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09



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- 09 Pakistan's highest civil honour "Nishan-e-Pakistan" Conferred upon Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman**

"Our Pakistani brothers participated truthfully and effectively in the great development project that Saudi Arabia witnessed, especially the enlargement project of Masjid-e-Haram and Masjid-e-Nabwi. More than 2 million Pakistanis are working in Saudi Arabia and are contributing to the development of both the countries.

- 14 Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman The most popular foreign leader in Pakistan**

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, no doubt, has emerged as one of the most popular foreign leaders in Pakistan because of his highly laudable pronouncements made during his crucial visit to Islamabad and sentiments of love, affection and care expressed for Pakistani state and its people. By expressing his determination, while wrapping up his historic tour, to make efforts to reduce tension between Pakistan and India, MBS conveyed in clear-cut terms that he was keen to mitigate challenges of the country on every front.

- 26 "TOGETHER FOR PEACE" MULTINATIONAL MARITIME EXERCISE AMAN-2019**

Pakistan has always been an ardent supporter of regional peace and collaborative security. As a torch bearer of this unflinching resolve, Pakistan Navy is spearheading numerous initiatives, and conduct of series of Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN is one of the quantum leaps towards the fulfillment of this shared vision along with global partners. Pakistan Navy has been hosting Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN biennially since 2007.

- 31 President of Pakistan confers NI (M) upon Sri Lankan Armed Forces' Chief of Defence**

President Dr. Arif Alvi conferred Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon Admiral Ravindra Chandrasiri Wijegunaratne Chief of Defence Staff Sri Lankan Armed Forces in a special Investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Zubair Mahmood Hayat NI(M) and senior officers were also present in the ceremony.

Special Report on the Visit of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman



By Mian Fazal Elahi



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Mian Fazal Elahi

The captured Indian pilot who has become the face of one of the gravest military crises to engulf South Asia in two decades, have released by Pakistan. Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan announced that Abhinandan would be released as a “gesture for peace,” offering a potential means of defusing tensions between the two nuclear powers. The decision was appreciated Pakistan’s great generosity and demonstrated as a high goodwill gesture toward peace. The decision of freeing the Indian pilot called as the ample proof of the peace-loving and high statesmanship approach of the Pakistani leadership, especially Prime Minister Imran Khan. A man was identified as Wing Commander Abhinandan has been held in Pakistan after his MiG-21 jet was downed during a dogfight between Pakistani and Indian warplanes over the ceasefire line in the disputed Kashmir region when Indian plans violated the rules and crossed the LOC. Slowly and incrementally, the region may be limping back towards relative normality, but there is still much to be done before the current crisis can be deemed to be over. Meanwhile, army chief Gen Qamar Bajwa had a number of meetings and telephone conversations with diplomats and military officials of international powers in which, according to a tweet by DG ISPR Maj Gen Asif Ghafoor, the army chief emphasised that Pakistan “shall surely respond to any aggression in self-defence”. Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi also announced that he would boycott the OIC’s Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in the UAE because of an invitation by the organisation to Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj to address the meeting. OIC should stand with Pakistan but the organization failed to do so. For its part, Pakistan must continue with its measured response of pledging to act only in self-defence, while emphasising the need for peace in the region. Pakistan Air Force taught a lesson to the enemy, demonstrating effectively that the country and its defence forces were fully prepared and motivated enough to respond to any challenge. The international community must not forget that peace and security of South Asia would remain imperiled until and unless substantial progress is made for negotiation and just settlement of the longstanding dispute of Jammu & Kashmir. It must not be allowed to succeed in its bid to divert attention of the world from worst kind of atrocities in Occupied Kashmir through engineered incidents of terrorism. India is using the incident of Pulwama as an excuse to intensify its brutalities against Kashmiris and is making attempts to suppress their voice for freedom through military means.

The articles, columns, Opinions are published in Magazine in good faith. However, the contents of these writings may not necessarily match the views of the Editor/Publisher/Organization.

Important Announcement

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



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Pakistan's highest civil honour

“Nishan-e-Pakistan”

Conferred upon Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman

By Mian Fazal Elahi

President Dr Arif Alvi conferred Pakistan's highest civil honour “Nishan-e-Pakistan” upon Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman in a prestigious ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The highest civil honour was bestowed upon the Saudi Crown Prince in recognition of his efforts and contributions towards enhancing the bilateral brotherly and traditional ties

between the two countries.

Later, addressing the luncheon the the crown prince said he was honoured to meet President Arif Alvi and thanked him for honouring the highest award.

“The brotherly relationship between the kingdom and Pakistan focus on the principle of Islamic solidarity. It is a model to be emulated by other nations. Our [countries' relationship] go back 67 years that witnessed continuous development that rendered itself beneficial for

both countries.

“The founding fathers for both countries established these relations on the principles of truthfulness, common understanding and mutual respect that go back to the first days of the establishment of Pakistan, post-World War 2.

The president congratulated the Saudi crown prince on his “modernisation efforts” as well as measures taken to highlight Saudi Arabia's previously “hidden” tourism sites.



All wars are miscalculated...

Let's sit together & settle this with talks

PM Imran Khan

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Monitoring, Agencies

Amid bloody clashes across Line of Control and serious fighting above the horizons between the air forces of two nuclear-armed South Asian countries, Prime Minister Imran Khan yet again offered arch-rival India to sit across the table to resolve the matter through dialogue.

"I once again invite you: we are ready. We understand the grief India has suffered in Pulwama and are ready for any sort of dialogue on terrorism. I reiterate that better sense should prevail. "Let's sit together and settle

this with talks," Prime Minister Imran Khan said during his short yet brief address to the nation. Premier looked fresh and well-determined during his televised address which was not only hailed by millions of his countrymen, but also garnered pleasant response from across the world including world leaders.

His address came on the heels of an announcement made by the military spokesperson that Pakistan Air Force (PAF) successfully targeted non-military targets across the Line of Control earlier in the day to demonstrate Pakistan's aggressive capabilities,

and shot down two Indian Air Force jets after they crossed the LoC.

"Pakistan Air Force has shot down two MIGs as they violated our airspace. We offered India that we would cooperate. Yet, I had anticipated that India would still take action, and I had therefore warned India against aggression and said we will be compelled to respond because no sovereign country can allow that. We were forced to take this action," Imran Khan said.

"We are a peaceful nation which discourage to get engage in war. It is important where we go from here. From here, it is imperative that we use our heads and act wisely. Let's sit across the table to discuss what you want us to do," Khan was quick to add.

Premier warned India to escalate the tension across Line of Control arguing that all wars and miscalculated.

"Let me tell you that all wars are miscalculated, and no one knows where they lead to. World War I was supposed to end in weeks, it took six years. Likewise, the US never expected the war on terrorism to last for 17 years. Let's refrain ourselves from engaging in war," Khan said questioning Indian leadership can India and Pakistan really afford such a miscalculation.

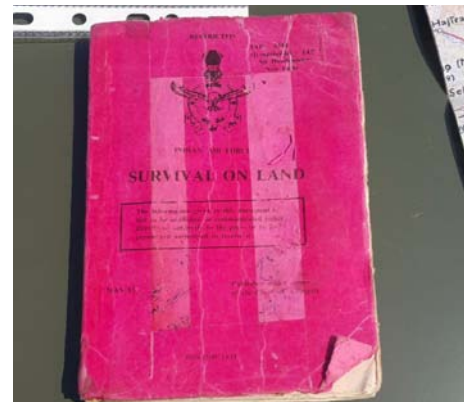
Khan said only purpose behind his address was to take his nation into confidence over standoff between Pakistan and India.

"I wanted to take the nation into confidence over the latest developments. Let me tell you that had we offered peace to India after what happened in Pulwama. I understood the pain of the families. I have visited hospitals and seen the pain of people affected by violence. Pakistan has lost 70,000 of our own and I know what those who are left behind and those who are injured feel," Khan said making a point.

Khan revealed during the address that he had spoken to military leadership following Indian planes violation of Pakistan's airspace.

A day before, A special meeting of the National Security Committee chaired by the Prime Minister was held at Prime Minister's office. The meeting was attended by Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Finance, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Chief of Army Staff, Chief of Naval Staff, Chief of Air Staff and other civil & military officials.

Forum strongly rejected Indian claim of





Captured Indian pilot Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman handed back by Pakistan and the decision appreciated world wide.



targeting an alleged terrorist camp near Balakot and the claim of heavy casualties. Once again Indian government has resorted to a self-serving, reckless and fictitious claim. This action has been done for domestic consumption being in election environment, putting regional peace and stability at grave risk. The claimed area of strike is open for the world to see the facts on ground. For this domestic and international media is being taken to the impact site.

Forum concluded that India has committed uncalled for aggression to which Pakistan shall respond at the time and place of its choosing. To take the nation on board, the government has decided to requisition joint session of the Parliament. The Prime Minister has summoned a special meeting of National Command

Authority on 27th February, 2019.

The Prime Minister has directed that elements of national power including the Armed Forces and the people of Pakistan to remain prepared for all eventualities. He decided to engage with global leadership to expose irresponsible Indian policy in the region.

The Prime Minister appreciated timely and effective response of PAF to repulse Indian attempt without any loss of life or property.

Meanwhile, in an unprecedented call for peace, Pakistan said it is ready to hand over captured Indian Air Force pilot, Wing Commander Abhinandan, to India.

Reiterating the message of peace, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said: "If returning Wing Commander Abhinandan brings

peace, we are definitely ready for it."

FM Qureshi also said Prime Minister Imran Khan is ready to hold talks with India. However, is Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi ready, he questioned.

Regarding Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj attending the meeting of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) next month, Qureshi said, "India is neither a member of OIC nor an observer."

Qureshi stressed, "I will not hesitate to meet but OIC is not the forum for talks with Swaraj." The foreign minister added that war is not a solution.

"After destruction, you also have to sit down for talks. Civilised dialogue is the only way forward."

PAF's prompt action embarrassed India

Two Indian Air Force aircraft were shot down by the Pakistan Air Force and Indian targets across the Line of Control were struck by Pakistani fighter jets from within friendly airspace as the country's armed forces struck back after unprovoked Indian aggression a day earlier.

The military spokesperson said the Indian aircraft crossed the LoC, the PAF retaliated and two Indian aircraft were shot down in Pakistani airspace.

He confirmed that there was only one pilot under Pakistan Army's custody, who is being treated as per norms of military ethics.

The wreckage of one of the IAF jets fell within Azad Jammu and Kashmir while the second fell

in occupied Kashmir.

The Foreign Office said the sole purpose of the airstrikes on Indian military targets in occupied Kashmir was to demonstrate the country's right, will and capability of self-defence.

"Sole purpose being to demonstrate our right, will and capability for self-defence. We have no intention of escalation, but are fully prepared to do so if forced into that paradigm." The FO statement added it was why Pakistan "undertook the action with clear warning and in broad daylight".

The development came a day after Pakistan's civil and military leadership declared the violation of airspace by Indian fighter jets

"uncalled for aggression" and decided that the country would respond at the "time and place of its choosing".



Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman's
visit laid the foundation for

a new chapter *in* Pakistan-Saudi relationship





Prince Mohammed Bin Salman acknowledged that Pakistan was his second home

The Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed Bin Salman had a meeting with the President of Pakistan Dr Arif Alvi at the President House. The Crown Prince was accompanied by a delegation including Members of the Royal family, Foreign Minister and Minister for Economy. The meeting was held in a frank and cordial manner. The President thanked the Crown Prince for his visit

to Pakistan and for the hospitality extended to him during his visit to Saudi Arabia last year. The President greatly appreciated visionary leadership of the Crown Prince, his successful drive against corruption and his efforts to shift economy to non-oil sector. The President also thanked Prince Mohammad Bin Salman for facilitating Pakistani pilgrims in Saudi Arabia, ordering release of Pakistani prisoners and

setting up of immigration procedures for Hajis in Pakistan. Prince Mohammed Bin Salman acknowledged that Pakistan was his second home and pointed out that Pakistan was poised to become leading economy by 2030. He maintained that there was great excitement in Saudi Arabia about Pakistan's potential to become a vibrant economy and promised more Saudi investment in Pakistan in coming years.



Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman

The most popular foreign leader in Pakistan

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, no doubt, has emerged as one of the most popular foreign leaders in Pakistan because of his highly laudable pronouncements made during his crucial visit to Islamabad and sentiments of love, affection and care expressed for Pakistani state and its people. By expressing his determination, while wrapping up his historic tour, to make efforts to reduce tension between Pakistan and India, MBS conveyed in clear-cut terms that he was keen to mitigate challenges of the country on every front.

