peace and stability. Russian Ground Forces Commander said that Pakistan is a geo-strategically important country and Russia is keen to expand its existing bilateral military to military cooperation.

General Qamar Javed Bajwa thanked Russian

Ground Forces Commander and said that Pakistan reciprocates desire of enhanced bilateral military engagements. COAS said that Russia has recently played a positive role to help resolve complex situations in the region. He said that Pakistan will continue to play its part to keep conflicts away from the region and seek approaches which bring regional convergences into play rather than the divergences.

Uzbek President appreciated Pakistan's achievements in fight against terrorism

COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa met President of Uzbekistan, Mr Shavkat Mirziyoyev. The Uzbek President appreciated Pakistan's achievements in fight against terrorism and said that the world needs to recognise Pakistan's contributions for regional and global peace.

COAS also met Foreign Minister and Secretary of National Security Council of Uzbekistan. Both sides agreed to enhance bilateral security cooperation and continue efforts which bring peace and stability in the region. Earlier, on arrival, COAS was received by Uzbek Defence Minister, Major General Abdusalom Azizov and Chief of General Staff Major General Pavel Ergashev.



COAS General Qamar Javed Bajwa met Foreign Minister and Secretary of National Security Council of Uzbekistan.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Ambassador of Kazakhstan H.E. Mr. Barlybay Sadykov calls on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at PM office Islamabad.



Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates UAE H.E. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi call on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at PM office Islamabad.



H.E. Mr. Nawaf Saeed Ahmad Al-Maliki, Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan call on Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at PM office Islamabad.



H.E. Mr. Yao Jing, Ambassador of China to Pakistan called on Ms Marriyum Aurangzeb, Minister of State for IBNH&LH in Islamabad.



H.E. Mohammed Karmoune, Ambassador of Morocco called on Ms Marriyum Aurangzeb, Minister of State for IBNH & LH in Islamabad.



Ambassador of Morocco, Mohamed Karmoune called on Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Engr. Mohammad Baligh ur Rehman Islamabad.



Interior Minister professor Ahsan Iqbal in a meeting with British High Commissioner Mr. Thomas Drew in Islamabad.



Ambassador of Morocco, Mohamed Karmoune called on Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial coordination Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada in Islamabad.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



National Security Adviser Lt. General (Retd) Nasser Janjua meeting with British High Commissioner Mr. Thomas Drew in Islamabad.



National Security Adviser Lt. General (Retd) Nasser Janjua in a meeting with Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, Takashi Kurai at his office in Islamabad.



Ambassador of Morocco, H.E. Mr. Mohamed Karmoune called on National Security Adviser Lt. General (Retd) Naseer Khan Janjua in Islamabad.



Ambassador of Tunisia H.E. Mr. Adel Elarbi called on National Security Adviser Lt. General (Retd) Naseer Khan Janjua in Islamabad.



National Security Adviser Lt. General (Retd) Nasser Janjua in a meeting with French Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Marc Baretty in Islamabad.



National Security Adviser Lt. General (Retd) Nasser Janjua meeting with Turkish Naval Chief Vice Admiral Adnan Ozbal in Islamabad.



National Security Adviser Lt. General (Retd) Nasser Janjua in a meeting with Indian High Commissioner Ajay Bisaria in Islamabad.



Minister of State for IT and Telecom, Mr. Anusha Rehman meeting with Secretary General Unctad Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi at Geneva.

Queen Elizabeth II Celebrates 92



By Mian Asadullah

Queen Elizabeth II marked her 92nd birthday. The celebrations kicked off at Buckingham Palace during the changing of the guard where the Band of the Irish Guards played “Happy Birthday.”

The customary gun salutes by the British Army took place midday — “a 41 gun salute in Hyde





Park, a 21 gun salute in Windsor Great Park and a 62 gun salute at the Tower of London,” according to the Royal Household website.

Despite the public fireworks, “The Queen usually spends her actual birthday privately,” says the website.

The queen often celebrates two birthdays, one in June and another on her actual birthday, April 21. It’s a tradition that dates back to King George II in 1748.

Queen Elizabeth, joined by other members of the royal family, attended “The Queen’s Birthday Party,” a concert at London’s Royal Albert Hall. An eclectic ensemble performed in her honor, including Tom Jones, Sting, Kylie Minogue, Ladysmith Black Mambazo and other

stars from across the Commonwealth.

The concert proceeds will benefit The Queen’s Commonwealth Trust, a new youth charity of which the queen is patron.

In a speech at the event, Prince Harry wished his grandmother a happy birthday, and announced the official launch of her charity. “This organisation, in your name, will provide a platform for those working to make a difference in their communities across 53 countries. Happy Birthday Your Majesty,” he said.

This year, her official birthday is set for Saturday, June 9, according to the Household Division’s website, and will be celebrated with a Trooping the Colour parade in London.



President Mamnoon Hussain has conferred

Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military)

Upon Commander of Turkish Naval Forces & Commander People's Liberation Army Air Force



President Mamnoon Hussain conferring the Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon Vice Admiral Adnan Ozbal, Commander of Turkish Naval Forces at the Alwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.



President Mamnoon Hussain Conferring Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon Lieutenant General Ding Laihang Commander People's Liberation Army Air Force, China at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

By Agency, Monitoring

President Mamnoon Hussain has conferred Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon Vice Admiral Adnan OZBAL, Commander of Turkish Naval Forces. Speaking on the occasion, the President said that it is difficult to express the depth of the relations between Pakistan and Turkey in words. He underlined that Pakistan respects the role of Turkey in resolving the challenges faced by Muslim Ummah. The President stated that Pakistan and Turkey will continue to support each other at the international forums. He underscored that there is a strong cooperation between the democratic institutions of the both countries. He emphasized that Turkey is playing remarkable role in resolving the issues of the Muslim World. The President said that Pak-Turkish defense relations will further develop in the future. He stated that President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has played a commendable role for the resolution of Afghanistan issue. He added that we are proud of the friendship with Turkish Government, people and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. He also praised the hospitality of Turkey towards the refugees. He stressed that unity among the Muslim Ummah

is need of the hour in order to deal with the current problems. Earlier, an investiture ceremony was held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad to confer NI(M) upon the Turkish Naval Chief. Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi, Turkish Ambassador Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul and senior officials were also present in the ceremony. On the occasion, Commander of Turkish Naval Forces Vice Admiral Adnan OZBAL thanked the President and said that he will continue to play his role in promoting Pak-Turkish defence ties.

President Mamnoon Hussain has said that Pakistan and China have everlasting friendly relations which are also the basis of our foreign policy. The President said this while talking to Lieutenant General Ding Laihang, Commander People's Liberation Army Air Force of China who called on him at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad. Earlier, President also conferred Nishan-i-Imtiaz upon him during a special investiture ceremony at the Aiwan-e-Sadr. Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, Chinese Ambassador Yao Jiang and senior officials were present on the occasion. The President stated that defence relations between Pakistan and China are the guarantee of peace and stability

in the region. He appreciated the efforts of Chinese authorities for successfully holding the joint exercises of the Air Forces of Pakistan and China and hoped that such exercises will also be held in future. He thanked the Chinese Government and Commander of its Air Force for providing quality support to the Air Force of Pakistan. He emphasized that Pakistan fully supports the One Belt One Road project of China. Pakistan also supports China on the issues related to Taiwan, Tibet, Xinjiang and South China Sea, he added. He thanked the Chinese Government for its support to Pakistan on the regional and security issues. The President also expressed satisfaction over the progress of different projects under China Pakistan Economic Corridor. He underlined that frequent exchange of high level delegations between the two countries should continue for further enhance the bilateral relations. On the occasion, Commander People's Liberation Army Air Force Lieutenant General Ding Laihang thanked the President and Government of Pakistan and resolved that he will continue to play his role towards promoting the relations between both countries.



President inaugurated pictorial exhibition featuring **Pak-Turkey** Relations

By Mian Fazal Elahi

President Mamnoon Hussain inaugurated the week-long exhibition displaying pictorial survey of relations between Turkey and Pakistan.

The exhibition titled 'Journey of Friendship and Brotherhood – A Pictorial Survey of Turkey-Pakistan Relations' has been organized by Turkish Embassy and Yunus Emre Turkish Culture Center at the Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA).

While addressing on the occasion, President Mamnoon Hussain said relations between Pakistan and Turkey have grown from cordial to excellent level and now they have further been strengthened over the years. President Mamnoon also gave a historical perspective of relations between the two countries and highlighted role of various leaders who had contributed to further strengthening of these relations. The President also recited some poetry to delineate depth of relations between Pakistan and Turkey and received huge applause from the audience.

The President said such exhibitions should be held in Turkey as well. He said that elders of

both the countries had laid the foundations of fraternal ties between the two nations.

Ambassador of Turkey Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul while thanking the President for inaugurating the exhibition. The Turkish ambassador said he attached great importance to the exhibition, humbly displaying some landmarks of this journey of friendship and brotherhood, between Turkey and Pakistan. "Various pictures

and photos of the different personalities and events, duly drawn or shot in the course of past centuries, shed light on the long lasting relations of fraternity and solidarity." "We are neighbors without physical borders," he said. The event was attended by a large number of people, including diplomats and intellectuals.





PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi at Boao Forum:

Regional connectivity, open trade and increased economic growth are the key to promoting tolerance and deny space to extremism

President Xi termed Pakistan as a pillar for regional peace and stability

By M.Saeed Yousafzai, Monitoring Desk

The Boao Forum for Asia in the Chinese province of Hainan is often considered as Asia's answer to the World Economic Forum at Davos. The three-day forum, which concluded, was an opportunity for China to demonstrate its soft power. Most of the speeches at the Boao Forum touched on the One Belt, One Road initiative by which China is expanding its economic reach throughout Asia. Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi devoted much of his speech at the opening ceremony to speak of the benefits of OBOR, particularly the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

China-Pakistan friendship is the bedrock of strategic stability in the region: PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi

will we be able to promote tolerance and amity and deny space to extremism." According to him, the China-Pakistan-Afghanistan trilateral framework is aimed at achieving these very objectives while connectivity remains the cornerstone of Pakistan's plans.

