Monthly Magazine on National & International Political Affairs, Diplomatic Issues | January 2020 | Volume 11 | Issue 01
Promoting Bilateral Relations | Current Affairs | Trade & Economic Affairs | Education | Technology | Culture & Tourism
ABC Certified

DIPLOMATIC FOCUS

"Publishing from Pakistan, United Kingdom/EU & will be soon from UAE , Central Africa, Central Asia & Asia Pacific"
A Largest, Widely Circulated Diplomatic Magazine | www.diplomaticfocus.org | www.diplomaticfocus-uk.com |
Member APNS
Central Media List
Member Diplomatic Council
/diplomaticfocusofficial /dip_focus

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2020

Austria-Pakistan's Bilateral Trade Relations on an Upswing

H.E. Mr. Nicolaus Keller, Ambassador of Austria to Pakistan

HBL HABIB BANK حبیب بینک

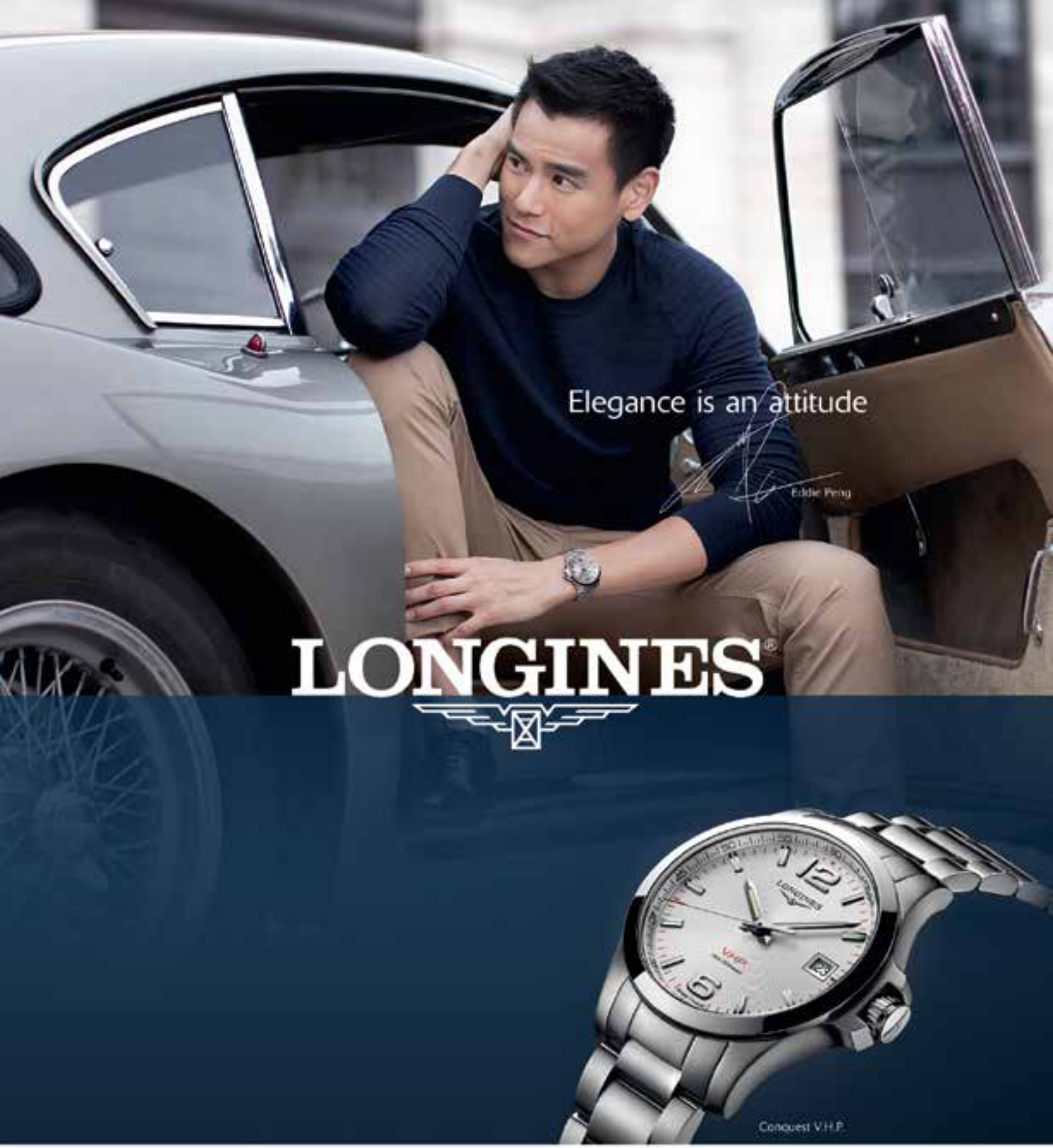
Jahan Khwab, Wahan HBL

No paperwork, no branch visits.
Your credit card is 4 taps away!