As the Crown Prince was briefed about latest developments pertaining to the Occupied Kashmir, it is expected that he would have frank discussions with his Indian interlocutors over the grave human rights situation there, sufferings of Kashmiri people and the need for peaceful resolution of the longstanding conflict. The situation becomes all the more grim as there are reports of intensified atrocities against Kashmiris in the wake of Pulwama attack, which, the Opposition parties in India have categorically stated has been stage managed by the ruling BJP to gain electoral support. India is putting blame on Pakistan for Pulwama incident but the ground situation became fully evident to the international community on Monday when Indian troops suffered heavy loss in a battle with Kashmiri freedom fighters as five troops including a major were killed besides injuries to a DIG Police in another clash. It is because of India's reckless use of force that Kashmiris have lost hopes of any peaceful settlement of the conflict and are now responding in kind to

the barbarities being committed by occupation forces. MBS, during his visit, in a clear reference to Occupied Kashmir, said that KSA strongly condemns the atrocities and human rights violations committed against Muslims around the world. He also lauded Pakistan's peace initiatives with India and the desire for dialogue and hopefully he would persuade Indian leaders to respond positively to these overtures. People of Pakistan are also thankful to the Saudi Crown Prince for instantly agreeing to the request of Prime Minister Imran Khan with regard to release of Pakistanis from Saudi prisons and immigration of pilgrims at Pakistani airports before their departure to the holy land. Immediate release of 2,107 prisoners would bring agonies of the prisoners and their families to an end while immigration of pilgrims at Pakistani airports would save them from trouble of waiting for hours at Jeddah and Madinah Munawwara for clearance. Saudi Arabia has already reduced visa fee for Pakistanis, which would be a significant relief to the visitors to the holy land and by ordering release of prisoners and accepting immigration proposal, the Crown Prince lived up to his declaration "Consider me Ambassador of Pakistan in Saudi Arabia" and that Saudis cannot say "No" to Pakistan. MBS demonstrated his immense passions for Pakistan and it was because of his words and deeds that the Prime Minister (IK) aptly remarked that he (MBS) would get more votes than him in case of an election. Like China, Saudi Arabia has become a development and strategic partner of Pakistan and declaration of the Crown Prince to support agenda of PM

Imran Khan of transforming Pakistan into a welfare state based on Islamic socio-economic principles would help accelerate pace of progress and prosperity of people of Pakistan. The visit of MBS has surely laid the foundation for a new chapter in Pakistan-Saudi relationship, marked by high-level institutional framework to guide future direction of political, diplomatic, economic, investment, trade, people-to-people, defence, security and cultural aspects. The desire of the two sides to make use of all available channels to promote bilateral trade, investment and promote communication between the two peoples and businessmen offers bright prospects for mutually shared prosperity. We have been pointing out that Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries have the necessary financial resources and Pakistan has the required manpower to undertake mutually beneficial joint ventures in different fields. Construction activity has been going on in the entire Gulf region since long and the process continues to-date but we have not been able to get our due share in this process. Apart from providing skilled manpower to the region, Pakistan can also export construction material and bid for developmental contracts with hard work and innovation. There is great potential for diversification of imports and exports by the two sides. It is hoped that Pakistani policy-makers and planners, in consultation with China, offer workable proposals to Saudi Arabia and other GCC countries for joining China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). This makes greater sense as Saudis are going to make huge investment in Pakistan especially in Gwadar.



Saudi-Pak Supreme Coordination Council

TOWARDS A UNIFIED VISION

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Prime Minister Imran Khan had a one-on-one meeting with His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad bin Salman at the Prime Minister House. The meeting was followed by inaugural session of the Supreme Coordination Council, co-chaired by the Prime Minister and the Crown Prince.

Under the Supreme Coordination Council, a Steering Committee and Joint Working Groups have been set up at Ministerial and Senior Officials levels, to develop frameworks of cooperation in specific projects and submit recommendations to the respective Ministers. The functioning of the Supreme Council will be coordinated by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the two countries. The Supreme Council will meet annually, in Riyadh and Islamabad alternately.

The Supreme Coordination Council, will cover areas under three pillars: political and security, economic, social and culture.



Joint Statement between Pakistan and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the Visit of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense

KSA & Pakistan reaffirmed the historical relations

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Under the guidance of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud - may Allah keep him in His protection- and at the invitation of His Excellency the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Mr. Imran Khan, His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, headed a high-level delegation of Ministers and businessmen, and paid an official visit to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan between 12-13/6/1440H corresponding to 17-18 February 2019. The two sides reaffirmed the historical relations



between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Prime Minister Imran Khan praised the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, and the efforts of his wise government, specially its services to the millions of pilgrims who visit the two holy mosques every year. The Prime Minister also lauded the leadership of His Royal Highness the Crown Prince for the development and investment files that would push the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in a rapid progress and prosperity in view of its Vision 2030, which aims to put the Kingdom on the path of development in various fields.

HRH praised Prime Minister Imran Khan's agenda of transforming Pakistan into a welfare state, based on Islamic socio-economic principles and assured him of the Kingdom's continued support.

During the high-level discussions between the two sides, they applauded the growing momentum in their bilateral relations in all areas of cooperation, held wide-ranging discussions in a cordial atmosphere and expressed their satisfaction at strengthening the level of leadership communications between the two countries.

The Pakistani side appreciated the leadership and positive role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in resolving the issues facing Islamic Ummah worldwide. The Saudi side lauded Pakistan's important positions in the Islamic world and its efforts for regional peace and security. Both sides noted with satisfaction their strong defence and security ties, and agreed to further enhance cooperation in this field to advance shared objectives.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan reiterated their commitment to continue combating extremism and terrorism and expressed their deep appreciation for the achievements and sacrifices made by the two sides in the war against terrorism. They also applauded the martyrs who sacrificed their lives in order to confront this serious scourge and called on the international community to shoulder its responsibilities to join all international efforts to combat global terrorism. They also underlined the need for avoiding politicization of UN listing regime.

The two sides expressed their hope for achieving a fair, comprehensive and long-lasting peace in the Middle East in accordance with the Arab Peace Initiative and the resolutions of international legitimacy guaranteeing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including the establishment of an independent and viable Palestinian state based on internationally agreed standards 1967 with Jerusalem as its capital.

During the official talks in Islamabad, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Deputy Prime



Minister, Minister of Defense praised openness and efforts of Prime Minister Imran Khan for dialogue with India and the opening of the Kartarpur crossing point and the efforts exerted by both sides, stressing that dialogue is the only way to ensure peace and stability in the region to resolve outstanding issues.

The two sides agreed on the importance of political settlement and promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan so that millions of Afghan refugees in neighboring countries can return to their country and contribute to their development and lasting peace. The Saudi side appreciated Pakistan's generous hosting of millions of Afghan refugees and other initiatives by Pakistan in the Afghan context.

With a view to enhancing bilateral relations in various fields, the two brotherly countries decided to establish a Joint Supreme Coordination Council between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, co-chaired by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense from the Saudi side, and by His Excellency the Prime Minister from Pakistani side for enhancing and institutionalizing the bilateral relations in various fields and take them to a higher level, and to hold its meetings in the two countries alternately.

The two sides agreed to make use of all available channels to promote bilateral trade, investment and promote communication between the two peoples and businessmen. The Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade, which is now part of the Saudi-Pakistan Supreme Coordination Council, shall facilitate bilateral trade in specific sectors and products. The two sides agreed to further strengthen measures to promote trade, participate in exhibitions and events, welcome business meetings from both countries, and encourage the private sector to take the lead in building a strong economic partnership between the two brotherly countries.

Highlighting the growing economic relations, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense and the Prime Minister of Pakistan witnessed the signing of a number of agreements and memorandums of understanding. The total investment opportunities resulted in over USD 20 billion, which would increase the mutual investment and volume of trade between the two brotherly countries.

The Saudi side expressed its appreciation for the initiatives taken by the Government of Pakistan to facilitate the conduct of business in the country and facilitate FDI in Pakistan. The

Prime Minister called on Saudi Arabia to be a partner in economic growth and development in Pakistan.

His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense also praised the efforts of Prime Minister Imran Khan to develop the economic and social structure in Pakistan. He stressed the potential of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which will contribute to the development and prosperity of the region.

The two countries called to promote dialogue, respect and understanding among followers of different faiths to promote peace and interfaith harmony.

They strongly condemned the atrocities and human rights violations committed against Muslims around the world.

At the end of the visit, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense expressed his thanks to the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan for his warm hospitality and brotherly feelings which are not unusual for Pakistan and the Pakistanis. For his part, the Prime Minister expressed his best wishes to the health and wellness of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz, hoping to visit Pakistan in the near future.



7 BILATERAL AGREEMENTS AND MOUS WERE SIGNED

IN THE PRESENCE OF THE CROWN PRINCE
AND PRIME MINISTER OF PAKISTAN



Cooperation program between
KSA's Standards, Metrology and
Quality, and Pakistan's Standards
& Quality Control



An MOU for investment
opportunities in the refining and
petrochemical sectors



An MOU in the field of
developing renewable energy
projects



An agreement to finance the
provision of quantities of crude
oil and petroleum products



An MOU for financing electricity
generation projects



An MOU in the field of mineral
wealth



An agreement for cooperation in
sports



Investment by Saudi Arabia in **Pakistan**



Short Term (1-2 Years)

US\$ Million

RLNG Plants (02)

4,000

ACWA Power

2,000

Saudi Fund for Pakistan

1,000

Sub-Total I**7,000**

Mid Term (2-3 Years)

US\$ Million

Petro-Chemical projects

1,000

Food & Agriculture projects

1,000

Sub-Total II**2,000**

Long Term (3-5 Years)

US\$ Million

Aramco Oil Refinery

10,000

Mineral Development

2,000

Sub-Total III**12,000****Total I+II+III****21,000**

Source : PID



Saudi Arabia - Pakistan

Economic Cooperation

Remittances

1ST IN THE WORLD

US \$ 3690.57 million

No. of Workers in KSA

2ND IN THE WORLD

0.143 million

What is Remittances?

A remittance is the funds an expatriate sends to his or her country of origin via wire, mail, or online transfer. These peer-to-peer transfers of funds across borders are economically significant for many of the countries that receive them.

Source : PID, Economic Survey of Pakistan

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman **Won the hearts**





By Mian Fazal Elahi

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia today are entering into a new economic partnership which will lead to shared prosperity, regional stability and mutual respect based on long term investment, strategic and social ties.

Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman's visit laid the foundation for a new chapter in Pakistan-Saudi relationship, marked by high level institutional framework to guide future direction of political, diplomatic, economic, investment, trade, people-to-people, defence, security and cultural aspects. "We were waiting for that kind of a leadership to partner with and build a lot of things together," Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman.

"We believe that Pakistan is going to be a very, very important country in the coming future and we want to be sure we are part of that," Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman. Both sides strongly condemned the atrocities and human rights violations committed against Muslims around the world. Crown Prince visit inked US \$20 billion worth agreements and Memorandums of Understandings (MoUs).

A US \$10 billion deal of establishing an oil refinery in Gwadar with Pakistan.

Crown Prince ordered the immediate release of 2,107 Pakistanis languishing in Saudi jails.

The Prime Minister Imran Khan briefed the Crown Prince on the grave human rights violations in IOK and the need for resolution of Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions and wishes of the Kashmiri people.

"We were waiting for that kind of a leadership to partner with and build a lot of things together,"

Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman



KSA Foreign Minister Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir We want to see Pakistan as an economically stable country

By Mian Fazal Elhai

We want to see Pakistan as an economically stable country," said Saudi Foreign Minister Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir while addressing a joint presser with his counterpart Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, he reiterated Saudi Arabia's resolve to strengthen ties on every front including security, trade and the economy. Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir added that an oil refinery will be set up at a cost of \$10 billion in Gwadar.

He said Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, through close strategic and economic cooperation, are making headway in achieving the targets of development. "We are developing a roadmap with set targets ahead in areas including counter-terrorism, economy, people-to-people contacts and culture to further deepen our relations," he said. Saudi Foreign Minister Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir, in a news briefing, clarified that the money given to Pakistan was 'not charity but investment'.

Foreign Minister Qureshi said 10 joint working groups have been formed under the Saudi-Pak Supreme Coordination Council, which will meet every three months. He said the council will coordinate in areas including security, defence, intelligence sharing and energy and the top

leadership will oversee the implementation of the projects. "The council is a comprehensive plan with well-laid design which will fulfill the vision of the leaders of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia," he said.

Qureshi expressed gratitude to Saudi government for revising the visa fees for Pakistani visitors and pilgrims. He mentioned that strong economic ties with Saudi Arabia will greatly benefit the Pakistani diaspora with immense employment opportunities as the country is opening up to the world through tourism and construction of two new cities.

Adel al-Jubeir lauded the Pakistani citizens including skilled labourers in Saudi Arabia for contributing constructively to the country's development and mentioned the existing people-to-people contacts at university level and military academies.

On Afghanistan, the Saudi minister said Saudi Arabia is in favour of a peaceful solution to the problem and is also facilitating the peace process in close coordination with the Afghan government, Pakistan, United States, United Arab Emirates and Taliban. On Pak-India relations, he said we want both countries to resolve their conflicts and have peaceful relations.

Both nations face similar challenges and terrorism is among the scourge of problems the two countries intend to get rid of, the foreign ministers pledged.

Addressing the conference, FM Qureshi said that the two countries want to institutionalise bilateral ties.

Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said Saudi Arabia will invest 20 billion dollars in various sectors of Pakistan.

He further said seven MoUs have been signed with Saudi side and more will be signed soon.

Qureshi said the working groups and other high-level bodies for Saudi investment have been made time bound to meet regularly to follow the updates.

The senior leadership of both countries will meet at least once a year to review the progress on these matters.

During the high-profile summit, Saudi Arabia vowed to "de-escalate" rising tensions between Pakistan and India. "Our objective is to try to de-escalate tensions between the two countries, neighbouring countries, and to see if there is a path forward to resolving those differences peacefully," said Saudi Foreign Jubeir.



Chairman Senate

2030 vision of Saudi Arabia



A vision of peace, economic growth & prosperity

Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjranj has said that Saudi investment in Pakistan is a trust of international community in the country which would further pave the way for opening up new avenues of cooperation and economic partnership for regional development.

He expressed these views in a meeting with HRH Prince Muhammad Bin Salman in Islamabad. Chairman senate headed the delegation of the Upper House of Parliament during the meeting. He said that 2030 vision of Saudi Arabia is a vision of peace, economic growth and prosperity.

“The people of Saudi Arabia are fortunate to have the able leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques and your energetic Crown Prince like Mohammad Bin Salman “ Sanjranj remarked.

He said the visit of crown Prince would be a new chapter in the history of Pakistan and Saudi relations. Sadiq Sanjranj said, situation in Pakistan has changed and the country is offering a conducive environment for trade and investment. Saudi investment is a trust in Pakistan’s capabilities and potential for steering the agenda for regional development, chairman Senate said.