The prime minister chose this occasion to emphasise the connectivity imperative by stating that the major driving force behind its overlapping membership of the regional platforms of ECO, SAARC and SCO stems from its resolve to create greater connectivity.

There is no doubt about the fact that Pak-Sino





relationship has no parallel in history. There is also no doubt about another fact that China and Pakistan are iron brothers. That China-Pakistan friendship is the bedrock of strategic stability in the region is yet another profound fact. It is, therefore, heartening to see the bright prospects of the CPEC. That is why the PM disclosed to the Forum that the CPEC, which is the flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative, is fast reaching fruition. He also told the audience that work on the Gwadar deep seaport at the southern tip of the CPEC is proceeding on fast track. On completion, it will not only serve as a transit and trans-shipment hub, but also become an economic nucleus. The CPEC would provide the shortest maritime and overland access to Western China, Central and South Asia and the Middle East, the prime minister told the conference being held on the theme of 'An Open and Innovative Asia for a World of Greater Prosperity'. The PM's description of the development activity created by the CPEC is spot on: "In Pakistan today, step by step, brick by brick, a brave new Asia is taking shape." Pakistan, according to the PM, has already started reaping dividends of CPEC rail, road and infrastructure projects.

The establishment of several special economic zones along the highways and motorways is integral to the CPEC plans; and the country of 209 million people will offer tailored incentive packages for these zones which would catalyze the development of innovation-based industries in the country.

The major driving force behind its overlapping membership of the regional platforms of ECO, SAARC and SCO stems from its resolve to create greater connectivity

In his speech at the Boao Forum, the PM made a serious effort to woo fast-emerging private sector in China with a view to attracting foreign investment. He seems to have realized the fact that China is going to open its economy further and lower import tariffs on various products in coming weeks and months in order to defuse its escalating trade dispute with the US. Unfortunately, however, his speech was bereft of any mention of gross imbalance in bilateral China-Pakistan trade as China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement continues to be skewed in favour of Beijing, hence the need for taking all the required steps to correct the deepening trade imbalance without any further loss of time. Friendship emotions must not override good business sense.

During the visit, Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi held a bilateral meeting with President of the People's Republic of China Mr. Xi Jinping. Senior members of the Politburo as well as State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi participated in the meeting. Prime Minister Abbasi was assisted by Foreign Minister, Interior Minister and other senior officials. The Prime Minister congratulated President Xi on his re-





election as President of the People's Republic of China. Both sides exchanged comprehensive in-depth views on enhancing the bilateral cooperation. The Prime Minister stated that China and Pakistan are iron brothers. This unique relationship has withstood the test of time and has strengthened with each passing year. Prime Minister lauded the commitment and determination of President Xi in making Asia more open for growth and development. He appreciated President Xi's transformative vision of "Belt and Road Initiative". The two leaders discussed a variety of issues pertaining to bilateral interest as well as developments in the region. Prime Minister briefed President Xi on Pakistan's efforts for the successful

implementation of CPEC. He also discussed the smooth progress of CPEC projects along with the establishment of Special Economic Zones. President Xi said that industrial parks will be a new growth path for Pakistan's industrialization and help upgrade Pakistan's industrial mix. He reaffirmed China's continued support to CPEC. President Xi termed Pakistan as a pillar for regional peace and stability. A strong and prosperous Pakistan will continue to play a key role in this regard. He expressed China's full support for Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. China wishes to further deepen its friendship and strategic cooperation with Pakistan, he added. President Xi appreciated Pakistan's contribution in addressing the

challenge of terrorism and also commended Pakistan's relentless efforts for working towards a peaceful neighbourhood. Prime Minister apprised President Xi of situation in Indian occupied Kashmir. Both sides agreed to continue to deepen cooperation in all areas of bilateral relations while exploring new avenues for practical collaboration in line with the vision of leadership of the two countries.

In sideline meetings, PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi called on by United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, The Executive Chairman of Alibaba Group Mr. Jack Ma, The Chief Executive of Hong Kong, Ms. Carrie Lam and some other prominent figures.



Russian Defence Ministry supports activation of cooperation between military departments of SCO for providing security

By Monitoring

Russian Defence Ministry supports activation of cooperation between military departments of SCO for providing security. This was stated by the head of the Russian military department General of the Army Sergei Shoigu at the SCO Defence Ministers' session in Beijing.

"At the same time, special attention should be given to the rapid exchange of information, study of the experience of countering terrorism, maintaining close contacts through the general staffs".

Sergei Shoigu noted that a new mechanism for cooperation in the field of defence and security was launched – the Expert Working Group at the Meeting of the Defence Ministers of the SCO member states.

Sergei Shoigu noted that the Russian Defence Ministry proposes "to take into account the Russian combat experience gained in Syria

while holding the Peaceful Mission joint exercise in Russia this August. He expressed confidence that the results of the meeting will become a solid basis for expanding practical cooperation of military departments of the SCO member countries in the future.

Defence Minister, Engr Khurram Dastgir Khan along with defence ministers of other Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) called on Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall.

The defence ministers of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and ambassador of India were present during the joint meeting.

The SCO, an inter-governmental organization, founded in China's Shanghai on June 15, 2001,

now includes China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan and India as full members. Pakistan and India were admitted as full members of the organisation

at the summit in Astana last year.



After the admission of India & Pakistan, the SCO has become a comprehensive regional organization: China

Over the past 17 years since the inception of the SCO, the member states have been working to consolidate political mutual trust, deepen cooperation in the fields of security, economy and people-to-people exchanges, and carry out extensive international interactions under the "Shanghai Spirit" of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for cultural diversity and pursuit of common development, said by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying's Regular Press Release received here in response to a question that The SCO Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting was held in Beijing on April 24, the first meeting after India and Pakistan were admitted to the group. How do you see the development and the prospect of the SCO

after the admission of India and Pakistan?

Ms. Hua further added that these efforts have made enormous contributions to upholding regional security and stability and promoting common development and prosperity. After the admission of India and Pakistan, the SCO has become a comprehensive regional organization with the largest population and geographic coverage and immense potential. It will surely play a more positive role in the regional and international affairs.

During the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting on April 24, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and foreign ministers of other member states including India and

Pakistan exchanged views in great depth and reached important consensus on the Qingdao Summit preparations and the SCO development. The foreign ministers agreed that they will carry forward the "Shanghai Spirit", remain true to their original aspirations, keep pace with the times, enhance solidarity and mutual trust, deepen cooperation across the board, and build a new type of international relations featuring mutual trust, equity, justice and win-win cooperation and a community of a shared future for all mankind. All parties reaffirmed their support to China in making best preparations for the Qingdao Summit as the rotating chair to ensure the success of the Summit and propel the development of the SCO at a new starting point.

North Korea's Kim Jong-un crosses into South Korea

“We bade farewell to the frozen relationship between North and South Korea, which was a nightmare. And we announced the beginning of a warm spring to the world,” Mr. Kim



By Mian Fazal Elahi, Monitoring

In a moment rich with symbolism and pomp, South Korean leader Moon Jae-in and Mr Kim shook hands at the border.

Mr. Kim said it was the “starting point” for peace, after crossing the military line that divides the peninsula.

The leaders of North and South Korea have agreed to work to rid the peninsula of nuclear weapons, after holding a historic summit.

The announcement was made by the North’s Kim Jong-un and Moon Jae-in of South Korea after talks at the border. The two also agreed to push towards turning the armistice that ended the Korean War in 1953 into a peace treaty this year.

The summit came just months after warlike rhetoric from North Korea.

Speaking at a banquet after talks, Mr. Kim hailed the progress he said had been made.

“We bade farewell to the frozen relationship between North and South Korea, which was a nightmare. And we announced the beginning of

a warm spring to the world,” he said.

What is in the agreement?

Details of how denuclearisation would be achieved were not made clear and many analysts remain sceptical about the North’s apparent enthusiasm for engagement.

An issue for the North is the security guarantee extended by the US, a nuclear power, to South Korea and Japan and its military presence in both countries.

Previous inter-Korean agreements have included similar pledges but were later

abandoned after the North resorted to nuclear and missile tests and the South elected more conservative presidents.

Mr Kim said the two leaders had agreed to work to prevent a repeat of the region’s “unfortunate history” in which progress had “fizzled out”.

“There may be backlash, hardship and frustration,” he said, adding: “A victory cannot be achieved without pain.”

Other points the leaders agreed on in a joint statement were:

An end to “hostile activities” between the two



Pakistan welcome historic meet between North and South Korea And Appreciate China's efforts

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

Pakistan wishes peace and stability for the Korean peninsula, said by Pakistan Foreign office spokesperson in weekly press briefing in response to a question on 26 April 2018. He add that, We hope that all stakeholders will be able to find a negotiated solution to the issue. Pakistan has consistently supported the objective of nuclear weapons free Korean peninsula in line with the mutual agreement between all the stakeholders.

Any step towards normalization of the situation in the Korean Peninsula would be for the benefit of the entire region and would contribute towards global peace. He appreciated the role of China and said that "In this context we appreciate the efforts made by the countries of the region, especially China".

Mr Kim jokingly apologised to Mr Moon for repeatedly forcing him to get up early because of the North's missile and nuclear tests.

"I heard you [President Moon] had your early morning sleep disturbed many times to attend National Security Council meetings," he said. "I will make sure that your morning sleep won't be disturbed."

"Now I can sleep in peace," Mr Moon replied.

Mr Kim also acknowledged that the North's infrastructure lagged behind that of the South.

"I'm worried that our transport situation is bad so it may discomfort you, it may be embarrassing [for me] if you visit North Korea after living in the South's environment," he said.

After separating for lunch, the two leaders took part in a tree-planting ceremony using soil and water from both countries.

Mr Kim was accompanied for the symbolic discussions by nine officials, including his powerful sister, Kim Yo-jong.

The rapprochement began in January when Mr Kim suggested he was "open to dialogue" with South Korea.

The following month the two countries marched under one flag at the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics, held in the South.