HBL CreditCard
The Most Rewarding Experience

111-111-425 | www.hbl.com | HBL Mobile | hblbank | HBLPak | hblpak | HBL

This offer is exclusively available for select customers only. Terms & conditions apply.



KAHF INTERNATIONAL

Official Sale & Service Centres:

KARACHI:	Dolmen Mall, Clifton:	**Tel 021-35293667-68**
	Mansoor Tower, Clifton:	**Tel 021-35820644, 35820707**
	Saddar:	**Tel 021-35655081-84**
ISLAMABAD:	Beverly Centre, Jinnah Avenue:	**Tel 051-2824751, 2824901**
LAHORE:	Shop 2067, Packages Mall: Walton Road:	**Tel 042-38914244**

www.kahfintl.com Email: **kahf@kahfintl.com**

UNIWORTH BLACK

Couture Studio

SINCE 1971

Customized Stitching

Book An Appointment

+92 42 111 789 456

or whatsapp at

+92 345 4037778

UNIWORTH BLACK

Worth Wearing!

www.uniworthblack.com

CARTE POST

EST 1979

WORLD CLASS

SUITING

WORL

CLAS

LONG JACKETS

LADIES

CAMEL WOOL

&

CASHMERE WOOL

MADE IN ENGLAND

AVAILABLE AT OUR OUTLET

ELEGANCE AWAITS FOR YOU

WWW.WORLDCLASSSUITING.COM

SHOP 27,37 GROUND FLOOR BEVERLY CENTER BLUE AREA ISLAMABAD

January 2020 | Volume 11 | Issue 01

DIPLOMATIC FOCUS

"Publishing from Pakistan, United Kingdom/EU & will be soon from UAE"

09

10

14

24

64

09	**H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi President Islamic Republic of Pakistan addressed on the occasion of Christmas Celebrationdifference**	I extend my heartiest greetings to all our Christian brethren on the occasion of Christmas. Much more than festivity and celebration, the spirit of Christmas is to share, to reach out, and to love all humanity. Jesus Christ brought and preached the message of peace, brotherhood and love for the whole humanity. He guided people towards virtuous living and urged them to seek divine mercy.
10	**Nation celebrates Quaid's 143rd birthday**	The 143rd birthday of the nation's founder Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah is being observed with traditional zeal and enthusiasm across the country. The day started with a change of guards ceremony at Jinnah's mausoleum in Karachi. The national flag was been hoisted at all government and private buildings and special events have been planned for the day in order to shine a light on Jinnah's life and legacy.
14	**Justice Gulzar Ahmed takes oath as 27th Chief Justice of Pakistan**	Justice Gulzar Ahmed on Saturday took the oath as Chief Justice of Pakistan. In a ceremony held at Aiwan-i-Sadr in Islamabad, President Dr Arif Alvi administered the oath to Justice Ahmed. Prime Minister Imran Khan, Chief of Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi, National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser, Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani
24	**Prime Minister Imran Khan visited the Kingdom of Bahrain on the invitation of King Hammad Bin Isa Al Khalifa**	At the invitation of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, His Excellency Mr. Imran Khan, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, paid an official visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain on 16 December 2019. The Prime Minister was accompanied by a high-level delegation. His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa received H.E. the Prime Minister of Pakistan at Sakhir Palace and conferred on the Prime Minister the
64	**Austria-Pakistan's Bilateral Trade Relations on an Upswing H.E. Mr. Nicolaus Keller Ambassador of Austria to Pakistan**	The Diplomatic Focus has found the opportunity to talk to His Excellency and learn about his early life, education career, experiences and most importantly his role in bringing Austria and Pakistan closer in terms of trade, diplomatic, education and cultural ties. Your Excellency! Being appointed as an ambassador in Pakistan. How do you find conduct of people