He said that Pakistan desires to further expand ties in different areas of mutual interest. He said that Saudi Arab has always supported Pakistan in testing times and both have enjoyed long standing fraternal ties rooted firmly in common religion, which have stood through the test of time. He said that there is a significant convergence of views on many religious, political and security issues and exemplary collaboration at multilateral forums between the two countries.

Chairman Senate observed that bringing key businessmen, investors, companies and innovators under one roof – the Future Investment Initiative Conference –was one example; and am sure such initiatives will help realize the goals set out in Saudi Vision 2030. He called for strengthening bilateral trade through close contacts between our businessmen and investors, activation of Joint Business Council and regular participation in each other’s exhibitions and fairs. He said that Pakistani workers in Saudi Arabia have played a positive role in the development of both the countries and serve as “a bridge between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia”.

He said that Pakistani community contributing for development of Saudi Arabia would also play a proactive role in realizing Saudi Vision 2030.

“TOGETHER FOR PEACE”

MULTINATIONAL MARITIME EXERCISE AMAN-2019



By Abu Afnan

Pakistan has always been an ardent supporter of regional peace and collaborative security. As a torch bearer of this unflinching resolve, Pakistan Navy is spearheading numerous initiatives, and conduct of series of Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN is one of the quantum leaps towards the fulfillment of this shared vision



along with global partners. Pakistan Navy has been hosting Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN biennially since 2007 which has a global outlook. With AMAN Exercise Pakistan Navy seeks to enhance interoperability between regional and extra regional navies as a means of promoting peace and stability in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond. This Exercise also provides a unique training opportunity to develop and practice response tactics which helps participants foster and sustain the mutual relationships that are conducive to ensuring the safe and secured sea lanes on the world's

oceans.

Exercise AMAN-19 was conducted by Pakistan Navy from 08-12 Feb 19 at Karachi which was 6th of Multinational Exercise AMAN series. Navies from 46 countries participated along with ships, aircraft, SOF/ EOD/ Marines Teams and observers in this exercise. The Exercise was conducted in two phases; the harbour phase spanned from 08-10 Feb and the sea phase from 11-12 Feb 19. The harbour phase comprised Flag Hoisting Ceremony, International Maritime Conference, seminars, table talks, cross ships visits, calls on, International Band Display and





Maritime Counter Terrorism Demonstration. Whereas, the sea phase included practical execution of operational plans and activities finalized during harbour phase. The Exercise was planned with focused objectives, which include:

- Project positive image of Pakistan as a

country contributing towards regional peace and stability.

- Consolidate Pakistan Navy's position in the regional maritime arena.
- Enhance interoperability with regional and extra regional navies thereby acting as a bridge between the regions.
- Display of united resolve against terrorism and crimes in maritime domain.

President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Prime Minister, Minister for Defence, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chief of the Naval Staff issued special messages on the occasion. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi expressed in his message that threats to maritime security increasingly emanate from contemporary asymmetric challenges that have deeply impacted the maritime environment. There is a strong realization that given the vast expanse of oceans and an array of maritime threats, preserving maritime order in the global commons, necessitates collaborative efforts as a matter of compulsion rather than choice. Pakistan is a firm believer in collaborative maritime security and has taken a number of initiatives in this regard. Regional Maritime Security Patrols is one such initiative of Pakistan Navy to fulfill international obligations besides

protection of own national interests in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). RMSP is focused on establishing maritime patrols along the vital choke points and important waterways of IOR to ensure good order at sea.

The Naval Chief further added that Pakistan Navy has also been a forerunner in the quest for collaborative security. AMAN series of exercises effectively built on this concept. It is a matter of pride to see flags and ensigns of over forty-six Navies fluttering together as an embodiment of Exercise motto, 'Together for Peace'. Chief of the Naval Staff showed his satisfaction and said, "I am certain that the camaraderie generated herein will continue to grow and bring us even closer to the cherished goal of realizing regional peace and shared prosperity".

As a curtain raiser, Pakistan Navy organized a media brief on 7 Feb 19 at Pakistan Navy Fleet Headquarters, Karachi to apprise the reps of media regarding contours and objectives of the Exercise AMAN-19. Commander Pakistan Fleet, Vice Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi presided over the media brief. A large number of Media reps attended the media brief. Commander Pakistan Fleet also responded to the questions of the media reps after the brief.

Multinational Exercise AMAN 19 formally



Dockyard, with a colorful flag hoisting ceremony. Ships of the participating navies, observers, foreign diplomats and a large number of Pakistan Navy officers and men attended the event. Commander Pakistan Fleet, **Vice Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi** graced the occasion as **Chief Guest** whereas Chief of Romanian Naval Forces, Vice Admiral Alexandru Mirsu Ph.D and Commander Zimbabwe National Army, Lt General Edzai Absalom Tafadzwa Chanyuka Chimonyo attended the ceremony as Guests of Honour.

During the ceremony, the Message of Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi was also read out. Speaking on the occasion, Commander Pakistan Fleet, Vice Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi warmly welcomed the august participating nations for a common resolve "Together for Peace". Admiral emphasized that we can work together, keeping our differences aside, to defeat our common adversaries. These adversaries pose threats like piracy, terrorism, drug-trafficking, gun-running and human smuggling; and greater adversary is the climate change which calls for a growing need to respond to it collectively.

A Flag hoisting ceremony of participating Special Operations Forces (SOF) was also held separately at Pakistan Navy Unit PNS IQBAL, which was graced by Commander Coast, Vice Admiral Muhammad Fayyaz Gilani as Chief Guest.

During the harbour phase, in tandem, three-day International Maritime Conference was also conducted at Karachi. The three-day International Maritime Conference was organized on the theme of 'Global Geopolitics

in Transition: Rethinking Maritime Dynamics in the Indian Ocean Region' under the auspices of National Institute of Maritime Affairs. The Conference was organized on following objectives:

- Examine dynamics of global geo-politics and its implications for IOR
- Share knowledge and perspectives on socio-economic strategies in the Indian Ocean Region
- Suggest collaborative frameworks for pursuance of shared goals and responsibilities amongst maritime stakeholders
- Highlight measures that can lead to peaceful coexistence, prosperity and secure maritime environment in the Region

The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Dr Arif Alvi graced the Opening Session as chief guest. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi was also present on the occasion. While addressing the audience, the Chief Guest underscored the importance of Blue Economy and effective use of Ocean resources as key to Pakistan's future. He stated that Indian Ocean acts as a strategic gateway for food, maritime transportation and energy supplies to the world and the presence of major powers in IOR, signifies its importance under a complex security environment. Appreciating the role of Pakistan Navy, the President said that the collaborative maritime security engagements with regional and extra-regional navies in the form of "AMAN-19" signify Pakistan's resolve and commitment towards global peace and prosperity. Pakistan as an important regional player wishes to work in harmony and collaboration with all regional countries for the common objectives of peace,

stability and economic prosperity for the people of the region.

Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi in his opening remarks highlighted the significant role being played by Pakistan Navy in the sustenance of peace and stability in IOR. The Naval Chief added that Pakistan has always been an ardent supporter of maritime cooperation, and being the pioneer partner of Combined Maritime Forces' (CMF) task forces CTF150 and CTF 151, Pakistan has been the largest regional contributor to these constructs in terms of men and material. On our national front, Pakistan has commenced 'Regional Maritime Security Patrols' which aims to maintain security posture in critical sea areas and choke points in the Indian Ocean.

In his welcome address, Director General National Institute of Maritime Affairs, Vice Admiral (Retd) Syed Khawar Ali Shah, presented a brief resume including the objectives of International Maritime Conference. In addition, Mr. David N. Griffiths, Research Fellow Centre for the Study of Security and Development at Dalhousie University Canada, presented Keynote address on "Security Myths and Paradigm Traps: Strategic Thinking for the 21st Century".

The inaugural session was followed by two academic sessions on the 1st day in which various international and national scholars along with academia from Canada, China, Russian, Iran, Maldives, Sri Lanka presented their papers.

Maritime security challenges and opportunities remained in focus on the second day of Conference. The 1st and 2nd sessions of 2nd day were graced by Vice Admiral Kaleem Shaukat



Vice Chief of Naval Staff and Dr. Masuma Hasan Chairman Pakistan Institute of International Affairs as Chief Guests respectively. Whereas, Lt General Afgan Taghiyev Veli Chief of Coast Guard State Border Service Azerbaijan and Vice Admiral Alexandru Mirsu Ph.D Chief of Romanian Naval Forces attended as Guests of Honour.

During the first session of the 2nd day, Admiral William Owens Former Vice Chairman United States Joint Chief of Staff stressed upon the significance of global navies for facilitating peace and cooperation among nations. Senior Captain Shao Shuguang, Commander Task Force, PLA (N) China expressed his desire to keep the Indian Ocean stable in wake of non-traditional security threats at sea where interests of multiple stakeholders converge. The speaker was followed by Vice Admiral Asif Khaliq, Commander Karachi who highlighted about contemporary Maritime Security challenges from Pakistan's perspective. Last speaker of the first session was Rear Admiral Mehmet Cen Okyay, Commander of Turkish North Task Group who added that freedom of high seas is the core principle for maritime commerce and shipping.

Following session of the 2nd day was themed on Maritime Dynamics of the Western Indian Ocean Region. Eminent speakers included Dr Christian Bueger, Professor at Copenhagen University, Denmark who emphasized upon the need for security architecture in the Western Indian Ocean for a sustainable and stable future. Dr Syed Riffat Hussain, National University of Science and Technology (NUST) added that the scope of sea borne trade has expanded to new folds due combined effects of globalization and technological changes. The distinguished scholar Bhagya Senaratne, Lecturer at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Sri Lanka stated that Indian Ocean is one of the busiest shipping routes of the globe that presently being confounded by distrust.

In the last session of the 2nd day of the Conference, Dr Nazery Khalid, Head of Group Corporate, Boustead Heavy Industries, Malaysia was the keynote speaker who explicated opportunities for development of a blue economy in the Indian Ocean littorals. He was followed by Vice Admiral (R) Iftikhar Ahmed who was of the opinion that CPEC will make Gwadar an unparalleled hub of economic activities. Dr Aneel Salman, Head of Business Management Program, COMSAT, presented a paper on sustainable oceanic economic growth strategy for Pakistan. Last speaker of the session was Mr Irfan Rahim, Director Special Projects at International Maritime Organization (IMO). He emphatically appreciated Pakistan's Navy efforts in ensuring maritime security of Global Common in Indian Ocean Region. He not only highlighted Pakistan Navy's Maritime Security Initiative of establishing Regional Maritime

Security Patrol but also appreciated Pakistan Navy's contribution in fighting transnational crime out at sea.

The concluding session of IMC was held on 11 Feb 19. Federal Minister for Defence, Mr. Pervez Khattak was the Chief Guest of the event.

While addressing the audience, Defense Minister, Mr Pervez Khattak, stated that the current maritime threats and emerging Geo-Strategic situation is posing new challenges and risks to the stakeholders in the Region. The situation will provide constructive dialogue and develop collective mechanism. The Conference has provided a platform to the scholars as well as practitioners to deliberate on the contemporary maritime challenges and share understanding of the dynamics in the maritime domain. The Defense Minister expressed his confidence that the conference deliberations and its valuable recommendations will provide insight to maritime stakeholders for effective policy making. He also thanked all the guests, panelists and dignitaries and congratulated National Institute of Maritime Affairs for successful conduct the conference.

In the context of CPEC, Defence Minister added that amongst the recent maritime development in our region, China Pakistan Economic Corridor is rightfully considered a Game Changer, not only for Pakistan but for economic well-being and prosperity of the entire region. With the progress of CPEC and Gwadar port, maritime activities would increase manifold, especially in the Western Indian Ocean. The responsibilities of Pakistan Navy would also increase for maintaining a secure maritime environment for smooth flow of sea trade.

Vice Admiral (Retd) Syed Khawar Ali Shah, Director General National Institute of Maritime Affairs, integrated the conference presentations. Heads of various panelists including Ms. Yan Yan Director Research Centre of Ocean Law & Policy from China also presented the recommendations of their respective panels.

International Maritime Conference (IMC), brought together eminent speakers and delegates from across the globe for in-depth discussions and deliberations on changing dynamics of geopolitics and analyse the impact of these changes on IOR's economic exploitation and maritime security canvas. The conference was attended by a large number of dignitaries from across the globe, tri-services officers, academia, foreign & local media representatives and researchers from local and international think-tanks.

The rise of terrorism and instability at global level has changed the nature of how nations engaged both friends and foes. Special Forces play a unique role that include tracking of terrorists cells and leaders, disrupting insurgent campaigns and building relationships with international partners for ensuring peace and stability.



Accordingly, during the harbour phase of AMAN 19, Special Operations Forces of Pakistan Navy presented an impressive Maritime Counter Terrorism Demonstration at PNS QASIM, Karachi. Mr. Imran Ismail, Governor Sindh graced the occasion as chief guest.

The counter terrorism demonstration was a fine display of strength and specialized skills by Special Operations Forces (SOF) of Pakistan Navy to counter acts of maritime terrorism, refine special operating procedures, exchange of professional expertise and to enhance interoperability with participating SOF teams. The special demonstration of Pakistan Navy assets and their capabilities included Dolphin Maneuvers by Special Fast Boats (SFBs), Fast Boat Recovery, Advance Fire Arms Drills, Static Line Para Jumps, Clearance Ops, Insertion of SOF Teams & Marines Platoon to Hover Craft, Bomb Burst by Helos and Free Fall Jumps etc.

An International Bands display was also presented by the bands of participating countries of AMAN 19, aiming to connect the countries through cultural heritage as well. The military bands from Sri Lanka, Pakistan Army, Pakistan Navy, Pakistan Air Force and Pakistan Rangers played a mix of their traditional and military tunes. The enchanting melodies mesmerized the audience and were really appreciated. A large number of personnel of the participating navies, observers, foreign diplomats and senior officials of armed forces of Pakistan witnessed the Counter terrorism demonstration and Bands display.