Courtesy to BBC



nations

Changing the demilitarised zone (DMZ) that divides the country into a "peace zone" by ceasing propaganda broadcasts

An arms reduction in the region pending the easing of military tension

To push for four-way talks involving the US and China

Organising a reunion of families left divided by the war

Connecting and modernising railways and roads across the border

Further joint participation in sporting events, including this year's Asian Games

The commitment to denuclearisation does not explicitly refer to North Korea halting its nuclear activities but rather the aim of "a nuclear-free Korean peninsula".

The two countries have also agreed to seek international support to reach this goal, the joint statement says.

What do China and the US say?

China later praised the political determination and courage of both leaders and said it hoped the momentum could be maintained.

US President Donald Trump also welcomed the news, tweeting that "good things are happening".

Mr Kim is due to meet Mr Trump in the coming weeks. Speaking in Washington, Mr Trump said the meeting would take place in one of two countries under consideration and vowed he would not be "played" by the North Korean leader.

"We will come up with a solution and if we don't we'll leave the room," he said.

New US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo - who earlier this month travelled secretly to Pyongyang to meet Mr Kim - said his impression

was that Mr Kim was serious about reaching a deal.

"The economic pressure put in place by this global effort that President Trump has led has led him to believe that it's in his best interest to come to the table and talk about denuclearisation," he said, speaking at a Nato meeting in Brussels.

How did summit unfold?

The leaders were met by an honour guard in traditional costume on the South Korean side. The pair walked to the Peace House in Panmunjom, a military compound in the DMZ.

Mr Kim then invited the South Korean president to step briefly across the demarcation line into



North Korea, before the pair stepped back into South Korea - all the while holding hands.

It was an apparently unscripted moment during a highly choreographed sequence of events.

The two leaders spoke together during a session broadcast live on South Korean TV.



Natural gas and LNG market

Middle East capabilities and South Asia's demand

Last several years LNG market demonstrated unprecedented scale, and it continues to grow. New players are coming, as from suppliers' side, as well as buyers' side. In this material, we are trying to recognise demand and supply for natural gas in the Middle East and South Asian regions.

To be more precise, India and Pakistan as the main buyers, Qatar and Iran as the main natural gas producers of the considering region.

Does appetite increase?

At the moment, with the growth of economies of countries with a total population of almost two billion people, their energy needs, respectively,

are also increasing. So according to the latest BP report, India's primary energy consumption reached 724 million tons of oil equivalent. Ten years ago, the country consumed just over half of this figure. Pakistan's figures are more modest, but still high, and in 2016 it consumed 83.2 million tons of oil equivalent, which is 1.5 times higher than consumption in 2006. At the same time, the Governments of both countries are trying to artificially limit the growth of consumption, and in the cities, even in capitals, there are prolonged outages of electricity. In winter, everything that burns and gives heat is burned in the cities. In addition to this, both countries experience colossal environmental difficulties and the development of the market



for classical types of energy resources can further exacerbate an already deplorable situation.

Recipe: natural gas

As known, natural gas is the most environmentally friendly of all available hydrocarbons. With the increase in the capacity of the LNG market, both India and Pakistan are turning their attention to buying large and long-term volumes of liquefied natural gas, increasing their share in exports from Qatar. Over the past few years, both countries have signed major contracts for the supply of natural gas from Qatar, thereby reducing the difference between supply and demand. It should be noted that if you look at BP's report, the difference between supply and demand in energy resources in these countries are not that big. But this is only a visible part of the problem, the so-called tip of the iceberg. If we look at this problem deeper, it turns out that the majority of the population of these countries lack access to basic conditions, including electricity and heat, as well as plants and factories that still use primitive fuels or do not use them at all. Thus, India and Pakistan have a huge shortage of energy resources.

But here it is necessary to note that the governments of both countries are carrying out huge work to saturate the market. In addition to contracts for Qatari gas, negotiations are under way with other major suppliers such as Australia, Malaysia and Russia. Gas pipeline projects are also on the agenda, which enjoy variable success. Two countries are considered as potential suppliers of natural gas: Iran and Turkmenistan. Both directions originate from the nineties of the last century, and for a number of reasons have not been implemented to this day. The IPI project was eventually frozen by Pakistan because of the sanctions of some countries against Iran. Trans-Afghan gas pipeline from another gas reach Turkmenistan, or TAPI, was also postponed due to the situation in Afghanistan, but recently the project participant countries are actively promoting it. Recently, with the initiative of Iran and support of Russia, the possibilities of laying on the bottom of the Arabian Sea are being studied.

Possibilities of the world's largest deposit

This article is not in vain devoted to the Middle East. More than 40% of the world's proven natural gas reserves are located here, and one-third of the total reserves belong to Iran and Qatar, respectively, the majority is concentrated in the North Dome / South Pars deposit. This deposit is the largest field in the world with total reserves of 28 trillion cubic meters, which was discovered in 1971, production started in 1991. At present, according to statements of operators, daily production reaches 1.5 billion



cubic meters, as a result, 550 billion cubic meters annually. Given that the beginning of production in 1990's, the intensive production of the field already makes itself felt. This is evident in the pressure drop. According to a simple hydraulic calculation, it can be assumed that the pressure drop in this field is at least 20%. This process is normal in hydrocarbons production, and depend on the production, it is necessary to construct booster-compressor stations or additional wells. So, according to the statement of the head of the South Pars gas company's operator, Iran needs to invest 25 billion US dollars, to avoid a loss in the volume of production due to the pressure drop. If, in the case of Qatar, the attraction of such investments is relatively easy, for Iran foreign investments can be available to a limited extent, due to the validity of the sanctions of some countries. In addition, since most of the produced gas in Iran is consumed domestically, the export amount can remain in Iran, in a pessimistic outflow of circumstances, gas imports to Iran may increase.

Where to make up the increasing demand?

As we said at the beginning, there are other opportunities for supply diversification, such as increased opportunities for LNG production from other countries and pipeline projects.

For this, the considered in this article two large gas consumers will need to make a lot of effort. Re-detailed study of the LNG market, analysis of the potentials of new players. Also, Pakistan and India will have to make efforts to eliminate existing issues (both among themselves and the situation in Afghanistan) and accelerate the construction of the TAPI gas pipeline and other pipeline projects.

In any case, it is obvious that to ensure the growth of the economies of India and Pakistan, they need energy to make up the increasing demand.

Courtesy to <http://www.ocamagazine.com/natural-gas-and-lng-market-middle-east-capabilities-and-south-asias-demand>





Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi calls on King Salman Bin Abdulaziz at Damam, Saudi Arabia.

Joint “Gulf Shield 1” drills conclude in Saudi Arabia’s Eastern Region

Joint Gulf Shield 1 Drills have concluded in the Eastern Region of Saudi Arabia with the participation of 24 countries in addition to Saudi troops from all military sectors. Among the countries that participated were India, Afghanistan, the United States, United Kingdom and Pakistan. The one-month exercise came under the auspices of Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz.

The drills aimed to raise the competencies of participating forces to confront challenges and

threats within a joint operation environment to achieve the concept of the joint action whereas participants in the exercises include military forces of high levels of training and professionalism, using many modern and sophisticated weapons. Troops of the Pakistan Army, Pakistan Air Force C-130 aircraft, JF-17 Thunder Fighter jets, Pakistan Navy ships, and commandos from Special Services Group participated in the exercise.

The Joint Gulf Shield military exercises are

believed to have been the biggest of its kind in the region to date – not only in terms of countries that participated but also regarding the types of weapons and equipment used.

The spokesman for Joint Gulf Shield-1, Brig Gen Abdullah Al-Subaie, told a news conference that the exercise featured two types of military operations; conventional military operations that involved coastal defence attacks against the enemy, besides the irregular war operations carried out by besieging and penetrating villages and industrial installations to cleanse them of hostile elements.

The spokesman said the most important aspect of the exercise was to activate the concept of joint military combat operational plans to counter hostile acts that threaten the security and stability of the region. The exercise also displayed military uniformity among the participating countries, in addition to the development of a sense of collective security, unity and common destiny, the spokesman said.

Leaders of Arab countries, and others, headed to the eastern city of Jubail in Saudi Arabia to attend the final phase of the Joint Gulf Shield-1 military exercise.

Pakistan’s Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi witnessed the joint military exercise





'Gulf Shield-1' along the east coast of the Kingdom.

Prime Minister Abbasi is accompanied by Minister for Defense Khurram Dastagir and Chief of Army Staff Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa.

Upon his arrival at King Abdulaziz Airbase Dhahran, the prime minister was received by Eastern Province Emir Prince Saud Bin Naif. Ambassador Khan Hasham Bin Saddique and Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf Al-Maliki were also present at the occasion.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoy close brotherly

relations. The equation draws its strength from religious and cultural affinities, mutual trust and shared vision about peace and security at regional as well as international level.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi met Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and discussed matters pertaining to mutual interests. Minister for Defense Khurram Dastgir Khan and Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa also accompanied the prime minister during the meeting.

The premier also met crown prince Muhammad

bin Salman and Minister for Defense.

The prime minister on the occasion said that Saudi Arabia is of immense importance for the people and government of Pakistan. In return, King Salman also lauded the people of Pakistan.



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi exchanging views with Governor Dammam Sauf bin Nayaf Al-Saud upon his arrival at King Abdulaziz Airbase Dhahran.

Saudi Arabia drafting national human rights strategy

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Saudi Arabia is drafting a national human rights strategy, covering more than 100 initiatives of all areas of human rights, Dr. Nasser bin Rajeh Al-Shahrani, Vice President of Human Rights Commission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia said. Dr Al-Shahrani told the 59th Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) that his country had developed many legal and institutional frameworks in various areas related to human rights, including justice, criminal judiciary, combating corruption, racial discrimination, women and children, persons with disabilities, older persons and expatriate labours, and to promote regional and international cooperation in the field of human rights. Dr Al-Shahrani led his country's delegation to the CERD meeting,

Saudi press agency (SPA) reported. He said under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz



Al Saud and Crown Prince, the Kingdom was undergoing comprehensive reforms and continuous development within the framework of the implementation of the "Vision of the Kingdom 2030". He pointed to the issuance and amendment of several regulations, citing the anti-trafficking law, protection against abuse, associations and civil institutions system, the list of domestic workers and the like. The procedures of women and the provision of services to them without the consent of any person, as well as the amendment of the judicial system and the system of the Board of Grievances, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the system of legal proceedings and the system of work were conducted to go in line with international standards of human rights, he added.