Contents

09 H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi President Islamic Republic of Pakistan addressed on the occasion of Christmas Celebration
10 Nation celebrates Quaid's 143rd birthday
12 Benazir Bhutto A Triumph for Women
14 Justice Gulzar Ahmed takes oath as 27th Chief Justice of Pakistan
16 Maiden visit of the Foreign Minister of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud to Pakistan
17 Prime Minister Imran Khan visit to Saudi Arabia
18 His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi visited Pakistan
19 President Dr. Arif Alvi appreciated UAE's efforts for promoting regional peace and stability
20 H.E. Mr. Muhammad Aejaz Ambassador designated of Pakistan to Hungary calls on President Dr. Arif Alvi
21 High Commissioner designated of Pakistan to Bangladesh calls on President Dr. Arif Alvi
22 Pakistan values its time-tested and all weather friendship with Saudi Arabia
24 Prime Minister Imran Khan visited the Kingdom of Bahrain on the invitation of King Hammad Bin Isa Al Khalifa
26 Prime Minister Imran Khan's keynote address at the First Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in Geneva
29 Pakistan will continue to sincerely play the role of facilitator in the Afghan peace process: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi
30 Speech by the Hon Tun Dr Mahathir Bin Mohamad Prime Minister of Malaysia and Chairman of Kl Summit
33 Suffering of Muslims can be stopped with cooperation, proper leadership 31Amir participates in Kuala Lumpur Summit 2019
35 Rethink in Islamabad over moot in Malaysia to pacify Saudis
36 High Commissioner designated of Pakistan to Sri Lanka calls on President Dr. Arif Alvi
37 Libya's GNA accepts Turkish offer of military support
38 Peace, Partnership and Prosperity themed of 8th Ministerial Conference of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process
40 Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens
42 Chinese President Xi Jinping's 2020 New Year speech
44 Looking forward to a New Chapter of, China-Pakistan Friendship, Yao jing, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan
45 CPEC moves successfully as year 2019 ends
46 China gifts old embassy building to Pakistan
47 Technology transfer, CPEC and agro industry
48 Can Chinese aid go green?
49 Pakistan and Germany have friendly bilateral relations
50 International Conference on "Cross-Regional Media Fusion among the Belt and Road Partners"
52 Prime Minister of Pakistan H.E. Imran Khan holds telephonic conversation with Prime Minister of Canada H.E. Justin Trudeau
53 Pakistan and Turkey are embracing strong relations with every passing day
54 Boris Johnson's Conservative Party wins majority in UK election
56 Austria-Pakistan's Bilateral Trade Relations on an Upswing
60 Graduation Ceremony 27th Junior Diplomatic Course at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
61 Door to Japan Opens for Pakistani Youth
62 Citizenship Amendment Bill: India's new 'anti-Muslim' law
64 Indian occupied Kashmir remains under siege
66 QATAR NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATED IN ISLAMABAD
68 Mr. Nizar Ahmed Nabih, Chargé d'Affaires of the State of Libya, hosted the meeting of the ambassadors of the African Group accredited in Pakistan
69 The Speaker NA Asad Qaiser credited Pakistan and Sri Lankan Cricket Board & players of both team to bring test Cricket back to Pakistan
70 56th Anniversary of Independence Day of Republic of Kenya
72 INDEPENDENCE DAY OF KAZAKHSTAN
74 Anniversary of His Majesty the King's Accession to the Throne and the National Day of the Kingdom of Bahrain
76 The National Day of the Kingdom of Thailand and Thailand's Father's Day Celebrated in Islamabad
78 Mountain Film Festival "Nuovimondi"
79 Palestine celebrated 31st Independence Day
80 Tribute to National Leaders
81 Telenor, Serena Hotels collaborate
82 Mahathir Mohamad Prime Minister of Malaysia gifted a Proton car to PM Imran Khan

RBI Mediaminds
Group of Publications
Electronic & Print Media Production House

Group Chairman/CEO: Mian Fazal Elahi
Chief Editor Hon: Mian Akhtar Hussain
Editor/Publisher: Mian Fazal Elahi
Managing Director: Shahzada Khurram
Executive Editor: Muhammad Bilal Zafar
Sub Editor: M Bilal Zafar
Director Marketing: Mian Furqan Akhtar
Editor in Chief UK/EU Edition: Mian Assadullah
Justin Plaza 3, 341London Road, Mit cham, Surrey-CR4 4BE
Editor Germany, EU Edition: Mian Mubeen Akhtar
Office Manager: Rana Bilal Ahmed
Creative Art Director: M.Shahbaz Nawaz, RN Scanner
Art Director: Sharyar Fazil
Designer: Malik waqar
Web Developer: Subhan Khalid
Chief Photographer: Ramzan Mughal

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

Board of Advisors

General (R) Talat Masood, Ambassador (R) Tassaduq Hussain, Ambassador (R) Arif Mehmmod, Mr. Kanwar Muhammad Tariq, Ambassador(R), Mr. Tariq Hyder, Ambassador(R) Fozia Nasreen, Ambassador(R) Javed Hassan, Maria Sultan, Kanwar Muhammad Dilshad (EX-Federal Secretary)Chaudhry Faisal Mushtaq (Thagma-e-Imtiaz), Dr. Mirza ikhtiar Baig (Thagma-e-Imtiaz), Shoukat Paracha, Malik Yousaf Ali, Ex-Ambassador, Mian Anwar-Ul-Haq Ramay, Ex-Parliamentarian, Ilyas Ahmed Chaudhry, CR Shamsi, Fozia Shahid, Mateen Haider, Captian (R) Wasif, Mian Mahmood Hon: Council General Republic of Moldova

Bureau Office

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

Printer

Roohani Art Press, Street no. 1, Service Road Muhammadi Town, Sohan near Express High Way, Islamabad.