During the harbour phase, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi was called on by various visiting foreign dignitaries including Lt General Edzai Absalom Tafadzwa Chanyuka Chimonyo Commander Zimbabwe National Army, Vice Admiral Alexandru Mirsu Ph.D Chief of Romanian Naval Forces, Lt General Afgan Taghiyev Veli Chief of Coast Guard State Border Service Azerbaijan and Admiral (Retd) William A.Owens of USA in separate meetings.

During the meetings matters of mutual interest including defence related collaborations and maritime security dynamics were discussed. The Naval Chief also thanked the dignitaries for participation in Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN 19 to enhance the collaborative efforts for peace and security. The dignitaries highly appreciated and acknowledged Pakistan Navy's efforts and focused commitments in support of collaborative maritime security in the region and conduct of Exercise AMAN.

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi visited ships of foreign navies participated in Multinational Exercise AMAN-19 during the harbour phase. Upon his arrival onboard foreign visiting ships, the Naval Chief was warmly welcomed by Senior Officers/ Commanding officers of respective ships and was presented the guard of honour by smartly dressed out contingents.

The Naval Chief visited ships of Australia (HMAS

BALLARAT), China (PLA(N) KUNLUNSHAN), Italy (ITS MARGOTTINI), Malaysia (RMK KD MAHAWANGSA), Oman (RNOV AL-RAHMANI), Sri Lanka (SLNS SAYURALA), Turkey (TCG GOKCEADA) and UK (HMS DRAGON). During the visit onboard, Chief of the Naval Staff held interactions with senior officers/ Commanding officers. The Naval Chief was given briefings onboard ships. During discussions, the Naval Chief highlighted that Pakistan Navy has always been a forerunner in quest for collaborative security in this region of immense strategic importance and AMAN series of exercises are anchored on this concept. The Admiral further expressed that camaraderie generated herein will grow in future and shall bring us closer to the mutual goal of regional peace and prosperity.



He also appreciated their participation in AMAN Exercise to fulfill common resolve of "Together for Peace". Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi interacted with foreign media reps during his visit and responded to their questions.

The Senior officers/ Commanding officers of the respective ships, highly acknowledged the strenuous efforts of Pakistan Navy by bringing together global navies towards shared commitment of maritime peace, stability and lawful order at sea.

With the commencement of sea phase of Exercise AMAN on 11 Feb 19, all participating foreign ships and Pakistan Navy designated Ships proceeded to sea for rehearsals and preparations of operational exercises and maritime related drills.

The pinnacle of Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN-19 was a day long sea activities on 12 Feb 19, which is known as International

Fleet Review (IFR). Exercise AMAN-19 came to its conclusion with these spectacular sea maneuvers and Fleet Review in the North Arabian Sea, amid a joint resolve of 46 countries - "Together for Peace".

President of Pakistan, Chief Minister Sindh, Defence Minister, Minister of Defence Production, Chairman JCSC, three Services Chief, Ambassadors, Defence and Naval Attaches and number of other guests witnessed spectacular sea maneuvers and International Fleet Review in the North Arabian Sea. Naval assets including naval ships, helicopters, Special Forces elements and observers from 46 countries participated in the exercise.

Upon arrival onboard Pakistan Navy Ship MOAWIN, the President was welcomed by Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi and Senior Naval officers. The Chief Guest witnessed different operational exercises including firing by ships on pre-deployed targets, underway replenishment between ships and maritime related maneuvers. The Fleet Review also featured an impressive Fly Past by participating aircraft and helicopters followed by Men and Cheership by participating ships. Thereafter, the participating ships formed up in traditional "AMAN Formation" to signify unity and harmony to ensure PEACE in maritime domain.

The President congratulated Pakistan Navy for hosting the mega event and reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve for peace and security in the region. The President appreciated the participation of large number of like-minded Nations and emphasized that AMAN-19 will pave the way to make the region more peaceful and secure with combined efforts by all stakeholders. He reiterated the need for strategic cooperation to counter transnational maritime threats and encourage safety, security and stability in the region.

Maritime security challenges in the Indian Ocean have acquired international dimensions. Cooperation between international navies therefore, is imperative to counter these emerging threats. Pakistan being a major stakeholder in maritime security of Indian Ocean Region is fully committed to ensuring freedom of navigation and lawful maritime order. Successful conduct of Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN-19 under the auspices of Pakistan Navy will be a big stride towards this direction. Participating of 46 countries across the globe, with their warships, aircraft, helicopters, Special Operation Forces, Explosive Ordnance Teams, Marines and Observers in this Exercise is conspicuous manifestation of poise and confidence on Pakistan in joining hands for common resolve of peace, stability and lawful order at sea. The exercise is a reflection of the strong ties between Pakistan and global navies and display of converging strategic interests which will go a long way in promoting maritime security and stability in the regio.

President of Pakistan

confers NI (M) upon

sri lanka

Armed Forces'
Chief of Defence

By
Mian Fazal Elahi

President Dr. Arif Alvi conferred Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon Admiral Ravindra Chandrasiri Wijegunaratne Chief of Defence Staff Sri Lankan Armed Forces in a special Investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-e-

Sadr, Islamabad. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Zubair Mahmood Hayat NI(M) and senior officers were also present in the ceremony.





Pakistan has become an attractive destination for foreign investments

Due to economic reforms of the government: President Alvi

By Bilal Zafar, Monitoring

President Dr Arif Alvi says Pakistan has become an attractive destination for foreign investments due to economic reforms of the government.

He was addressing a dinner hosted by Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industries in honor of ambassador and foreign diplomats. The President said declining trade deficit and increasing exports indicate improvement in the economic front. He said that positive results are being witnessed due to effective economic policies of the government. He said technical education is necessary to compete in the international market.

The President said declining trade deficit and increasing exports indicate improvement in the economic front.

The President said the law and order situation has been improved and it wants good relations with neighboring countries including India. He expressed hope peace will soon be restored in Afghanistan as peace in the neighbor country is very imperative for Islamabad. He said Pakistan has huge potential in tourism sector and over 2.5 million tourists visited Gilgit Baltistan this year. Dr Arif Alvi said that new economic zones under China Pakistan Economic Corridor will bring development and prosperity to the country. Lauding sacrifices of the armed forces of Pakistan in combating militancy, the President said that Pakistan Army is the only force in the world which has successfully defeated terrorism.



Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Yao Jing calls on Prime Minister Imran Khan at PM's Office Islamabad on 14th February, 2019.



Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani Exchanging Views with Mr. Gao Yunlong, Vice Chairman of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) At Parliament House Islamabad on February 14, 2019.



Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani Exchanging Views With Saudi Ambassador, NAWAF Bin Said Al-Malki At Parliament House Islamabad on February 07, 2019.



Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani Exchanging Views With Mr. Beishembiev Erik Aidarkanovick, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan House Islamabad on February 08, 2019.



Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani Exchanging Views With Mr. Barlybay Sadykov, Kazakhstan Ambassador to Pakistan At Parliament House Islamabad on February 08, 2019.



Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sanjrani Exchanging Views With Mr. Atadjan Movlamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan At Parliament House Islamabad on February 08, 2019.



Ambassador of Hungary to Pakistan, Mr. Istvan Szabo Called on Federal Minister for water Resources, Muhammad Faisal Wawda in Islamabad on February 20, 2019.



Chaudhry Fawad Hussain, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting in a Meeting with H.E. Mr. Stefano Pontecorvo, Ambassador of Italy To Pakistan in Islamabad on February 20, 2019.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Chaudhry Fawad Hussain, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting in a meeting with Ms. Wendy Christine Gilmour, High Commissioner of Canada to Pakistan in Islamabad on February 1, 2019.



Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Reform and Statistics Division, Makhdum Khusro Bakhtyar Talking to Ambassador of China Mr. Yao Jing who Called on Him in Islamabad on February 13, 2019



Federal Minister for Human Rights, Dr Shireen M Mazari in a meeting with the Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to Pakistan Mr. Gabriel Tiel Capote in Islamabad on february 08, 2019.



Ambassador of Hungary, H.E Istvan Szabo Called on Adviser to The Prime Minister on Commerce, Textile, Industries & Production and Investment, Abdul Razak Dawood in Islamabad on february 22, 2019



Ambassador of Netherlands, Her Excellency Ardi Braken called on Adviser to the Prime Minister on Commerce, Abdul Razak Dawood in Islamabad on 8-02-2019.



Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, H.E. Ali Alizada Called on Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Syed Ali Haider Zaidi in Islamabad on February 22, 2019.



Chairman Board of Investment, Haroon Sharif in a Meeting with Ceo Petronas LNG, LTD-Kuala Lumpur in Islamabad on February 22, 2019.



Chairman Board of Investment, Haroon Sharif in a Meeting with Ambassador of Argentina to Pakistan, Mr. Ivan Ivanishevich in Islamabad on February 22, 2019.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Ambassador of State of Qatar H.E. Saqr Bin Mubarak Al- Mansouri called on Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaiser in Islamabad.



Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaiser Shaking Hand with Ambassador of Azerbaijan Mr. Ali Fikrat Oglu Alizada at Parliament House on 14.02.2019.



Chairman Board of Investment, Haroon Sharif in a Meeting with H.E. Mr. Manuel Durn Gimenez, Ambassador of Spain to Pakistan In Islamabad on February 06, 2019.



His Excellency Dr. Marc Barety, Ambassador of France to Pakistan in a Meeting with Mr. Shamil Ahmad Khawaja, Federal Secretary Ministry of Water Resources in Islamabad on February 13, 2019.



Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani Exchanging Views with Chinese Ambassador To Pakistan, Mr. Yao Jing in Islamabad on February 08, 2019.



Minister of State for Interior, Shehryar Khan Afridi in a meeting with Minister for Interior of Turkey at Istanbul on 19th February 2019.



Admiral Ravindra C. Wijegunaratne, chief of Defence Staff of Sri Lanka Called on Federal Minister for Defence, Pervez Khattak At Ministry of Defence, Rawalpindi on February 13, 2019.



US Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Paul Jones called on Mr. Faisal Vawda, Federal Minister for Water Resources in Islamabad on February 11, 2019.



Our true AMBASSADORS

By Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari

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Overseas Pakistanis are a part of Pakistan's future. While our predecessors have rhetorically talked about the significance of overseas Pakistanis, no concrete measures were taken in this regard.

As a result, the true potential of overseas Pakistanis in facilitating the processes of development in Pakistan has not been fully tapped. The current PTI government under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan is cognizant of this fact and wants to redress it by developing a robust partnership with overseas Pakistanis for the development of Pakistan.

The significance of overseas Pakistanis cannot be overstated in terms of their contributions towards Pakistan's economy. Due to corruption and epic failures in the realm of economic policies and governance by previous governments, Pakistan's economy witnessed record high current account and budget deficits. Exports witnessed a sharp decline under the PML-N government. This has put a severe pressure on our balance of payments. Time and again, overseas Pakistanis have rescued Pakistan's economy by pumping in necessary foreign exchange reserves through remittances. In other words, remittances are necessary to Pakistan's economic stability.

This is why, as soon as Prime Minister Imran Khan assumed office, he gave directions to all concerned departments to facilitate overseas Pakistanis and address their problems. The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development set up a first of its kind complaint cell, 'Call Sarzameen', for overseas Pakistanis to efficiently redress their concerns. The response has been great so far; the ministry has successfully processed 80 percent of the complaints it has received.

Similarly, in collaboration with the State Bank of Pakistan, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Overseas and Human Resource Development, the government has launched a programme called the Pakistan Remittance Initiative (PRI). The idea behind the PRI is to facilitate and incentivise overseas Pakistanis to use official channels for remittances. This has been well received by overseas Pakistanis and I am glad to report that due to the concerted efforts of the PTI government, remittances from the US and the UK have witnessed increases of 33 percent and 23 percent, respectively.

Overall, there has been an increase of 12.2 percent in remittances since PM Khan assumed office. This is a remarkable achievement, especially given the fact that the global economy is experiencing a slowdown. The tremendous growth in remittances is a vote of confidence from the overseas Pakistanis that they are upbeat and optimistic that Pakistan is undergoing a positive turnaround under the leadership of PM Khan.

PM Khan launched the Pakistan Banao Certificate (PBC), a diaspora bond for overseas Pakistanis. This is not only going to generate much-needed foreign exchange reserves to ease the balance of payments crisis, but it is also going to make overseas Pakistanis active stakeholders and partners in Pakistan's economy. An official online portal has been launched to facilitate overseas Pakistanis to invest in the PBC. The return on the PBC is up to 6.75 percent per year; this is a lucrative rate, especially given the fact that purchasing these bonds is tantamount to investing in a better future for Pakistan.

Pakistan has a youth bulge, which is our strength. Our young people are full of innovative ideas. In order to fully tap the potential of our youth, PM Khan believes that Pakistan needs to become an economic powerhouse and a knowledge-economy hub in South Asia. Overseas Pakistanis have a big role to play in making Pakistan a dynamic knowledge-economy. There are highly qualified Pakistani scientists, engineers, IT experts, academics, and entrepreneurs around the world. I request these expats to consider giving back to their homeland. The Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (MOPHDR) will do its best to facilitate expats to build a strong foundation of a 21st century knowledge-economy in Pakistan. Overseas Pakistanis are the true ambassadors of Pakistan; they can help in projecting a positive and pluralistic image of Pakistan around the world. Previous governments did not pay attention on projecting a true image of the country; as a result, our adversaries have exploited this and have painted a negative image of Pakistan in the global community. The people of Pakistan wish for peaceful, democratic and prosperous lives like all civilised nations of the world. Ours is a pluralistic country where people from different faiths,

ethnicities and background live in harmony and peace. Overseas Pakistanis reflect these values of Pakistan around the world.