Pakistan appoints first female diplomat in Saudi

Fozia Fayyaz Ahmad's first appointment was in Washington DC and then in New Delhi

By Monitoring

Setting a new precedent, Pakistan for the first time in its 70 years history has appointed a female diplomat in Saudi Arabia.

Fozia Fayyaz Ahmed has been designated as

consular at Consulate General Pakistan in Jeddah, reflecting the country's resolve to empower women.

Fayyaz, talking about her appointment, said that she is the first female diplomat to serve in the Kingdom, adding that she heads a section

which facilitates Pakistanis who seek services such as passports, national identity cards, renewal and extension, travel documents etc.

Saudi Gazette quoted Fayyaz as saying, "Pakistan is a progressive country. Women are working in all fields. They are doing wonderful jobs. Our people have great regards for them. Everyone trusts on them and cooperates with them. Pakistan as a society that recognizes the women role and Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is very progressive. It has opened its doors for women at all levels."

She also expressed happiness, saying that accessibility of women has increased in the consulate due to the appointment of the female diplomat.

Hailing from southern Punjab, Fayyaz has been served in Washington and New Delhi and it is her third diplomatic posting in KSA.

Fozia holds a master degree in English literature from Islamic University of Bahawalpur and she passed Central Superior Service Exam (CSS exam) conducted by Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) Islamabad and then joined foreign service of Pakistan.



Relations with the US were very important for Pakistan



By M. Saeed Yousafzai

Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry delivered a talk on 'Pakistan's Place in the World' at John Hopkins University Washington. He was jointly invited by School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) John Hopkins University and Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), says a press release received from Washington. Dr. Vali Nasr, Dean, John Hopkins SAIS opened the floor by introducing the Ambassador. Dr. Joshua White contributed to the conversation as a discussant. At the outset, the Ambassador congratulated the two Universities for their initiative to institutionalize the study of Pakistan in the United

States. While sketching out the changing dynamics of global politics that had been playing out in the South Asia region, Ambassador Chaudhry said that the realignments were defining the broad contours of emerging

The two sides could work together to achieve the shared objective of peace and stability in Afghanistan



world order. Pakistan, for its part, had fared well in these challenging and changing times. The country had defeated terrorism; the economy was picking up attracting investors across the globe and the democratic process were on track despite challenges. The Ambassador added that relations with the US were very important for Pakistan and this realization was prevalent across all segments of Pakistani polity. In interactions, Pakistan had been impressing upon its American interlocutors that Pakistan meant well and both countries have a great deal of work to do together. This required continued engagement at all

levels. The two sides could work together to achieve the shared objective of peace and stability in Afghanistan. The conversation with the Ambassador concluded the two-day long Conference titled "Pakistan Beyond Seventy: The Long View" jointly organized by SAIS and LUMS with participation from think tanks and academia from Pakistan and the US. In the evening, the Ambassador hosted a reception for the participants of the Conference titled "Pakistan Beyond Seventy: The Long View" at the Embassy. Distinguished personalities from the US government, think tanks and academia were also invited.



Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



President Mamnoon Hussain giving away souvenirs to delegates during the Inaugural Ceremony of 7th South Asian Conference on Sanitation in Islamabad.



Chinese Ambassador Mr. Yao Jing calling on Adviser to Prime Minister on Finance, Miftah Ismail at Ministry of Finance, Islamabad.



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



Federal Secretary Commerce, Mohammad Younus Dagha in meeting with Japanese Senior Deputy Foreign Minister Kazuyuki Yamzaki in Islamabad.



Federal Minister for Commerce and Textile Muhammad Pervaiz Malik in a meeting with H.E. Mr. Wang Shouwen, Chinese Vice Commerce Minister in Islamabad.



Left to Right: Rizwan Siddique, M. Imran Khan, Naeem Sabir, Bilal Mehmood Ch, M. Tariq Wazir, Murk Aijaz, Farhat AYESha, Ata-ul-Munim Shahid, Kamran Akhtar, Tasnim Aslam, Khalil Hashmi, Ahmed Farooq, Muhammad Omar, Adnan Javid, Sarfaraz Gohar, Junaid Suleman, Sharrukh Khan, Syeda Marriyah Ali, Qasim Aziz.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi being presented with a memento after inauguration of Diabetes Center at Phulgran.



Federal Secretary for Commerce, Mohammad Younus Dagha in meeting with European Union Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Jean Francois Cautin in Islamabad.



Ambassador of the UAE, H.E. Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al Zaabi meeting with Secretary Information Division Sardar Ahmad Nawaz Sukhera in Islamabad



US Acting Assistant Secretary of State for South & Central Asian Affairs, Ambassador Alice G. Wells called on Adviser to PM on Finance Dr. Miftah Ismail.



Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Mr. Hasil Khan Bizanjo in a meeting with Ambassador of Netherlands Ardi Stolos-Braken in Islamabad.



Malaysian High Commissioner, H.E. Ikram Mohammad Ibrahim called on Minister of State for IT Telecom Mrs Anusha Rehman here at Islamabad.



Pakistan Ambassador to Turkey Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi giving briefing to NDU delegation at Embassy of Pakistan in Ankara.



Minister for Defence, Engr Khurram Dastgir Khan shaking hands with Chinese Defence Minister, Wei Fenghe at Shanghai.



Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi meeting a delegation of Canadian Parliamentarians headed by MP Ms. Yasmin Ratansi at Prime Minister's Office.

CCPA expressed keen desire to further strengthen Pak-Canada bilateral relations

By Mian Fazal Elahi

A nine Member Canadian Commonwealth Parliamentary Association delegation led by Ms. Yasmin Ratansi, Member of Parliament (MP), Chair of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) of Parliament of Canada visited to Pakistan.

Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi received the delegation at Prime Minister's Office. Pak High Commissioner in Canada Mr. Tariq Azim Khan, Canadian High Commissioner in Pakistan Mr. Perry John Calderwood and Ms. Romina Khursheed Aslam were present during the meeting. The delegation comprised of Senator Salma Ataullahjan, Senator Diane F Griffin and MPs Mr. Terry Duguid, Mr. Robert Kitchen, Mr. Murray Rankin and Mr. Ramesh Sangha. The Prime Minister welcomed the delegation to Pakistan and expressed the hope that their visit would further strengthen the existing Pak-Canada friendly relations and will provide momentum to the efforts aimed at forging greater cooperation in all areas of mutual interest including trade and promoting people-to-people contacts. Talking to the delegation, the Prime Minister said that Pakistan is a country of great diversity carrying huge economic opportunities. He said that the resilient people of Pakistan have successfully fought war against terrorism, as a society, to secure peace not only for the country but the entire region. He said that the economy of the country has witnessed steady

growth during recent years which is expected to reach 6% during the current financial year. The Prime Minister also highlighted positive impact of the CPEC project under One Belt One Road initiative towards socio-economic development of the region and enhancement of regional connectivity. Discussing regional situation with the visiting delegation, the Prime Minister highlighted the efforts of Pakistan for the peace in neighboring Afghanistan. He also emphasized upon the need for resolution of

the longstanding issue of Kashmir according to UN Security Council Resolutions for ensuring lasting peace in the region. Thanking the Prime Minister for meeting, the delegation stated that the visit would help them developing better understanding of the country. Observing that a large Pakistani expatriate in Canada were serving as 'ambassadors' and a bridge to bring the two countries closer to each other, the delegation expressed keen desire to further strengthen Pak-Canada bilateral relations.



Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Dean of Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Turkmenistan H.E. Atadjan Movlamov hosted a farewell reception in the honor of Outgoing Ambassador of Palestine H.E. Walid Abu Ali in Islamabad. Large number of Diplomates graced the event.





Abbasi & Ghani agreed Not to allow their soils to be used for anti-state activities against each other

By M.Saeed Yousafzai, Agency

President Ashraf Ghani, Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi agreed not to allow their soils to be used for anti-state activities against each other. At the invitation of President Ashraf Ghani, Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi accompanied by Foreign Minister, Interior Minister, Governor KP and National Security Adviser visited Kabul. President Ghani and Prime Minister Abbasi held one on one meeting followed by delegation level talks at the Afghan Presidential Palace. President Ghani and Prime Minister Abbasi discussed the entire gamut of Pak-Afghan relations including peace

and reconciliation in Afghanistan, counter-terrorism, return of Afghan refugees, bilateral trade and regional connectivity. The two leaders agreed that Afghanistan Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS) provided a useful framework for broad based and structured engagement on all issues of mutual interest and decided to operationalize the five working groups under APAPPS. Prime Minister Abbasi welcomed President Ghani's vision for peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan and his offer of peace talks to Taliban. Both leaders called on the Taliban to respond positively to the peace offer and join the peace process without further delay. They agreed that there was no military

solution to the ongoing Afghan conflict and that the political solution was the best way forward. The two leaders reiterated that terrorism was a common enemy and threat. Both the leaders agreed that peace, prosperity and stability of the two countries are interlinked. They reaffirmed their resolve to work together to address all issues of bilateral and transit trade. They also expressed their firm resolve not to allow politics to affect their economic relationship which was important for the welfare of the peoples of the two countries. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to regional connectivity as they had done in Herat on 23rd February 2018 while jointly inaugurating the



entry of TAPI Gas Pipeline from Turkmenistan into Afghanistan. They agreed to hold an early meeting of the Joint Economic Commission to take forward planning and implementation of key rail road gas pipeline and energy projects that would integrate Pakistan and Afghanistan with Central Asia. The two leaders also agreed to move forward on Chaman-Kandahar-Herat railway line, Peshawar-Kabul Motorway, and other connectivity projects which can help realize the tremendous potential of South and Central Asian Regions by providing shortest access through the sea ports of Gwadar and Karachi. They emphasized early completion of TAPI and CASA-1000 projects. The Prime Minister also met Chief Executive Dr. Abdullah Abdullah. Both leaders discussed the entire range of bilateral matters and agreed on regular leadership contacts. Prime Minister of Pakistan announced a gift of 40 thousand tons wheat for the Afghan people. He also announced waiver of additional regulatory duty on Afghan export to Pakistan to help lift the Afghan economy. The two sides also agreed to initiate discussions on consular matters and exchange of civilian prisoners. President Ghani and Prime Minister Abbasi reaffirmed their resolve to build trust and confidence between the two countries by working closely for peace, prosperity and stability in their countries. The two leaders agreed to continue the exchange of high



level visits. Prime Minister Abbasi extended invitations to President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah to visit Islamabad at their earliest convenience. Prime Minister met with senior political leaders including Mr. Gulbadin Hekmatyar, Ustad Mohammad Mohaqiq, Ustad Mohammad Karim Khalili, Pir Sayed Hamed Gailani, to convey the support of the government and people of Pakistan to all ethnic groups in Afghanistan and underscore Pakistan's commitment to peace and stability in Afghanistan.





23rd Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers (COM) held in Dushanbe

By M. Saeed Yousafzai

The 23rd Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was held on 16-17 April 2018 at Dushanbe-Republic of Tajikistan. The Meeting was attended all ten member states, three observers namely, the Turkish Cypriot State, the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States and Energy Charter Secretariat. The ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies and the representatives of the international organizations were present during the meeting. The delegation of the ECO Secretariat was led by the ECO Secretary General, Ambassador Halil Ibrahim Akca.

The Council of Ministers (COM) represents the highest decision making body of ECO and is composed of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member states. The Council, meeting annually, is primarily responsible for formulating policies, strategies and work programmes of the Organization. It has also the responsibility of reviewing and adopting the reports of the Regional Planning Council, Council of Permanent Representatives and ECO Specialized Agencies/Regional Institutions/Affiliated Bodies.

Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission of Pakistan, inaugurated the COM as the outgoing chairman. In his opening remarks while welcoming the delegates he highlighted the importance of intensifying

efforts for interconnectivity and trade for the regional development. Deputy Chairman touched upon the policy areas stated in the ECO Vision 2025 and the importance of meeting the timelines mentioned in the Implementation Framework of the Vision 2025. He also emphasized the significance of the ECOTA agreement for the region and urged the non-signatory members to sign it at the earliest. His Excellency also expressed their appreciation for the Secretariat's initiative to bring equality in the procedure of establishment of an affiliated body in different member states.

The 23rd meeting of the Council of Ministers marked the handing over of the Organization's chairmanship from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the Republic of Tajikistan for a period of one year. H.E. Mr. Sirodjidin Aslov, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan, expressed his gratitude to the Council for reposing confidence on his election as the Chairman. He expressed that the main principles of the ECO Vision 2025 was in line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and Tajikistan's national development strategies. Therefore, to get the benefit from it the ECO region should act together and find mechanisms for the effective implementation of it. He also highlighted the importance of regional cooperation for the peace and stability of Afghanistan and expressed their supports for the new ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan.

H.E. Mr. Halil Ibrahim Akca briefed the meeting

about the activities and developments within the Organization's framework. He urged the Member States to enhance their cooperation on trade, transport, energy and tourism sectors where the cooperation in these areas does live up to its potential. He laid particular stress on early implementation of the ECOTA. On the issue of Afghanistan, the Secretary General pointed out that Organization has been making contribution towards the nation's reconstruction though the Special Reconstruction Fund for Afghanistan and a new ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan has been prepared by the Secretariat. He also pointed out that the necessity of the early implementation of the reform of the ECO for the efficiency of the organization.

During their deliberations, The Minister of Foreign Affairs and representatives of the Member States also reaffirmed their countries commitment and support to regional cooperation.

The COM reviewed the activities of the organization since the last COM and adopted the reports and approved the administrative matters. The COM also deliberated on the substantial issues that have significant impact for the regional development and proper functioning of the Organization. The new ECO Advocacy Programme for Afghanistan was adopted. The "Dushanbe Communiqué" including salient points of cooperation among the Members of ECO as a regional organization in charge of significant regional issues approved.

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

“Colors of Deosai: A Wonderland of Pakistan” Launched



Colors of Deosai: A Wonderland of Pakistan, a book that attempts to describe an unending love story between two photographers and the second highest plateau of the world, Deosai is launched at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. Engro Foods has published the book and organized this event. Both Arif Amin and Ghulam Rasool are renowned photographers who have worked with utter dedication to collect these photographs. Minister of State for Information, Broadcasting, National History and Literary Heritage Marriyum Aurangzeb was the chief guest of the event. Mr. Ali Ahmed Khan Managing Director Engro foods presented the book to Ms. Marriyum Aurangzeb. Ambassador of Netherlands H.E. Ardi Stoios-Braken was graced the event as Guest of Honor.



“THE NIGHT” at Satrang Gallery

Satrang Gallery at Serena Hotel presented THE NIGHT by Ayesha Jatoi. Vibeke Jensen was the guest of honor. Jatoi has presented a series of delicate miniature drawings accompanied by other works. The artist's diverse practice is deeply rooted in her miniature training and is heavily influenced by her own readings, writings and observations. Text and simple lines form the backbone of her works which is supported by the strong conceptual framework behind her art.



CPEC

A Symbol of Friendship and Cooperation



By Zamir Ahmed Awan

We all know and witness over the years that Pakistan and China enjoy excellent relations and an exemplary friendship. The roots of this friendship go back to the time when ancient Chinese traders used to travel to Europe through areas which now form part of Pakistan. The route taken was known as the Silk Route. Around two thousand years ago, famous Chinese monks like “Fa Xian” and “Xuan Zang” travelled to Peshawar, Swat, Taxila etc for learning Buddhism. General Geng Biao (late), during his tenure as the Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan in 1956-59, realized the importance of connecting China and Pakistan by road. He convinced the leadership of that time, Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou En Lai, for the construction of Karakoram Highway which would connect China’s Xinjiang province with Pakistan. It is worth mentioning that President Xi, acknowledges General Geng Biao as his mentor.

President Xi came into power in 2013 and launched a mega initiative, we all know it as the “One Belt One Road” (OBOR) or the “Belt and Road Initiative”; it is a major development plan for China and its future. Furthermore, it is a message of peace, harmony and prosperity for the entire region. Today 69 countries have joined OBOR. There are six economic corridors planned under it and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is one of them. Since it is the first one, it is declared as the flagship project. Both China and Pakistan highly prioritize it and are occupied in making it a success so it can stand as a role model for the following 5 economic corridors.

Under the vast CPEC umbrella, China is assisting Pakistan to overcome its electricity shortfall and it has been resolved to a major extent. Load-shedding of several hours has been reduced to 2 hours only. The power supply will meet

its demand in the upcoming couple of years as currently operative power projects reach their completion.

Pakistan was facing difficulty due to outdated infrastructure. The existing Railway system was built by the British way before Pakistan had earned independence. At the time, the road network was lacking as well. China is assisting Pakistan with this by developing multiple motorways and highways throughout the country. Most of the road network is near completion. ML-1, the railway system will be up-graded within the next couple of years to meet the modern day needs.

In addition, an optical fibre link is being laid down between China and Pakistan. It will improve internet coverage, enhance internet speed and boost the struggling IT industry of Pakistan. Attention is being paid to Thar Coal. Oil and Gas pipelines are also under construction to meet the energy needs.

Moreover, Gwadar Port is being developed and will soon be a hub for the entire surrounding region’s commercial activities. Gwadar is located at the entrance of the Gulf – Arabian Peninsula and acts as a major energy trade route between the Middle-East and the rest of world.

However, we are at the very initial stage of CPEC and are working on laying a strong foundation for its success. The benefits of CPEC in essence will be vividly realized with the launch of the planned Special Economic Zones (SEZs). Pakistan is blessed with many natural resources (Mineral and Mining) a rich agriculture. Most of our agricultural produce is used in an un-processed form since our agriculture process is not yet mechanized; this includes food processing, cold-chain processing, post-harvest processing and preservation. Pakistan is rich with regards

to minerals as well; however the mining industry is not efficient and automated enough to utilize this blessing. Although, precisely because of this, there exist huge investment opportunities for Chinese Entrepreneurs; value addition in various areas of the agriculture and mining sector is definitely a rewarding venture.

We believe in the Chinese “Win-Win” philosophy and trust that any collaboration between Pakistan and China will be beneficial to both the nations. It is our sincere outlook that both countries work, develop and prosper together. We also play important role in regional security and stability too.

Pakistan is facing many challenges and threats. With the launch of CPEC, some western nations have become harsh and unwelcoming towards it. Therefore, the amount of obstacles we have to overcome has risen. The western nations seem to be favouring India over Pakistan. The USA is supplying latest hi-tech weapons and financial assistance to India. Australia and France have provided the Indian Navy free access to their naval bases in the region. The western nations have encouraged and facilitated India to enter into Afghanistan. India has established 17 consulates inside Afghanistan along the border with Pakistan. It has allocated a budget of USD 500 to its notorious Intelligence Agency “RAW” to hinder CPEC. The west is using the United Nations and other international organizations to isolate and harm Pakistan.

Trust, Pakistan and China will overcome all such challenges and threats. We will work more closely with each other to make CPEC a success story and role model.

Long Live Pak-China friendship. Zhong-Ba You Yi Was Sui.

Courtesy to Pakistan Observer

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Turkish film “My Father and Son” screened

Pakistan National Council of the Arts and Embassy of the Republic of Turkey joined hands to screen film “My Father and Son” in PNCA, Islamabad. Ambassador of Turkey H.E. Mustafa Yurdakul graced the Occasion and highlighted the close relations between two countries which now would include films.

Director General PNCA Syed Jamal Shah, Diplomates, Members of Diplomatic Community, Media Persons and notable from twin cities graced the event and enjoyed the film.



Turk-Pak photography exhibition held at AIUO

By **M.Saeed Yousafzai**

A colorful posters' exhibition reflecting journey of friendship and brotherhood: pictorial survey of Turkey-Pakistan relations: was held here at

Lahore Prof. Dr. Halil Toker, besides senior officers and academic staff of the University were also present on the occasion.