Our cultural heritage is rich and diverse, and we need to actively promote this around the world. The role of overseas Pakistanis is going to be central in this because they have access to places where our embassies or foreign delegations cannot reach. Thus, I encourage overseas Pakistanis – especially in the Western world – to actively engage with their non-Pakistani friends and colleagues and educate them about the pluralistic and diverse cultural heritage of Pakistan; the PTI government is going to provide them full facilitation in this.

PM Khan envisions Pakistan as the hub of tourism in the South Asia, a country that offers natural, cultural, historical and religious tourism. Pakistan has one of the world's most gifted topography with gorgeous scenery. Most importantly, Pakistan is a very safe country with low crime rates. Not to mention, in comparison to other tourist destinations, Pakistan is much more affordable.

This is the time to explore Pakistan. To facilitate tourism, the PTI government has launched an e-visa policy for over 150 countries and the people of Pakistan are ready to welcome tourists from across the world. I encourage overseas Pakistanis to tell their non-Pakistani friends and colleagues to consider Pakistan as a potential tourist destination. In fact, invite them to come alongside you during your next holiday/visit to Pakistan.

The PTI government inherited a crumbling economy, but due to the untiring efforts of PM Khan, it is stable now. Furthermore, PM Khan has reenergised Pakistan's geo-strategic and economic stature in the region. Pakistan is rapidly undergoing a positive transformation, but change happens with steady, continuous and collective efforts.

That is why the PTI government under the leadership of PM Khan wants to develop a strong and sustainable partnership with overseas Pakistanis to make Pakistan a country where every citizen gets an opportunity to maximise his/her true potential, as envisioned by our founding fathers Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Allama Iqbal.



By M Saeed Khalid

No time for PEACE?

Something considered remotely possible only a few days back is already here. India acted first, by brazenly violating Pakistan's airspace and claiming death and destruction in a fictional terror camp.

India went on to boast about its aggression, thereby provoking Pakistan to retaliate. The PAF's riposte came the very next day, resulting in the shooting of two enemy fighter planes. Alarmed by these developments, the international community has appealed to both the countries to work for de-escalation and avoid a bigger conflict.

It remains to be seen whether these appeals will be heeded, especially in India where Narendra Modi is focused on heightening tensions with Pakistan to secure another five-year term. The latest state elections and Lok Sabha by-polls show that Modi is losing popularity as the general elections come closer. As the clock ticks, Modi's body language is that of a worried man.

Ever since the BJP rose to power in 2014, it has relentlessly pursued policies of hate and intimidation toward Pakistan. This was linked to a larger agenda of hatred for the Muslims in India in general and for those in Kashmir in particular. Acting more like some foreign rulers, Narendra Modi and his associates aimed at dividing the Indian people on the lines of caste and creed. Although they called it Hindutva, a large segment was left on the margins because of issues of low and high castes in India.

Muslims, whether descendants of the invading armies or those who may have converted to Islam, became the primary target of (Hindu) purification. Kashmiri Muslims would soon come to bear the brunt of Hindutva wrath as they rejected Indian occupation and struggled for freedom. In short, Muslims in general, and Kashmiris in particular, were to be sorted out. And of course Pakistan, which is a big thorn in India's hold of the Subcontinent and which

supports the Kashmiri cause, had to be shunned bilaterally and isolated internationally.

As time passed, the BJP's tactics for Kashmir became more draconian. The Kashmiri Muslims were subdued by all means of repression and coercion. Equally worrying are the efforts to change Article 370 of India's constitution, which grants a special autonomous status to Jammu and Kashmir, and Article 35-A, which restricts non-Kashmiris' right to property in the disputed territory. The BJP muscled its way into the coalition led by Mehbooba Mufti in Indian-held Kashmir but brought it down to impose governor's rule when her party rejected the constitutional amendments proposed by the BJP leadership.

The Indian security forces were given the licence to kill, maim and rape at will, leading to greater alienation from India with more young Kashmiris embracing resistance to the occupation. Sane voices within India called upon the Modi government to stop this madness but to no avail. A report by the UN testified to the gross violations of human rights in the occupied territory.

The BJP's strategists believe that a hard-line approach towards Kashmir and repression of minorities in India will lock the Hindu vote for them in the coming election. To be doubly sure, tensions with Pakistan must be kept high – and what better way of doing that than holding Pakistan responsible for terrorism in Kashmir? The attack on Indian security personnel in Pulwama was immediately attributed to the JeM in Pakistan without proof.

Measures like recalling India's high commissioner from Islamabad, revoking Pakistan's MFN status, and favourable statements obtained from Washington and Kabul pointed to a choreography prepared in advance. If Pakistan was no longer the 'epicenter' of terrorism, it was blamed for being its 'nerve centre'. Official India and its media partners fulminate over how to punish Pakistan and isolate it in regional and global forums. Sporting and cultural links are further reduced as hate-mongering assumes a higher pitch.

Not everyone is fooled. Listen to Mehbooba Mufti, Farooq Abdullah, Rahul Gandhi or Yashwant Sinha to feel the level of despondency

prevailing from Srinagar to New Delhi. And watch Modi's response of mass arrests and sending ten thousand more security forces to a Kashmir that is already the world's most militarised area. Unnamed Indian officials warn the Kashmiri Muslims of greater brutalisation.

In an opinion column in 'The Indian Express', Pratap Bhanu Mehta wrote that the situation represented a victory for Pakistan because "the radicalization in Kashmir is real and the alienation pervasive...in the last five years we made the situation in Kashmir far worse...the fragile and uncertain gains in Kashmir of the Atal Behari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh years have been squandered away in an illusory bravado". He added that "the chest thumping Indian politicians can seldom win peace".

Peace is not a priority for the BJP or its RSS minders. Calls from the international community and appeals from sane voices within India have failed to move the BJP/RSS planners who firmly believe that communalism and anti-Pakistan war hysteria can lead to another electoral victory. It was not surprising that, rather than expressing grief and looking into intelligence failures, New Delhi launched another round of propaganda war against Pakistan.

There is a crucial question to reflect upon. Can Modi afford to bring down tensions with Pakistan in the run-up to the election, and expose himself to be judged on his government's performance alone? Events of the past few days reveal his plan to whip up war hysteria and even take limited aggressive actions against Pakistan. A swift response by the PAF shows that Pakistan will unreservedly exercise its right to retaliate as cautioned by Pakistan's political and military leadership. Being the bigger power, India is in the habit of spurning Pakistan's offers of negotiations; so Prime Minister Imran Khan's call for restraint and dialogue may not get traction across the border.

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By Ignacio Artaza

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Key priorities

Pakistan's development paradigm has evolved over time. As the country continues to firm up its development planning, we reached out to a diverse group of experts and policymakers to gather inputs that could inform its development priorities. Their views are summarised below.

Pakistan's economy is prone to boom-and-bust cycles; every four to five years, it finds itself mired in a balance-of-payments crisis. Exports have largely remained stagnant, and are considered to be the main reason for low foreign exchange earnings. There is a need to diversify the export base and export markets. Besides exports and remittances, the experience of other countries suggests that international tourism plays a critical role in building up foreign exchange reserves. The current contribution of tourism to Pakistan's economy is estimated at 6.9 per cent of GDP and is expected to double in a decade. However, as the bulk of it is domestic tourism, more measures are needed to make Pakistan attractive to foreign tourists and thereby generate additional foreign exchange earnings. Youth and women are key drivers of inclusive growth, but neither demographic is optimally employed. Young Pakistanis (15-29 years), constituting around 29pc of the population, need skills and knowledge to be useful for the economy. The government should have a national youth internship programme for them to get initial exposure and skills training required by the market. Skills training through public-private partnerships tends to have a larger impact on employment creation. A solely government-run programme is bound to fail unless outsourced and done in collaboration with the industry and business sectors.

Meanwhile, women, constituting 49pc of the population, make up a mere 24pc of the labour force. Without empowered women, we can neither achieve sustainable economic growth nor high-level human development. The majority of experts suggest that the government should introduce legislation to make it mandatory for both public and non-public organisations to maintain quotas for women in employment and other segments.

Lack of mobility, moreover, is a key constraint in women's participation in the economic and social sectors. The government should incentivise the provision of transport facilities to women and girls in both public and non-public sector organisations, besides safeguards against violence in the workplace.

What will it take for Pakistan to achieve sustainable economic growth?

With the highest population growth rate in

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South Asia (as high as 2.4pc), Pakistan will find it difficult to provide the required public services to its citizens at the current growth rate. Pakistan had an impressive family planning and health outreach programme in the 1960s and 1990s. The Lady Health Workers programme in the 1990s was instrumental in increasing the contraceptive prevalence rate

from 12pc in 1990 to around 30pc in 2000. The country should revive such programmes and employ a whole-of-society approach involving men, religious and community leaders, to curb this challenging trend.

Pakistan is also the fastest urbanising country in South Asia. At the current 3pc annual growth rate, nearly half the population will live in cities by 2025. Urbanisation offers huge opportunities for economic growth. But to benefit from this trend, the government should also pay attention to the growth of second-tier cities along megacities. Rising populations strain the services and infrastructure of megacities. A diversified approach to urban development will not only spur growth, it will also help in better management of municipal services in megacities.

Pakistan is the eighth most vulnerable country to the effects of climate change. The mean annual temperature in the country has already increased by 0.5 degrees Centigrade in the last 50 years. The prime minister is championing investments in mitigation and adaptation interventions to reduce the effects of climate change. The country has also developed the National Climate Change Policy 2012. Strong institutions are needed to implement this policy. After the 18th Amendment, most actions to address climate change fall within the domain of the provinces. This requires strong coordination and collaboration across federal and provincial institutions.

And finally, the challenges related to governance bottlenecks need to be confronted head-on. E-governance, though not a panacea, has proven to improve efficiency in the provision of public services while also improving public-sector accountability and transparency.

The above is not an exhaustive list of proposals. The feedback gathered suggests that national development priorities require balancing economic, social and environmental (ie, the three pillars of the UN SDGs) aspects to produce sustainable results. These three dimensions constitute a valuable screening framework for policymaking.

Courtesy to DAWN



By Muhammad Hanif

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For the last six months, Pakistan's Foreign Policy has been proactive and it has not only brought economic and strategic dividends to the country, it has also greatly helped Pakistan in managing the current tension with India. During this period, while the Prime Minister, Imran Khan visited Saudi Arabia, China, Turkey, Malaysia, Qatar and the UAE, the Crown Princes of Saudi Arabia and the UAE have visited Pakistan. Moreover, whereas the Foreign Minister of Pakistan visited Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE and China, the Foreign Ministers of China and a few Muslim countries also visited Pakistan.

During the above mentioned visits and interactions many MoUs and agreements were signed, and Pakistan has got some major economic benefits, including a sufficient quantity of loans provided on easy terms by its friendly countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE and China, to ease out its financial difficulties. Besides, Pakistan has also signed some major investment agreements with Saudi Arabia like the construction of a major oil refinery at Gwadar and purchase of a few energy producing plants from Pakistan.

Apart from the above stated economic advantages, Pakistan has also strengthened its political and diplomatic relations with the above stated countries. Apart from above, the Prime Minister Imran had taken a major peace initiative of offering holding of a dialogue with India and opening the Kartarpur Corridor to facilitate Indian Sikhs' visit to the Shrine of Baba

Guru Nanak in Pakistan at Kartarpur, although these friendly gestures had not received an open hearted welcome from the Modi Government.

Also, Pakistan had taken a major peace initiative pertaining to Afghanistan by facilitating the US-Taliban talks. Now the second round of these talks is continuing in Doha and it is expected that these discussions will result in a concrete agreement on achieving peace in Afghanistan. In this context, apart from contributing towards peace in Afghanistan, by facilitating the US-Taliban talks Pakistan has also improved its relations with the US. In this regard, President Trump's recent statement that within a short time Pakistan-US relations have greatly improved is significant.

The above-mentioned economic and diplomatic gains in the economic and diplomatic fields have been greatly helpful to Pakistan in managing the current political and military tension created by India in the context of the Pulwama attack in the Indian occupied Kashmir. Even without conducting an investigation, India's PM, Modi had blamed Pakistan for the Pulwama attack. And, in this context, while Modi cancelled the Most Favoured Nation Status of Pakistan and stopped trading with it, he had also warned Pakistan for teaching it a lesson. Contrary to Modi's these actions, while Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan had offered to cooperate with India in the investigation of the Pulwama attack, he had also offered to India to hold a bilateral dialogue to resolve the bilateral issues. Despite Imran Khan's above stated offers, on the night of 25/26 February 2019, four aircraft of the Indian air force violated Pakistan's sovereignty by crossing the Line of Control (LoC), and when they were challenged by the

Pakistan Air Force aircraft, they offloaded their ammunition/bombs on a bare ground and fled back to India without hitting their assigned targets, although India had falsely claimed that its aircraft had destroyed a terrorist camp in Pakistan.

Then in the morning of 27 February 2019, when Pakistani aircraft had shot the Indian military-related targets across the LoC from a standoff distance from own side of the LoC to avenge the violation of its sovereignty a day before, two Indian aircraft again crossed the LoC and those were hit by the Pakistani aircraft. As one Indian aircraft fell on the Pakistani side of the LoC, its pilot was arrested by the Pakistan Army. To face the tension created by India, the provision of the economic assistance to Pakistan in the shape of easy loans by its friendly countries has given it an added confidence. Also, Pakistan's recently reset and renewed strong diplomatic relations with its friendly countries is greatly helping it in dealing with the military tension with India. In this regard, Pakistan Government's active diplomacy with the friendly countries is praise worthy.

The US is trying to diffuse the tension. Turkey has announced all types of support to Pakistan. Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister is visiting Pakistan in this context. The Crown Prince of the UAE is trying to mediate. China, Russia and the EU have asked for a reduction in the tension and favoured the Pakistan's stance of resolving the issues by holding bilateral talks. Thus, virtually, in relation to the current tense situation with India, Pakistan's proactive foreign policy has outperformed India's so called superior diplomacy by mustering sufficient diplomatic support in favour of its stance.

Courtesy to Pakistan Observer

Pakistan's

PROACTIVE FOREIGN

POLICY AND

India



By Ambassador Tariq Osman Hyder
The writer is a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the NDU

The demand to DO MORE a Strategic Instrument of Coercion

The nomenclature- the demand to do more, as an instrument of strategic coercion is relatively recent arising post 9/11 as a follow up to , ' You are either for us or against us', particularly in the context of Pakistan. However historically the concept and practice of strategic coercion in one form or the other is as old as the history of ancient Empires and their struggles and wars to expand their influence. In the 19th Century gunboat diplomacy was yet another manifestation.

Nor is the object of being at the receiving end of efforts of strategic coercion new in Pakistan's history though this has come much more to the fore post 9/11 and in the past 15 or so years. Even earlier we have been subject to such pressures because of our relative smaller size in our neighborhood, weak economy, reliance on foreign technology and at times unstable internal polity.

There are several reasons for the accentuation of this demand to do more, mainly by the US in the context of helping them in Afghanistan, and by India on the counter terrorism front. There are geopolitical shifts, the rise and role of China as unipolarity wanes, the position of the US to cooperate on some issues with China and to try to curtail and contain China's influence on other issues. The US's increasing tilt in South

Asia towards India both in the context of China and because of the economic and commercial opportunities it offers. Pakistan on its part to resist such pressures has been drawing closer to China. As a result Pakistan is in the cross hairs of this rivalry.

The instruments of strategic coercion that have been deployed by the US are well known. These include pressure on the IMF, FATF grey list, virtually closing off military sales, ending military training, deportation lists, freezing coalition support funds and payments due, and most lately questioning CPEC. This in tandem with increased strategic cooperation with India with military sales, support for India to join the NSG as a follow up to the US-India nuclear deal of 2005, greater access to sensitive technology, logistics and strategic communications agreements, expanded naval exercises and continuing support for India to join the UN Security Council as a Permanent Member.

Russia has moved somewhat closer to Pakistan than before, reminiscent to its reach out after the Tashkent Agreement that it brokered after the 1965 War. However the depth of its historical and current political and defence relationship with India remains. Here is one aspect in which it is in our interests to 'do more' to get closer to Russia.

India's pressure is most directly exercised along the LOC through frequent flare-ups and cease fire violations. Continuing with its 1947 onwards strategy onwards to distract Pakistan on the western front India has changed its earlier policy of inciting Afghanistan's irredentist claims, Pakthunistan, to a direct action policy of trying to destabilize us in Balochistan through terrorist and insurgent action and also opportunistically else as well. It continues its policy of trying to malign our image globally. Its repressive policy in Indian occupied Kashmir, accentuated by continuing killing unarmed young protestors, blinding many through a campaign of grave human rights violations which was so egregious that they caught the attention of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and led to his critical report of 14 June 2018. Such repression is counterproductive and will also fan extremism in Pakistan and elsewhere. In every international forum including the FATF India continues its hostile policy. Even though Pakistan's Prime Minister has called for better relations and a multi subject dialogue to discuss all disputes in which Pakistan is ready to discuss terrorism India is not responsive.

The situation is clear. It is not enough to be a Greek chorus to decry the unfairness and

unjustness of it all. The real question before us is what should be our response strategy? What are we doing and what should we be doing in our own interest. First of all we have to analyze what are our own internal constraints which make us more vulnerable to external pressure than would be otherwise the case. Secondly as we need space to respond and to consolidate internally what do we need to do to gain space and time?

Why are our vulnerabilities? We are still dependent on foreign assistance, our economy is weak, our reserves low, our exports far less than our imports, tax revenue raising inadequate, lack of fiscal space, accelerating population, 65% youth bulge, high illiteracy rate, high unemployment, inadequate educational and vocational opportunities, vulnerability of youth and unemployed to extremism, no resolve or funding for education, inadequate curriculum reform, low productivity, unskilled labour, investment mainly in services not industry, and so on.

We need to prioritize and work towards resolving these challenges. We have by dint of blood and sacrifice created some space by meeting to a large extent the terrorist security challenge and the travel advisories are improving as is our image. We have to turn this youth bulge truly into an opportunity rather than talking about it.

CPEC is slowly changing the economic landscape and we need to hasten this process. On CPEC there are five areas we additionally need to focus on. First of all we need to negotiate agreements more diligently, to attract the large Chinese investment companies to take equity positions in many of the projects to both reduce our exposure and which would ensure that they are structured better and which would ensure that the possibility gaming the system is eliminated. Secondly, identify Chinese industries which are no longer competitive and encourage them to relocate to Pakistan under CPEC's the Special Economic Zones (SEZs). Thirdly transform Gwadar, which has a prime location outside the Straits of Hormuz, into not only a goods and oil/gas transshipment center but also a petrochemical complex by linking GCC exports and Chinese imports. This may be already happening if Saudi Arabia sets up refinery in Pakistan. Fourthly to jump to developing links, training and synergy for our software industry with their Chinese counterparts without waiting, as now in the plan, for industries to be set up in the SEZs. Much less investment and resources required than in bricks and mortar. Fifthly more training at all levels for CPEC projects and programmes so that more Pakistanis are progressively

employed.

We need to attract other investments from other countries around the CPEC catalyst. There is already more interest. For example an American diplomat was telling me a few days ago that the decision by Cargill the grains, commodities and agricultural based American multinational to invest \$200 million more in Pakistan was a good sign. The German Ambassador in interviews has said that German companies are looking more closely at Pakistan because of CPEC.

There are of course external and internal challenges to CPEC by countries including India that do not want Pakistan to strengthen its infrastructure and economy or those that have competitive interests in the region. There has been criticism by some countries that have been unwilling to provide any assistance or investment. Internally there is a constant foreign directed and funded campaign in parts of our media and more so in the social media to criticize both CPEC and its overarching One Belt One Road (OBOR) concept and projects elsewhere taking the lead from western critics and media. At the same time we must improve our own capacity for planning, negotiating and implementing CPEC.

Reaching an exportable surplus not just in textiles, goods and commodities, light engineering products but the objective should include services in construction and education institutions abroad and software technology as well which as mentioned earlier we need to make a priority in CPEC as well. Once we have more to export we need better alignment with the key countries and regional arrangements to improve our tariff lines access without which increased export capacity would not find an outlet, apart from digital based services such as software and call centers.

Hence while deepening ties with China continues, improving relations with the US in a manner consistent with our core national interests is also vital. For America at this time the road to better relations lies through Kabul. We should do all we can, again consistent with our core national objectives, to facilitate the objective of reconciliation in Afghanistan which finally now is also the US objective to allow them to withdraw completely or perhaps leaving a residual anti-terrorism force or airbase in Afghanistan. I believe that we are working towards this end as all indications show. Incidentally even if a residual US force or airbase in Afghanistan remains in an eventual agreement it would contribute to some extent to our relevance for the US.

Getting the Afghan Refugees and other Afghans ACCs to return remains an important objective

but we should recognize that for a sustainable solution to prevent further flows we will have to also invest in the development of South and South East Afghanistan along our borders.

We have never had a truly sustained strategic relationship with the US. It could be considered as such in the beginning phases but since then has been mostly tactical in nature and is not likely to go beyond that given the US' relationship with India and rivalry with the China. But a better relationship which improves our relevance to the US and by extension to its western allies in the EU and the Far East is in our interests. The EU has also emerged as an economic and security power increasingly being forced by US policy to carve out a role for itself. Closer relations with the EU is another priority, and to attract its investments. Better relations with the US would also have an effect on India which has been emboldened by the support of the US and other of its western allies.

With India we have to keep on projecting our sincere desire for better peaceful relations. It is also a plus for our image abroad. Before we always had a constituency for peace and better relations in India and while that changed we need to make efforts as with the Kartarpur corridor to rebuild that constituency. In time as our economy improves for that reason if no other India may consider better relations in its economic and then other interests.

In conclusion, to resist strategic coercion there is no magic bullet, there will be hard choices before us and we need to work simultaneously on a number of tracks. First of all to increase our relevance in the region and beyond. With the US particularly on Afghanistan in line with our core national interests. We cannot be expected to pull a rabbit out of a hat but we need to demonstrate we are doing the most we can. Secondly our national priority must be to make space in the the next five seven years and to use it well to internally consolidate, to educate, train and employ our youth and to grow our economy to ensure it provides us the additional strength and resilience that we need. That is in the medium term. Completing the task is a generational challenge which we need to embark upon now without delay.

<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/IN/DevelopmentsInKashmirJune2016ToApril2018.pdf>

This was a Presentation by Ambassador Tariq Osman Hyder on at the Pakistan House International Conference on "Instruments of Strategic Coercion: Theories and Implications", Islamabad.

CONFERENCE ON “Instruments of Strategic Coercion: Theories & Implications”

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

The harsh reality of power is as old as humanity, and the application of force, as a manifestation of power, is a common element in international relations” said General Ehsan Ul Haq (R) NI (M), former Chairman Joint Chief of Staff Committee who was speaking as the Chief Guest in an International Conference titled “Instruments of Strategic Coercion: Theories and Implications” organized by Pakistan House here at Serena hotel, Islamabad. He added that the art of state craft, diplomacy, and war have been deeply connected leading to politico-diplomatic strategies that could avoid conflicts and war while quoting San Tzu, an ancient Chinese strategist who said that “To fight and conquer in all our battles is not the supreme excellence; supreme excellence is breaking the enemy resistance without fighting” to explain the essence of strategic coercion. Describing the elements of strategic coercion, he said that first and foremost element of strategic coercion is offensive diplomacy which is done to isolate a nation strategically. This is characterized by specific demands, a time frame for making demands, and threats of consequences in case of non-cooperation. Apart from this an information onslaught is directed to influence the global audiences, and influential segments in the targeted society, in order to propagate the demands being made. He added that it is unfortunate that Pakistan who has been a victim of the situation in Afghanistan is being propagated as perpetrator. The second element of strategic coercion he highlighted was the use of economic sanctions against a targeted nation. In addition to previous elements, coercion is also seen through intelligence and subversive operations, and in our situation it relates to physically targeting CPEC who we describe as the game changer. He mentioned some key areas, which are of highly importance to policy makers: Understanding the emerging scenario; effective consultation and decision-making at the national level; economic self-sustenance, and proactive foreign policy. In his view nations are not coerced, but leadership and government functionaries are coerced,

therefore, it is necessary for them to draw strength from popular support.

In next Mr. Adrian Levy, Journalist specializing in Foreign Affairs and South East Asia, said that disinformation, misinformation, conspiracy, is obviously the first thing that comes to mind when we think of strategic coercion. The second instrument linked to the first, is a delivery mechanism- Twitter and WhatsApp- where polarized societies, vested interest group, nation states and opinionated play. Pakistan has been subject of strategic coercion that is politically and geopolitically charged but the blame for not hearing about Pakistan vital national interest- its achievements- must also

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GENERAL (R)
EHSAN UL HAQ**

lie with Pakistan. Telling its story better, finding advocates for it in the East and West, opening up to enable researchers, academics and journalists to understand the Pakistan narrative is essential. Also speaking at the Conference, Mr. Tariq Rauf, former Head of the Verification and Security Policy Coordination Office at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said that one definition of strategic coercion or coercive diplomacy is that of “getting the adversary to act a certain way via anything short of brute force; the adversary must still have the capacity of organized violence but choose not to exercise it”. He underlined a method to assess the success and failure of

strategic coercion; if the target state accepts the demands, without the use of force, then the threats made have been credible and successful. On the other hand, if the situation leads to military action or war, or if the coercing state withdraws or weakens its threats without its demands being met, or if the target state continuous with its behavior in defiance, then strategic coercion has not been successful. Moreover, he highlighted four variants of strategic coercion: first, try and see; second, classic ultimatum; third, tacit ultimatum; and last, increasing pressure.

Lt Gen Asif Yaseen Malik (R) HI (M), former Defence Secretary, said from his experience that the mantra of “doing more” was widely used by CIA and not by US Department of State during his tenure as Corps Commander Peshawar, and the reason for this was that they knew that Pakistan was doing enough. He added in aftermath of World War II, after defeating Germany and Japan, US started to police other states. This was seen in Libya, Iraq, and presently it is being observed in Syria. Libya had a strong welfare system, but now it is a stronghold of terrorist organization; on Iraq, it is being accepted by Mr. Trump himself that no matter how bad Saddam was, still he was managing Iraq better than it is being managed now. Concluding his speech, he said that Pakistan has been the longest target of strategic coercion in the present World. In turn, Ambassador Salman Bashir (R), former Foreign Secretary, opined that an academic discussion on strategic coercion is important to assess the situation that Pakistan is facing. He was of view that although Pakistan has an important role to play in stabilizing Afghanistan, yet it cannot pressurize Taliban. He added that the approach of US State Department on focusing entirely on national reconciliation without considering the economic factors must be changed. It is important to give all stakeholders, something for livelihood. That is the first thing which must be done for peaceful settlement in Afghanistan. Dr Shabana Fayyaz, Assistant Professor at Department of Strategic Studies, Quaid-i-Azam University, discussed the theoretical aspects of strategic coercion. She suggested

some models to counter strategic coercion, “Counter-Coercion Diplomacy Model” (CCDM). The essence of this model is to avoid war and make peace through engagement with the coercer; and SWOT- Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threat assessment. In order to deal with strategic coercion it is of highly importance to diversify the support base bilaterally, regionally, and globally. For this purpose the role of leadership is critical.