More than hundred posters were displayed

Turkey for promoting its rich historical culture, said Dr. Shahid Siddiqui while inaugurating the Exhibition. The Turkish people very close to their heart and the University wishes to be on forefront to celebrate their jubilation, he added.

The University, he said will be looking forward strengthening ties with Turkey's educational institutions. Its department of History introduced some new courses regarding history of Turkey; modern Muslim world (Turkey), the VC added.

The Turkish ambassador in his remarks on the occasion thanked the University's administration for their gesture of goodwill towards his country and the people. He assured his country will welcome the AIUO for bilateral cooperation in the education sector.



Allama Iqbal Open University (AIUO).

The exhibition was jointly organized by the Department of History (Faculty of Social Sciences), Institute of Educational Technology and Uunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre. It was inaugurated by Ambassador of Turkey Ihsan Mustafa Yurdakul and the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Shahid Siddiqui.

Director of Yunus Emre Turkish Cultural Centre,

that reflected the Turkish history, traditional life of the Turkish people and decades' old bonds of Turk-Pak friendship.

Some rare photographs of Sheikh Faisal Azeem, head of the University's Photo section were also put on display on the occasion. Thousands of students visited the exhibition and took keen interest in the historical pictures of Turkey.

We are glad for our cooperation with the



Why the World Bank and IMF are no longer fit for purpose



By Hafed Al-Ghwel

Finance ministers and central bank governors from around the world have gathered in Washington DC for the annual meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to discuss the global economy. These international financial organizations bring together more than 180 countries in the hope of facilitating global economic stability, monetary cooperation, and international trade by promoting foreign and capital investments that spur economic growth, intended theoretically to tackle unemployment and reduce poverty. Both organizations were created by the US and UK in 1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference near the end of the Second World War.

The IMF was initially created to manage the international payments system, and to formalize global financial and economic cooperation. The IMF's main goal is to oversee exchange-rate agreements and help governments with advice and loans to manage exchange rates in a way that prioritized economic growth. The World Bank, on the other hand, offers more targeted assistance, such as advice, grants and loans for infrastructure projects — particularly in transport, energy, and communications in the hope that these areas will stimulate economic development and reduce poverty levels. Over the years, however, the World Bank's role has expanded into making loans available to fund improvements and policy reforms in, and access to, social services and other sectors, including health, environmental protection and governance.

The agenda for their meetings this weekend includes the US-China trade war, rising global debt — at \$233 trillion, an all-time high — Brexit, the new financial technologies, and the issue of losing trust in governments. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) data reflect a troubling decline in public trust in governments, which will probably hamper efforts at poverty eradication, investments in critical infrastructure, unemployment reduction, literacy, better health care, welfare, and improvement of overall economic and social conditions.

The real question, however, facing the international community — which owns the World Bank and the IMF despite US and European dominance — is whether these institutions are still relevant, and can they effectively contribute to global political

and economic stability and reducing global poverty? How is their political agenda, despite their mandate not to interfere, affecting global governance and the stability of member



countries in the face of increasing state fragility? Is their near total Western economic-development paradigm, despite their global membership, the best and most effective way to effect development in countries that don't share Western values or systems?

The short answer to these questions is not positive for two main reasons; global socio-economic and political realities have changed dramatically over the past few decades, and these institutions, despite some cosmetic reforms, are still operating more or less as US-European fiefdoms. This stretched band between reality and the very structure and nature of these institutions will eventually snap.

An internal joke between staff at these institutions about their mandate to eradicate global poverty illustrates part of the problem: "Yes, we are committed to fighting poverty, but we really mean one staff member at a time." This encapsulates the internal dynamics and the paper-shoveling, bureaucratic nature of these institutions, as well as how their staff, of which I was a member myself, are more motivated to create work for themselves and obtain larger budgets for their departments than to actually reduce poverty around the world.

The results of decades of World Bank and IMF policies and loans speak for themselves. As a Clinton administration task force put it in its report: "Despite decades of foreign assistance, most of Africa and parts of Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East are economically worse off today than they were 20 years ago."

From a political point of view, however, these institutions were created by the US and Western Europe as part of an international order meant to be a tool in the Cold War to defeat the rising tide of communism at that time. Many countries were not allowed to be members of these institutions, or their requests were "delayed," until they changed their policies and received US and European approval. This political agenda also extended, and still does, to helping only countries and governments the West deems to be friendly and open to its way of thinking and political interests.

From their membership and the structure of shareholding to how they scandalously choose their leadership and their chiefdoms without any real oversight; to the exclusive recruitment of Western-educated staff despite the diversity of nationalities; to the distorted incentive mix which is an obstacle to the staff actually achieving real results; to how their boards of directors employ political horse-trading behind closed doors to decide on membership, loans, and appointments; to the low level of the board's members' capabilities and their almost total uselessness in being a rubber-stamp board sitting in Washington DC — these institutions are in far worse shape than most know or would like to believe.

These two institutions, like many others, in my view after almost 16 years of working in them, have deep, internal structural problems and are no longer really able to address the new global realities. The world needs and deserves better, newer, and more robust international institutions that truly reflect the diversity of our world, not ones created and still dominated by the Western powers of yesterday who still think that the only model for development is one made exclusively in the image of the West.

Hafed Al-Ghwel is a former adviser to the board of directors at the World Bank Group. Twitter: @HafedAlGhwel. The article published in Arab News, April 21st, 2018

Subversion of Democracy

By Latha Jishnu

The problem starts at a fundamental level. How does one define a sadhu? Tied to the meaning of this word, or character, is in a way the well-being of the world's largest democracy. Most people would think of a sadhu as an ascetic or monk of some sort. Dictionaries, however, are more specific. The Cambridge English Dictionary describes the sadhu to be a Hindu holy man, especially one who has chosen to live apart from society, while Collins, similarly, declares him to be a wandering holy man.

None of this is relevant anymore in saffron India. With the saffron Bharatiya Janata Party in power at the centre and in the majority of India's 29 states, the sadhus get to play politics and wield enormous power. Early this month, five of this species were conferred minister of state rank after they were put on a committee to create awareness about tree plantation and water conservation by the chief minister of BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh. It was a straight deal. The sadhus were threatening an agitation and were bought off.

There is no let up in the appalling ways democratic norms are being thrown aside as the BJP consolidates its hold over the country, the motto being power by any means. There was another bizarre twist when the Narendra Modi regime at the centre ordered the Delhi government, run by his *bête noire*, the Aam Admi Party (AAP), to dismiss a clutch of advisers. These were professionals who were advising the Arvind Kejriwal government on overhauling the functioning of critical sectors such as education and health. None of the advisers was being paid. They were specialists offering ideas and time in a public cause. The work of some of these advisers, particularly of Atishi Marlena in the educational sector, has been spectacular. But the centre cribbed. It said that Kejriwal had not taken its permission.

If that appears petty and vindictive, that's how the Modi regime treats its opponents. It has been gunning for the AAP government ever since it came to power in 2015 in a sweeping victory that stemmed the Modi wave. The

relentless assault on the powers of the Delhi government — this is an issue which is in the Supreme Court — has dealt a severe blow to the spirit of cooperative federalism which is a foundational pillar of the republic. It is symptomatic of the BJP's contempt for constitutional norms and democratic traditions. In the process, autonomous institutions which are key to the survival of the republic have been eviscerated.

One is the Election Commission which has become the ruling party's handmaiden as the BJP pursues its single-minded objective of power at any cost. If the EC has been compliant in meeting the BJP's agenda on poll dates, it has been zealous in going after opposition parties on the flimsiest pretext. In the case of AAP, it has been way out of line and has been pulled up by the court for disqualifying 20 of its Delhi legislators on the charge of holding offices of profit. The Delhi High Court, setting aside the disqualification, reminded the poll panel that its procedures were neither fair nor reasonable. The principle of natural justice had been violated.

But what happens when the judiciary itself appears to have taken sides? As India is roiled by the crisis in the Supreme Court over the functioning of the chief justice, its democracy is looking increasingly fragile. The refusal of the apex court to allow a petition seeking an independent inquiry into the death of a special judge hearing a case involving BJP chief Amit Shah has brought to a head the simmering problems in the judiciary, the last bastion to have fallen as the BJP tightens its power over all pillars of democratic governance. Seven opposition parties led by Congress have begun an unprecedented move to impeach Chief Justice Dipak Mishra for misusing his authority to undermine the independence of the judiciary. Whichever way the move ends, the notice of impeachment will cast a long shadow over the republic.

If democracy is in danger, the primary reason would be Modi's lack of tolerance for political opponents and his inability to accept competing parties as legitimate rivals. His party's frequent call for a 'Congress-mukht Bharat', or an

India free of the Congress, reflects the poor understanding he has of how democracies work.

Then there is the BJP's discomfort with following the constitution in letter and much less in spirit. For a party spawned by the Hindu supremacist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh which has been contemptuous of the constitution, the constitution is an albatross that must be shaken off, primarily because it embodies the Nehruvian values of secular liberalism. Many of the BJP leaders openly talk about changing it as does the RSS which is working on a new template to include what it calls the Hindu ethos. Yet, a large majority of Indians are sanguine in their belief that their democracy is in no danger because of the ultimate weapon: elections.

Elections are no panacea, warn two Harvard professors, Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, who offer a checklist on how robust a democracy is. Autocrats are elected, and maintain a veneer of democracy while eviscerating its substance, they warn. Worse, institutions alone would not be enough to rein in elected autocrats. And while constitutions must be defended — both by political parties and citizens — it also needs to be safeguarded by democratic norms. "Without robust norms, constitutional checks and balances do not serve as the bulwarks of democracy we imagine them to be. Institutions become political weapons, wielded forcefully by those who control them against those who do not," they caution in their recently published book *How Democracies Die*.

There is a particularly chilling passage which lists how autocrats subvert democracy: by packing and 'weaponising' the courts and other neutral agencies, by buying off the media and the private sector (or bullying them into silence) and rewriting the rules of politics to tilt the playing field against opponents. "The tragic paradox of the electoral route to authoritarianism is that democracy's assassins use the very institutions of democracy — gradually, subtly, and even legally — to kill it." On all these counts India ticks the boxes.

The writer is a journalist based in New Delhi. ljishnu@yahoo.com

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Pakistan and Uzbekistan Avowed to Enhance Relations

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

A high-ranking Ministerial delegation from Uzbekistan led by Uzbek Minister for Foreign Trade Mr. Khodjaev Jamshaid called on Mr. Mohammad Younus Dagha, Secretary Commerce and officials of the Ministry at the Ministry of Commerce. Uzbek delegation also included Mr. Adham Ikramov, Chairman CCI of Uzbekistan, Mr. Bahadir Alihanov, Deputy Chairman of Association "Uztextile Industry", Mr. Alisher, HoD, International Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Trade, Mr. Azamat Yuldashev, Director on Production and Investment of JSC "Uzagrotechmash" (Agricultural Machinery), Mr. Murad Bekmirzaev, Deputy Head of Marketing Department of JSC "Uzagrotechmash" (Agricultural Machinery) and Embassy officials. During the meeting, both sides avowed to enhance trade relations between the two countries. It was resolved that all out efforts would be made to remove impediments hampering bilateral trade including lack of direct cargo links, safe and direct land route, removal of NTBs and efficient and effective banking channels. It was agreed that institutional mechanism between both the countries needs to be upgraded. The Secretary Commerce, Mr. Mohammad Younus Dagha proposed to form Joint Working Group (JWG) on Trade and Investment. The JWG would focus on exploring opportunities to enhance bilateral economic relations. The Uzbek Minister agreed to the proposal. Afterwards the dates and venue of the 1st meeting of JWG either in Pakistan or in Uzbekistan would be decided.

On other side, a high level delegation of Uzbekistan headed by Lt Gen Victor Vladimirovich, Secretary of Security Council under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan called on Secretary Ministry of



Defence Production Lt Gen (Retd) Muhammad Ijaz Chaudhary at Rawalpindi. Secretary Defence Production warmly welcomed the delegation. Secretary Defence Production appreciated existing relations between the two countries and desired to translate into active cooperation in the domain of defence

Production. Matters of mutual interest were discussed including visit of Uzbek experts to Defence Production Establishments of Pakistan. Secretary Defence Production also thanked Uzbekistan's leadership for supporting Pakistan's bid for full membership of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Amb. Javed Malik welcomes Royals at Diplomat Business Club

President of Diplomatic Business Club, Ambassador Javed Malik welcomed members of the Royal Family, Senior Diplomats and visiting dignitaries at a prestigious seminar organized by Diplomat Business Club at the iconic Emirates Towers in Dubai. The high profile ceremony was also attended by leading businessmen based in UE and Gulf countries, and Diplomats representing over 20 countries along with the dean of the diplomatic corps of Dubai and Northern Emirates, Diyab Al Rashidi, says a

press release received from Dubai here today. Speaking on the occasion, Javed Malik said that Diplomat Business Club is an international



forum that creates unique opportunities that bring together Diplomats, Business leaders and other eminent members of the community to promote goodwill, friendship and explore ways to further expand the horizons. Sheikha Hend Al Qassimi, a member of the Royal family of Sharjah appreciated the role of Diplomat Business Club and said that it is truly positioned itself as one of the most prestigious forums in the region and hailed the efforts of Ambassador Javed Malik for leading the initiative.

Serena Islamabad Hosts A Delightful Spring Festival

The Islamabad Serena Hotel hosted the Spring Festival on its premises with an aim to bring together members of the diplomatic and business communities along with its guests and friends to celebrate the arrival of the spring season in an outdoor event. Michel Galopin, GM of the hotel, said the hospitality industry was fundamentally founded on relationships.

The delicious food produced at the

live cooking stations showcased cuisines from all restaurants, while various activities were arranged to keep young children entertained, making the festival truly a family day out under pristine blue skies. The variety of food ranged from south eastern cuisine, continental foods, Middle Eastern and Pakistani delicacies. The most frequented counters, however, featured barbecue lamb and chicken, 'sajji',



'chaat', 'dahi barray', and Sindhi 'biryani' served in a 'baradari' style arrangement. The children enjoyed a street magic show and took photographs with the Disney characters mingling with the guests.





Pakistan, Tajikistan: Stress laid on developing energy corridor

Practical steps are needed for the implementation of an energy corridor between Pakistan and Tajikistan, which would connect Central and South Asia to alleviate poverty and regional connectivity, said participants at a conference on bilateral relations.

The conference was organised by the Embassy of Tajikistan and Centre for Global Strategic Studies

(CGSS) titled, 'Pakistan-Tajikistan; Exploring New Dimensions of Bilateral Cooperation'. Speaking on the occasion, CGSS Chairperson Muhammad Zahirul Islam said that Tajikistan is a leader in energy resources and an energy corridor would benefit the entire region. Ambassador of Tajikistan Sherali Jononov gave a presentation on CASA-1000 power import project. He said the project will alleviate

electricity shortages in Pakistan during the peak summer season and replace fuel-based power generation with clean hydropower. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan Additional Secretary Abdurahmonov Marufjan said that Pakistan and Tajikistan had signed several agreements since 1992 to improve bilateral relations in trade, energy and science.







Pakistan and War on Terror

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Pakistan's role in the War on Terror is a widely discussed topic among policy-makers of various countries, political analysts and international delegates around the world. Pakistan has experienced the wave of terrorism for more than a decade for which the nation has borne a huge cost in human and economic terms. The menace of terrorism afflicting Pakistan cannot be attributed to a single cause. A host of internal and external factors led to the spate of terrorism. Initially, the state machinery found itself unprepared to respond to the daunting challenge of countering the terrorism in a coordinated manner and till 2013, the state response towards the evil machinations of the terrorists remained largely reactive and sporadic. Pakistan has simultaneously received allegations of harbouring and aiding terrorists and commendation for its anti-terror efforts. Pakistan has suffered huge sacrifices both in terms of financial loss and infrastructure in the fight against terrorism. Pakistan lost over 50,000 civilians in the war against terrorism since 2003, according to government figures. Pakistan has fought the war against terrorism large from its own resources and it has cost the country \$123 billion over 15 years.

The Global Terrorism Index, which profiles data on terrorism from across the world, had ranked Pakistan second among the countries most affected by terrorism.

A breakdown of the figures collected by Watson Institute shows that Pakistan lost 6,000 security personnel in the fight against terrorism, as compared to 2,357 US soldiers.

In 2013, 5,379 Pakistanis were martyred in terrorist attacks followed by 5,496 in 2014; 3,682 in 2015; 1,830 in 2016 and 924 in 2017.

Pakistan is a leader in the war against terrorism

and sent 20,000 soldiers to fight the terrorists. Terrorism is a global phenomenon, therefore, it can only be tackled and addressed through collaborative and cooperative efforts. It is, however, unfortunate that despite lead role of Pakistan in the war against terror and its tremendous sacrifices, some sections of the international community harbour doubts about intentions and actions of the country in this regard. Pakistan has put across a strong message that it is fully resolved to continue the struggle till complete elimination of the menace of terrorism and extremism. At the same time, it has emphasised the need for addressing the root causes of extremism and terrorism, otherwise sustainable world's peace and stability would remain a dream. The global community should also realise that Pakistan is the most affected country from the menace of terrorism and the situation is being made complicated by some foreign countries that are harbouring terrorist activities in Pakistan by misusing the Afghan soil.

Pakistan has showed strength and perseverance and stood united in dealing with menace of extremism and terrorism and that Pakistan no longer to be treated as victim of terrorism rather a country that has established its credentials as a victory against the menace.

For a very long time, it was considered that extremism in Pakistan was primarily driven by poverty. The discourse was based on the argument that discontentment, unemployment and frustration against the state lead to motivated violence by the youth. This primarily explained the nexus between terrorists hot-spots and impoverished areas like Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and South Punjab. However, few recent incidents and apprehension by LEAs indicate that poverty is not the only driver of extremism. Through social media and access to higher educational institutions, young students are trapped

through emotional and ideological luring; these young people eventually get involved with radical organizations and some of them actually commit ideologically driven acts of violence.

Hence, a strong need was felt for an in depth analysis of other motivating factors particularly drugs and social media use as tool by various extremist groups to attract the young students as they first commit themselves to the extremist ideology and later join the extremist groups as active members.

Pakistan is determined to eliminate extremism from the society in all its manifestation through adoption of appropriate counter violent extremism strategies and narratives. The road to peace and stability has been very rough and full of challenges and the incidents of terrorism have fallen sharply since 2013. Pakistan launched major operations against those who attacked the Peshawar school and the notorious Red Mosque, Pakistan has almost broken the back of the terrorist groups. Terror incidents have declined in Pakistan, according to the report by Global Terrorism Index released in November, 2017. Pakistan ranks fifth on the index, a marked improvement as it ranked fourth in 2007. It was believed that there are terrorist sanctuaries in Pakistan but these sanctuaries are now in Afghanistan, which are being used to target Pakistan. Pakistan has taken special measures to strengthen Pakistan-Afghan border management to stop illegal infiltration of terrorists from across the Afghan border. Pakistan has made National Action Plan (NAP) and launched a full-fledged operation against terrorists in the country. Through a series of major counter-terrorism operations Pakistan cleared all these areas resulting in elimination of organised terrorist presence leading to significant improvement in security in Pakistan. The world should recognize that it had taken substantial measures to eliminate terrorism and promote peace.

Mr. Shakil Ahmed CEO of Shakil Express Pvt. Ltd hosted Bid farewell to His Excellency the Ambassador of Palestine Mr. Walid Abu Ali at his residence in Islamabad Diplomates of different countries graced the event



Mr. Khalid Malik, a notable businessman of Rawalpindi/Islamabad hosted a Get together reception at his residence



H.E. Adel Elarbi Ambassador of Tunisia and Acting Dean of Diplomatic Corps of Arab League presented souvenir to outgoing Ambassador of Palestine H.E. Walid Abu Ali on the occasion of farewell reception in his honor at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. Ambassador of Egypt H.E. Ahmed Fadel Yakoub also presented him peace of Islamic Calligraphic art.