Ambassador Tariq Osman Hyder (Retd), Distinguished Visiting Fellow, NDU, opined that the instruments of strategic coercion that have been deployed by US are well known. The various attempts towards strategic coercion deployed by India are also important to discuss. India’s pressure is most directly exercised along the LOC through frequent flare-ups and ceases fire violations. While continuing with its 1947 onwards strategy to distract Pakistan on the Western front India has changed its earlier policy of inciting Afghanistan’s irredentist claims to a direct action policy of trying to destabilize Pakistan in Baluchistan through terrorist and insurgent action. It continues its policy to try to malign Pakistan’s image globally. The situation is clear. It is not enough to be a Greek chorus to decry the unfairness and unjustness of it all. The real question before us is what should be our response strategy? We have to analyze what are our own internal constraints which make us more vulnerable to external pressure. We need space and time to respond and to consolidate internally.

CPEC is slowly changing the economic landscape and we need to hasten this process. Hence while deepening ties with China continues as the main priority, improving

relations with the US in a manner consistent with our core national interests is also vital. For America at this time the road to better relations lies through Kabul. We should do all we can consistent with our core national objectives, to facilitate the objective of reconciliation in Afghanistan, which finally now is also the US objective, to allow them to withdraw. We have never had a truly strategic relationship with the US as it has been tactical and is not likely to go beyond that now given the China and India factors. But a better relationship which improves our relevance to the US and by extension to its western allies in the EU and the Far East is in our interests. The EU has also emerged as an economic and security power increasingly being forced by US policy to carve out a more independent role for itself. Closer relations with the EU is another priority, and to attract its investments. Better relations with the US would also have an effect on India which has been emboldened by the support of the US and other of its western allies. Russia has moved somewhat closer to Pakistan than before, reminiscent to its reach out after the Tashkent Agreement that it brokered. However the depth of its historical and current political and defence relationship with India remains. Here is one aspect in which it is in our interests ‘to do more’ to get closer to Russia.

He concluded that to resist strategic coercion there is no magic bullet and there will be hard choices and we need to work simultaneously on a number of tracks. First of all to increase our relevance in the region and beyond. Secondly our national priority must be to make space in the next five seven years to internally consolidate, to educate, train and employ our

youth and to grow our economy to ensure it provides us the additional strength and resilience that we need. That is in the medium term. Completing the task is a generational challenge which we need to embark upon now. Amb Zamir Akram (R) said that sanctions are key tool of coercive diplomacy which may be economic, trade, and military sanctions. Out of bilateral and multilateral sanctions, multilateral sanctions are more effective. Pakistan has been targeted with sanctions many times in its history under coercive diplomacy such as Symington, Glenn, Solarz, Pressler Amendment sanctions and cancellation of reprocessing plant from France. Dr Ashfaq Hassan Khan, Principle & Dean School of Social Sciences & Humanities, NUST, also shared his views in the conference. He was of opinion that inter-state war is on the decline. The concept of hybrid warfare has gained traction since 2005. Hybrid warfare is now being utilized to achieve political objectives that are not possible through direct military conflict. He added that all the elements of hybrid warfare have been unleashed on Pakistan with differing intensity for the last one decade and it is the responsibility of policy makers to counter the hybrid threat.

Rana Athar Javed, Director General Pakistan House summed up that the theme under discussion is very important not only for Pakistan, but for international powers as well. The discussions highlighted that Pakistan despite being a target of strategic coercion has remained resilient in the face of all international pressure. It has remained neutral in Middle Eastern Conflicts, and is also playing a vital role towards the stability of Afghanistan which further enhances its relevance.



Islamabad: (Left to Right) Mr Adrian Levy, Journalist Specializing in Foreign Affairs and South East Asia; Mr Rana Athar Javed; Director General Pakistan House; General Ehsan ul Haq (Retd), NI (M), former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee; and Mr Tariq Rauf, former Head of Verification and Security Policy Coordination Office at the IAEA addressing a Conference on “Instruments of Strategic Coercion: Theories and Implications” organized by Pakistan House.

New Envoy of Japan



H.E. Kuninori Matsuda

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Pakistan

ASSALAM-O-ALAIKUM!

This is my first time to be assigned to Pakistan in my 37-year career in Foreign Service. Nevertheless, through many opportunities of meeting friends from Pakistan in my career, I have been keenly interested in and had a great respect for Pakistan. I am determined to further enhance Japan-Pakistan relationship, which is already very close and has a long history.

Japan and Pakistan have strengthened ties of friendship since we established diplomatic relations in 1952. To this day, we have deepened our relationship in political, economic, cultural, educational, and other areas. As our relations have still plenty of room to expand, both countries are willing to develop our full potential in many areas. In this regard, I am committed to exploring

every possible avenue.

With Pakistan's more than 200 million people, we are expecting great development in our business relations. Our embassy is happy to offer its increased support to the Japanese business community engaging with Pakistan, as well as Pakistani businesses which are interested in economic relationship with Japan. We would also like to promote cultural exchanges, especially exchanges of the youth, the foundations of our future friendship.

As Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, I reaffirm my commitment to further strengthen our bilateral relations and look forward to meeting wonderful friends of Pakistan.

Pakistan-Japan friendship Zindabad!



Pakistan Korea Cooperation Project Korea handed over the conservation equipment to Pakistan



By M.Saeed Yousafzai

Pakistan and South Korea have warm cultural relations which deep rooted in the history. Especially, common heritage of Buddhism is of particular importance for further cementing cultural and religious ties between the two countries. The Republic of Korea and its Embassy in Pakistan are committed to increase relations with Pakistan for preservation of cultural heritage and to promote tourism in Pakistan. As part of cooperative efforts, the Korean government has provided the conservation equipment for treating and preserving the Pakistan's movable heritage, especially specimens of the Buddhist art uncovered from the archaeological remains of Buddhist sanctuaries in the ancient Gandhara region to DOAM.

The equipment included environmental control system for museum, devices for cleaning and conservation of antiquities including

conservation consumables, stereo-microscope, ultrasonic cleaner etc. at the amount of US\$ 50,000. The equipment will surely be instrumental in promoting the country's capacity to conserve its cultural heritage to the international level. The project has been administrated jointly by the Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) of the Republic of Korea, Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation (KCHF) and the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan with the common aim. H.E. Mr. Kwak Sung-kyu, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Engr. Mr. Aamir Hasan, Secretary of the National History & Literacy Division, Syed Junaid Akhlaq, Director General, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Islamabad and other officials from both sides participated in the handing-over ceremony that took place at the Islamabad Museum on February 15th, 2019.

On this occasion, Ambassador Kwak Sung-kyu

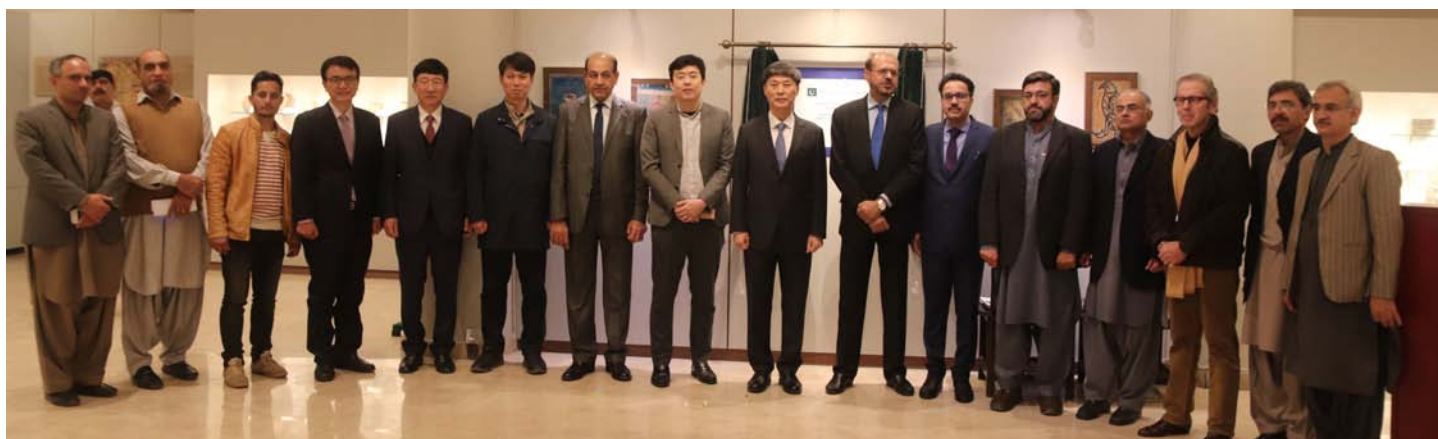


re-emphasized the importance of promoting cultural ties between the two friendly countries and reviewed the co-projects that were completed in the last two years such as;

- Gandhara Art Exhibition titled 'Alexander the Great Meets the Buddha' (Seoul, June to September 2017)
- Seminar titled 'Hyecho in Gandhara: Footsteps of a Korean Monk in Pakistan

in the 8th Century' (Islamabad, October 2018) He also announced new initiatives to this end in this year. Among them, he is emphatically working to arrange a pilot Korean Buddhists pilgrim tour to the Buddhist sacred places in Gandhara, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan by March or April this year. This will be followed by a couple of projects such as;

- one more project for capacity-building of treating historical artifacts, and
- program of inviting the historical and archaeological officials and academia, preferably from the museums having collection of the Buddhists Art of Gandhara, to Korea soon.





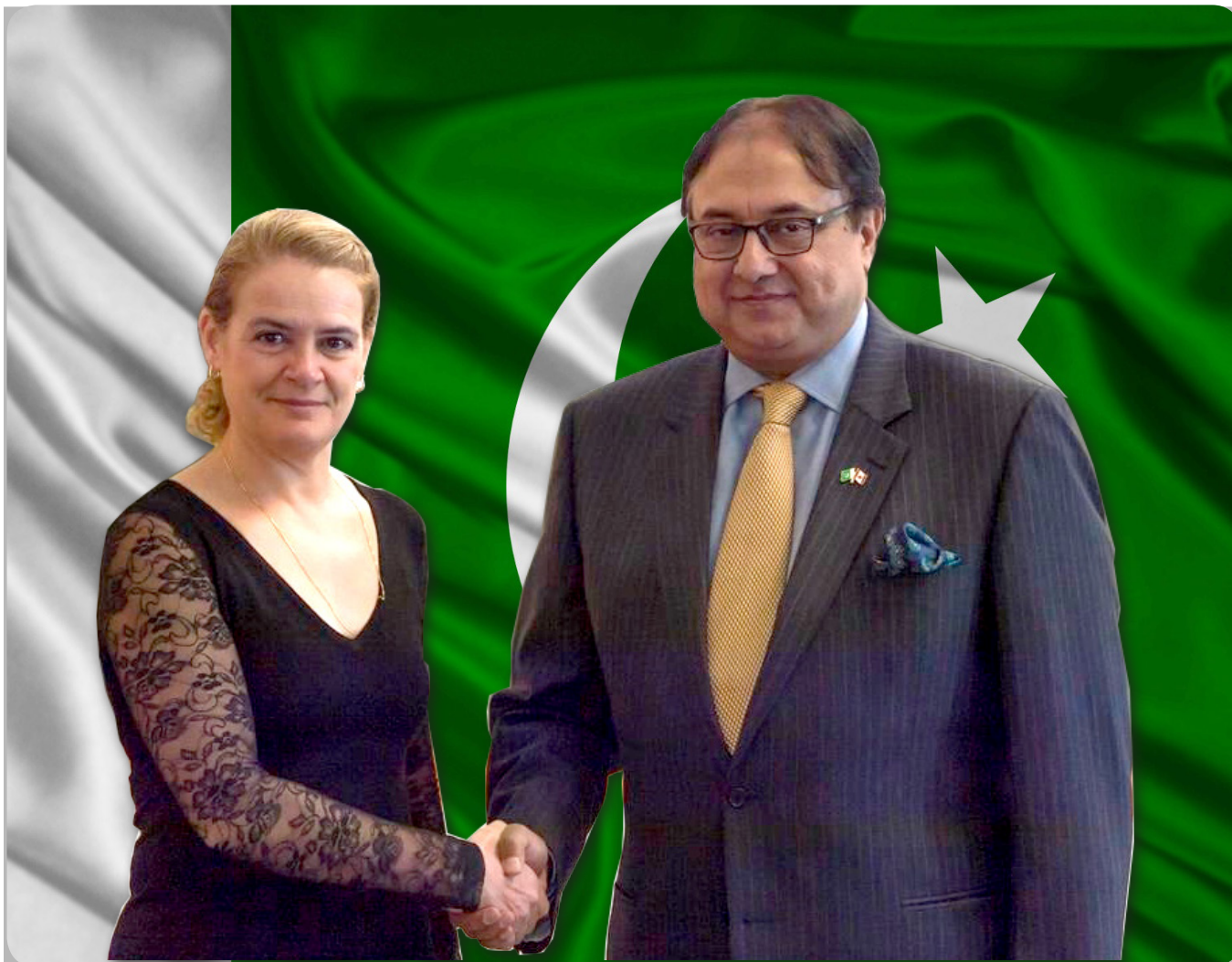
Mian Fazal Elahi expressed his profound **condolences** on the sad and sudden demise of the father of PIO Mian Jehangir Iqbal

Mr. Mian Fazal Elahi Editor, CEO & Publisher of "Diplomatic Focus" and Entire Team condoles the sad demise of Mian Muhammad Iqbal, father of Mian Jehangir Iqbal, Principal Information Officer, Govt of Pakistan.

Mr. Elahi expressed his profound condolences on the sad and sudden demise of the father of PIO Mian Jehangir Iqbal and prayed that Almighty Allah may rest the departed soul in eternal peace and give courage and patience to the bereaved family to bear the loss.

A condolence reference also held for the departed soul of Mian Muhammad Iqbal, father of Mian Jehangir Iqbal, Principal Information Officer at Press Information Department (PID), Islamabad.





Pakistani Envoy Raza Bashir Tarar

Presents Credential to Canadian Governor General

By Mian Fazal Elahi

H.E. Raza Bashir Tarar has assumed the responsibilities of new High Commissioner of Pakistan to Canada. Pakistan's new High commissioner to Canada, H.E. Raza Bashir Tarar, presented his credentials to Governor General of Canada, Julie Payette at a ceremony held at Quebec, Canada. While presenting the credentials, the High Commissioner expressed his determination to work hard towards fostering strong bilateral ties between Pakistan and Canada.

He also highlighted the need to enhance people to people contact and trade and investment links between the two countries. The High Commissioner conveyed the greetings of Pakistan's leadership to the Governor General Payette, who reciprocated with similar positive sentiments for the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan. H.E. Raza Bashir Tarar joined Foreign Service of Pakistan in 1987. He has held various diplomatic assignments in Pakistan Missions abroad: Manila (1991-1994), Brussels (1999-2002),

Tokyo (2003-2004) and New York (UN) (2008-2013). He has also served as High Commissioner of Pakistan to Kenya from August 2015 to February 2019. While in New York, he served as Pakistan Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Deputy Representative to the UN Security Council. He held different assignments in Islamabad. As Director General (Disarmament) from 2013 to 2015, he led Pakistan's delegations to various international conferences as well as bilateral disarmament dialogues.



The Embassy of the State of Qatar in Islamabad celebrates Qatar's National Sports Day

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

The Embassy of the State of Qatar in Islamabad celebrated the Qatar's National Sports Day in Islamabad.

H.E. Mr. Saqr Bin Mubarak Al Mansouri, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to Pakistan, along with all diplomats and embassy staff participated in the sports activities held at the

embassy.

Sports day activities included running and walking, then participants moved to sports ground where they played football and tennis.

Qatar's National Sports day is held annually on the second Tuesday of February, with the main objective of promoting awareness about sports, and it was adopted as a public holiday

by Amiri Decree.

His Highness the Amir of the State of Qatar, his family and Senior Qatari officials take part in the sports day activities away from the official protocols. The events vary with the participation of government and non-governmental organizations and different sports clubs.



Day of motherland and defenders of Uzbekistan celebrated

Embassy of the Uzbekistan hosted a reception to celebrate Day of motherland and defenders of Uzbekistan in Islamabad. The event was well attended with military attachés and diplomats from other countries, as well as Pakistani military colleagues and members of civil society.



Sri Lanka national day celebrated

Sri Lankan national day was celebrated at Serena hotel to mark the country's 71st anniversary of the Independence in Islamabad. The event was hosted by the high commissioner of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka Noordeen Mohamed Shaheed. Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Sahibzada Mehboob Sultan participated as the Chief Guest while Former Secretary Ministry of Foreign Affairs Jalil Abbas Jailani and Brig (R) Mohammad Bashir wali were the guests of honour. A great number of participants including ambassadors, diplomats, politicians, government official, businessmen and civilians have attended the event.



Photos by Ramzan Mughal

Sarangi musical evening organized by Serena hotel, Islamabad

Serena Hotels hosted a wonderful evening of musical melodies at the Nazara Hall as part of the Serena Sarangi Music Initiative. An annual online competition over the past two years has given young performers and amateur

bands from across the country a platform to share their talent. IFRA the Band from Faisalabad and Ans Rehmani from Rahim Yar Khan were the winners of Serena Sarangi Star Season 01 and 02 respectively. They sang Urdu melodies

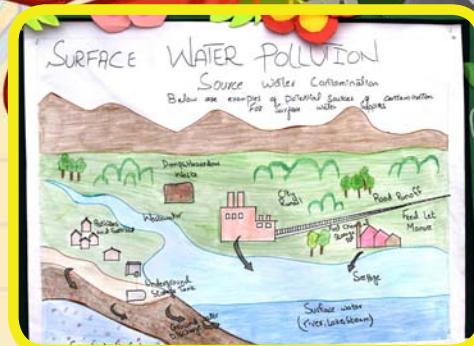
grasping the audience with their soulful performances. The evening was well attended by the music lovers, corporate and diplomatic community and other prominent personalities.



Russian Armed Forces Day Celebrated

Russian Ambassador H.E. Alex Dedov and the defence attaché hosted a Russian Armed Forces Day reception in Islamabad. The event was well attended with military attachés and diplomats from other countries, as well as Pakistani military colleagues and members of civil society.





“Go Green”

School poster competition to raise awareness of climate change

By M.Saeed Yousafzai

The High Commission of Canada in Islamabad organised a poster contest for schoolchildren in the federal capital to raise awareness about climate change and promote the benefits of a natural and healthy environment. The top winners were Syeda Amna, Aleena Tariq, Neha Riaz, Taha Khurshid and Saira Salamat.

The students designed posters to highlight the importance of preserving and protecting a healthy environment. The prize distribution ceremony was held at SLS Montessori and School, where the top five winning posters were displayed and the students given prizes and certificates. All other participants and participating schools received certificates.

Paul M Gareau, counsellor at the High Commission of Canada, praised the schoolchildren's artwork. "I am delighted to see young Pakistanis helping spread the message of need to protect the environment," Paul said.

High Commissioner of Canada Wendy Gilmour extended her congratulations to all the students who participated in the competition. She highlighted the Canadian government's commitment to addressing the environmental challenges faced by the global community. Pollution, including plastic pollution, is a global challenge which needs a collective response, she said. "Canada has recognized this challenge and is working to protect the environment and promote clean growth, both in Canada and abroad," she continued. "We are pleased to work with Pakistan on our shared responsibility to safeguard the environment for generations to come," she concluded.

Conference on

“Enduring Friendship *BETWEEN* Sri Lanka and Pakistan”

Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad in collaboration with High Commission of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Islamabad organized a Conference “Enduring Friendship between Sri Lanka and Pakistan”. The Chief Guest of the occasion was Mr. Sahibzada Muhammad Mehboob Sultan, Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research, Ministry for National Food Security & Research. He stated that the people and the government of Pakistan stand with the government and people of Sri Lanka in their march towards a bright future, a future of progress and prosperity. Ms. Saroja Sirisena, Director

General of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka shared her views on Witnessing the Relationship between Pakistan and Sri-Lanka. Both countries stood fast in the need of hour such as at the time of tsunami, when Sri Lanka was suffering from famine, Pakistan always supported Sri Lanka in hard times. She vowed to further strengthen the relations between both the brotherly nations. The Conference was followed by performance of Srilankan Army Cultural Troupe as Sri Lanka’s classical dance. Lieutenant General Muhammad Zahir Ul Islam HI(M), (Retd) – Chairman

CGSS who stated that the formation of new alliances in the region to maximize power of states provides new opportunities for Pakistan and Sri Lanka to join hands and integrate with the world as leading economies. H.E. Noordeen Mohamed Shaheid - High Commissioner of Sri Lanka stated both countries forged strong relations in defence, health, trade and economy and further look forward to enhance our relations with Pakistan in various sectors. Pakistan is the currently second biggest trading partner of Sri Lanka in the region.



Photos by Sheikh Arif

Austrian envoy hosts art exhibition

The Austrian ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Nicolaus Keller and his spouse Mrs. Ursula Keller arranged Oil paintings Exhibition of Wendy Billingslea at the Austrian residence in Islamabad. The event was attended by a great number of ambassadors, UN staff, and members of the public.



Iran's 40th anniversary of revolution celebrated

Iranian Ambassador H.E. Mehdi Honardoost hosted a glittering reception to celebrate 40th anniversary of Iran's Islamic revolution. Federal Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination Fahmida Mirza was the chief guest at the reception. A group of Iranian children attired in Pakistani dress sang national anthems of Pakistan and Iran. A large number of guests graced the celebration. They included political figures, ambassadors, diplomats and prominent people from various segments of the society.



Photos by Ramzan Mughal

Arab league hosted farewell reception in honour of outgoing Envoy of Libya

Envoys of Arab league in Pakistan hosted a farewell reception in honour of the outgoing Ambassador of Libya Nizar. A. Nabyah. Envoys of the members countries of Arab League highlighted the services and contributions of the outgoing envoy and paid them rich tributes.



Australia Day in Spring 2019 Marked

Australian High Commissioner Margaret Adamson marked Australia Day in spring 2019 with a reception featuring truck art at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. Chief Guest of the event was Ms. Zartaj Gul Minister of State for Climate Change. A great number of participants including ambassadors, diplomats, politicians, government official, businessmen and civilians have attended the event.



Photos by Ramzan Mughal

‘Friends of Silk Road’ launched

China valued its friendship with Pakistan and would continue to explore cooperation in various fields including energy, infrastructure, industry, agriculture and others. This was said by the visiting dignitary Vice Chairman of Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) Gao Yunlong at the launching ceremony of “Friends of Silk Road” in Islamabad. An initiative of Pakistan-China Institute, “Friends of Silk Road” is a platform that serves to bring together different segments of society from the two countries. Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Reform Makhdom Khusro Bakhtyar, Ambassador of China, Yao Jing, Chairman of Pak-China Institute Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed and Leader of House in the Senate Shibli Faraz were also present on the occasion.



Farewell reception in honour of outgoing Envoys of Libya & South Africa

Dean of Diplomatic corps and Ambassador of Turkmenistan H.E. Atadjan Movlamov hosted a farewell reception in honour of the outgoing High Commissioner of South Africa Mpendulo Jele and Ambassador of Libya Nizar.A.Nabiyah. H.E. Atadjan Movlamov, highlighted the services and contributions of the outgoing envoys and paid them rich tributes. A large number of Ambassadors from the Diplomat Corps were present to bid farewell to their colleague.



Photos by Ramzan Mughal

Former envoy of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ambassador Ali bin Saeed Awwad Asiri visited to Prof. Muzaffar Lateef Gill at his residence in Islamabad.

H.E. Ali Saeed Asiri is a very senior and seasoned Saudi diplomat. He served in Pakistan for twice. In his earlier tenure he spent 9 years in Islamabad before moving to Beirut on a diplomatic assignment in 2009. He was second longest serving Saudi Ambassador in Pakistan after Riyaz -el-Khateeb who remained ambassador of the Kingdom for 14 years in Pakistan. For second tenure H.E. Ali Saeed Asiri served in Pakistan from 2014. Mr. Ali Saeed Asiri created his impact on Pakistan during his tenures, he is known for his affection for Pakistan.



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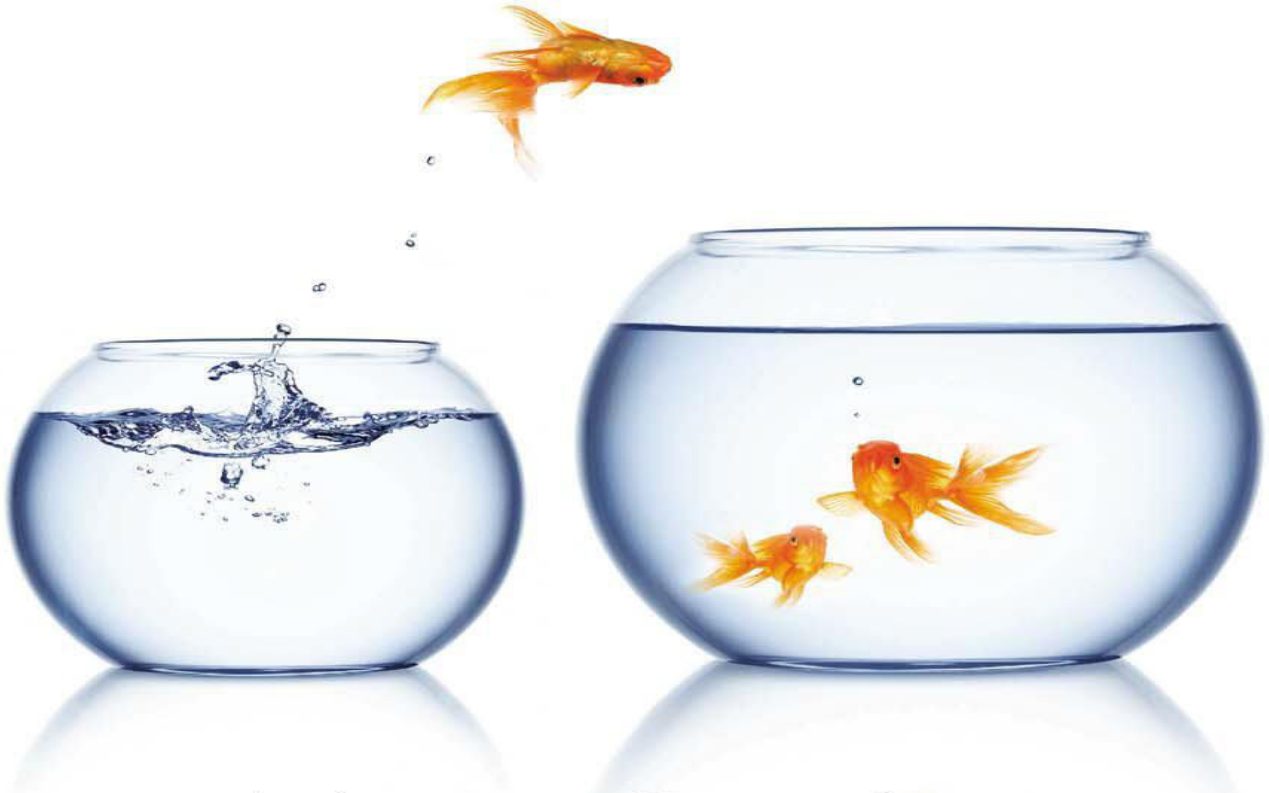


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