Ambassador of Kazakhstan briefed the media about New Opportunities under the Fourth Industrial Revolution Programme

Ambassador of Kazakhstan, H.E. Barlybay Sadykov highlighted the new initiatives of President H.E. Nursultan Nazarbayev

introduction of modern technologies in construction and utilities sector, rebooting of the financial sector, human capital as the basis of

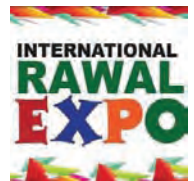
modernization, effective public administration, fighting corruption and ensuring the rule of law and Smart cities for the smart nation.



announced early this year in his address “New Opportunities under the Fourth Industrial Revolution” regarding social, economic and foreign policy of Kazakhstan. The address was made by President Nursultan Nazarbayev in January 2018 to Nation. The address pointed ten goals to focus on: industrialization, development of the resource potential, Smart Technologies, increasing the efficiency of transport and logistics infrastructure,



International Rawal EXPO 2018 Organized by RCCI, Launched in Rawalpindi



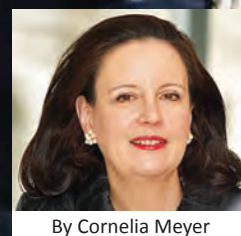
Federal Minister for Commerce & Textile Muhammad Pervez Malik, Dean of Diplomatic Corps and

Ambassador of Turkmenistan Atadjan Movlamov, Ambassador of Romania Nicolae Goia, Ambassador of Indonesian

Iwan Suyudhie Amri, President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industries Zahid Latif Khan, Senior Vice-President Nasir Mirza, Vice-President Khalid Farooq Qazi, Chairman Rawal Expo Malik Shahid Saleem and Group Leader Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce & Industries Sohail Altaf cutting ribbon to inaugurate International Rawal Expo 2018 organized by RCCI at Topi Rakh Auditorium, Ayub Park.



Florida Sunshine for Abe, but Storm Clouds Gather in Asia



By Cornelia Meyer

When Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited US President Donald Trump last week, he desperately needed a win. Abe faces elections in September and his poll ratings are at their lowest since 2012. Trump, on the other hand, could afford to play it cool; relations with Japan will have no impact on the US midterm elections.

Asia as a whole, however, does need to see results; despite the newly emollient words from Pyongyang on Saturday, the nuclear threat from North Korea remains, and there is also the ever stronger economic and geopolitical presence of China.

Abe had some nice photo ops playing golf with the president, which made him look statesmanlike — but that is not enough, given the current mood in his country. The economy has been stagnant and there are various scandals, the most recent being sexual harassment allegations against a senior civil servant (#MeToo has finally reached the shores of Japan). While this does not directly reflect on the prime minister, it is still a sign that the old ways of the political world will no longer do — and Abe and his Liberal Democratic Party are very much part and parcel of that tight-knit circle of politics, business and the bureaucracy. Life in Nagatacho, Tokyo's political district, is about to become a lot less cosy.

On his US trip, Abe hoped to be able to reinvigorate the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). The Obama administration had cajoled

12 Pacific rim countries (without China) into forming a trade pact, which would have encompassed 40 percent of the world's GDP and constituted an effective defense against China's ever-growing regional economic dominance. Alas, Trump saw the world differently, and on his first day in office he tore the treaty up. The other 11 nations felt strongly that something needed to be done. Under the guidance of Abe and Justin Trudeau of Canada, they re-invoked the "comprehensive Progressive TPP (CPTPP)," which was signed on March 8 in Chile.

Perhaps Abe hoped the Florida sunshine might change Trump's mind, and for a while it indeed looked as though the president might consider rejoining the revamped TPP. In the end he decided against it, which is a shame as the CPTPP would have a lot more clout if the world's largest economy were part of it. Trump feels uncomfortable on a multilateral stage, and much prefers bilateral negotiations, especially on trade.

This was a little bit of a setback for the Japanese prime minister, as it denied him his victory lap. He can still spin it sufficiently for domestic consumption, though, if he is able to negotiate a positive trading arrangement with the US.

There is also the issue of North Korea, whose nuclear ambitions are of great concern to Japan and the rest of Northeast Asia. What happens when Trump meets Kim Jong Un in June matters a great deal to Japan and its near neighbors. It was vital for the Japanese government to be

able to give its input before this all-important meeting.

The whole region breathed an audible sigh of relief in the early hours of Saturday, when the North Korean leader announced that he would temporarily halt his nuclear weapons development. It is still unclear whether this is a sign that economic sanctions have finally paid off, or no more than a goodwill gesture from a meeting between the North Korean leader and South Korea's President Moon Jae-in.

Japan's concerns over North Korea, however, go beyond the nuclear threat. In the 1970s North Korea abducted Japanese citizens; the official number is 17, but there may be more than 100. If Trump could negotiate a release of some, if not all, he would be a hero in Japan — and it would also give Abe a desperately needed popularity boost before the September elections.

All in all, Abe may not have obtained all he wanted from his US visit, but he can still spin it into a success back home. For Asia, it may look different. Having the US join the CPTPP fold would be important, especially in relation to China. As for the meeting between Trump and Kim, we are all waiting with bated breath. Before then, we will see what emerges from the North-South Korean summit.

Cornelia Meyer is a business consultant, macro-economist and energy expert. Twitter: @MeyerResources. Article published in Arab News, April 21st, 2018



Glimpse from Pakistani Mission in Mexico



H.E. Tasawar Khan Ambassador of Pakistan at the occasion of Exchange of mementos at the Rotary Club of Puebla



H.E. Tasawar Khan discussed foreign policy issues with the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Costa Rica, Mr. Alejandro Solano.



H.E. Tasawar Khan Ambassador of Pakistan attended Westhill Day. Westhill Institute is amongst the best private English medium institutions in Mexico City and Westhill Day is their annual event to celebrate world cultures



H.E. Tasawar Khan Ambassador of Pakistan attended dinner of Asian Head of Missions by Ambassador of China, Mr. Qiu Ziaoqi at China House



Pakistan presented with food and products at the Feria Internacional de las Culturas Amigas 2018 in Mexico City



H.E. Tasawar Khan at The Mexican Council of Foreign Trade, COMCE, in Jalisco, and discussed about business opportunities in Jalisco, Mexico



Norouz celebrated at Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, Islamabad

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

Pakistan's ministry for foreign affairs hosted an event for the first time to celebrate the Norouz Festival. Chief Guest Foreign Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Dean of Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Turkmenistan Atadjan Movlamov visit to stall during

Nowruz Festival. Ambassadors from other Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) member states, foreign diplomats attended the event. The countries of the ECO region including Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan set up stalls displaying different cultural items and

traditional cuisine. The event also provided an opportunity to all the ECO countries to further boost their ties by knowing each other's culture in a better way. Norouz, the traditional festival of spring is celebrated by millions of people across the globe including in Pakistan. It usually falls on March 21 or the previous or following day, depending on where it is observed.





A grand cultural show organized in Berlin

The highlight of the event was fashion shows by YBQ Design Studios and FAS Design Studio, Kathak dance performance by Wahab Shah Dance Studios, and a Jewellery show of Tsafira by Sana Nisar and Soofi Poetic rendition by Yusuf Bashir, which added much splendor to the celebration of the National Day. Fia Khan assisted with direction and choreography of the cultural presentation. H.E.

Ambassador Jauhar Saleem highlighted the great and rich culture of Pakistan.

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Mr. Niels Annen was honoured at the event with the traditional gift of Pakistani Pagri (Turban) as a symbol of respect.

At the end, the guests were served sumptuous Pakistani cuisine, which drew great appreciation

from all.

The event was attended by around 600 people including the German parliamentarians, senior Foreign Office officials, dozens of Ambassadors and Defence Attaches of diplomatic Missions, think-tanks, CEOs & Businessmen, Academics, prominent members of Pakistani community and German and Pakistani media.





9th National Book Fair concluded at the Pak-China Centre, Islamabad

The National Book Foundation's three days annual Kitab mela concluded at the Pak-China Centre, Islamabad.

President Mamnoon Hussain was inaugurated the event. The three days annual Kitab mela saw a large turnout. On this occasion posters bearing images of NBF's Book Ambassadors and eminent writers from across the country were displayed in the city. President of Azad Kashmir also graced the event.





Italian National Day Celebrated

To mark the Italian Republic National day the ambassador of Italy H.E. Stefano Pontecorvo and his wife Lidia Ravera Pontecorvo hosted a remarkable function at Serena hotel in Islamabad. Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman, was the chief guest. Ambassadors, politicians, government officials and business community representatives graced the event.





Fundraising Charity Event Organized by Islamabad Foreign Women's Association (IFWA) & Corps of Service Attachés Ladies Association (COSALA) at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. Different stalls were setup at event.





Health and Happiness - 2018

mass sports activities was held in Islamabad

Embassy of Turkmenistan organized various sports games in the Multipurpose sports complex, Islamabad, dedicated to the month of mass sports and cultural events held in Turkmenistan from April 5 to May 5 each year under the slogan "Health and Happiness".

Foreign ambassadors, diplomats accredited in Pakistan with their families, as well as representatives of international organizations and the media participated in these competitions. The competitions, the winner teams were awarded with cups and medals, as well as memorable gifts on behalf of the Embassy.



Sarangi Star

A MUSIC INITIATIVE BY SERENA HOTELS



Serena Hotels hosted a star-studded evening for Season-II of the Sarangi Music Initiative. Sarangi is part of the Serena's Cultural Diplomacy Initiative which aims to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of Pakistan. Sarangi Season-II also began with an online competition that allowed amateur bands to compete amongst other bands. The finalists were chosen by a professional and well-known jury panel comprising of Hadiqa Kiani, Nizar Lalani and Sarmad Ghafoor based on their submissions. Mr. Ans Rehmani from Rahim Yar Khan was declared the best performer for whom Serena Hotels will produce a debut song at Pakistan's leading sound studio along with a professional music video.



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

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