Publisher

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

Karachi Office: Mobile: +92-331-5155515

Price

Pakistan	Rs.1000	Middle East	50 Saudi Riyal
UK	£ 8	Schengen State	€10
Chinese Yuan:	75	Canada:	$15
USA:	$12		

Published from Islamabad

Our previous Issues

December 2019

November 2019

October 2019

September 2019

CPEC is a massive project of the Belt and Road Initiative that covers China's Xinjiang region and the whole territory of Pakistan including Islamabad, parts of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Sindh, Azad Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan.

The key areas of development and cooperation include transport, industries, network infrastructure, energy, agriculture, poverty eradication, tourism and financial collaborations.

2020 will be an indispensible year for CPEC's growth. Work on 17 out of 27 priority projects shall commence before 2020 on a fast track. The rest of the priority projects in the social and economic development component of CPEC are also in the pipeline. The joint cooperation committee agreed to proceed with the project development in a steady manner.

The first phase of CPEC, which is almost over, has focused on the development of energy and infrastructure sectors. Significant work has been done in this regard and power plants in Punjab, Karachi and Balochistan are already functional.

CPEC is soon going to enter the second phase of development, which is more focused on industrialization and socioeconomic growth. Each passing year in the diary of CPEC is challenging but also more rewarding at the same time. Upon the completion of the second phase, both countries will be socially and economically viable. The people of both nations are also hopeful about the ongoing project.

An evaluation of the planning process and the first phase of the CPEC's implementation clearly reveals that this development initiative will function as a game changer for the economies of Pakistan and China.

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

Annual Subscription of
Diplomatic Focus Rs. 9840/ Year (Including Courier Charges)
For Further detail Email: diplomaticfocus.isb.pk@gmail.com

RBI Mediaminds
Group of Publications
Electronic & Print Media Production House

- Publications
- Documentaries
- Films
- Events Managements
- Events Shots
- Advertising
- Telefilms
- Cultural Affairs
- Dramas
- Modeling

DIPLOMATIC FOCUS
daily 12 o'clock NEWS
DAILY PAKISTAN JOURNAL International

H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi President Islamic Republic of Pakistan addressed on the occasion of Christmas Celebration

I extend my heartiest greetings to all our Christian brethren on the occasion of Christmas. Much more than festivity and celebration, the spirit of Christmas is to share, to reach out, and to love all humanity. Jesus Christ brought and preached the message of peace, brotherhood and love for the whole humanity. He guided people towards virtuous living and urged them to seek divine mercy. As a Divine Messenger, Jesus Christ is venerable to adherents of all religions. Efforts of our Christian Community for the socio-economic development of the motherland are commendable. I also take this opportunity to pay the highest tribute to the sacrifices made by our Christian brethren in Pakistan's fight against terrorism. The Government of Pakistan holds sacrosanct the equality and freedom of conscience of all citizens irrespective of belief, creed or religion. Our commitment to this fundamental principle is firmly grounded in the teachings of Islam, the vision of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the inviolable guarantees of our Constitution. We are committed to building a society that respects difference and finds strength in diversity; a nation that is tolerant and cohesive; and a state that provides equal rights and opportunities to all citizens. We are proud of our Christian brethren; and together we are building a strong and prosperous Pakistan for our children.

Nation celebrates Quaid's 143rd birthday

Staff Reportor

The 143rd birthday of the nation's founder Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah is being observed with traditional zeal and enthusiasm across the country.

The day started with a change of guards ceremony at Jinnah's mausoleum in Karachi. The national flag was been hoisted at all government and private buildings and special events have been planned for the day in order to shine a light on Jinnah's life and legacy.

Chief of Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and Governor Imran Ismail also visited Jinnah's mausoleum on the occasion.

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

DG ISPR
@OfficialDGISPR

COAS paid homage to Quaid e Azam at his Mausoleum on his birthday.
"Quaid's vision about creation of Pakistan based on Two Nation theory is an even more acknowledged reality today. We can't thank him enough for having got us Pakistan", COAS. (1/2).

"With faith, discipline and selfless devotion to duty, there is nothing worthwhile that you cannot achieve."
Muhammad Ali Jinnah

Benazir Bhutto
A Triumph for Women

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Benazir Bhutto (1953-2007) was the first democratically elected female leader of a Muslim country during a tumultuous life that ended with her assassination.

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

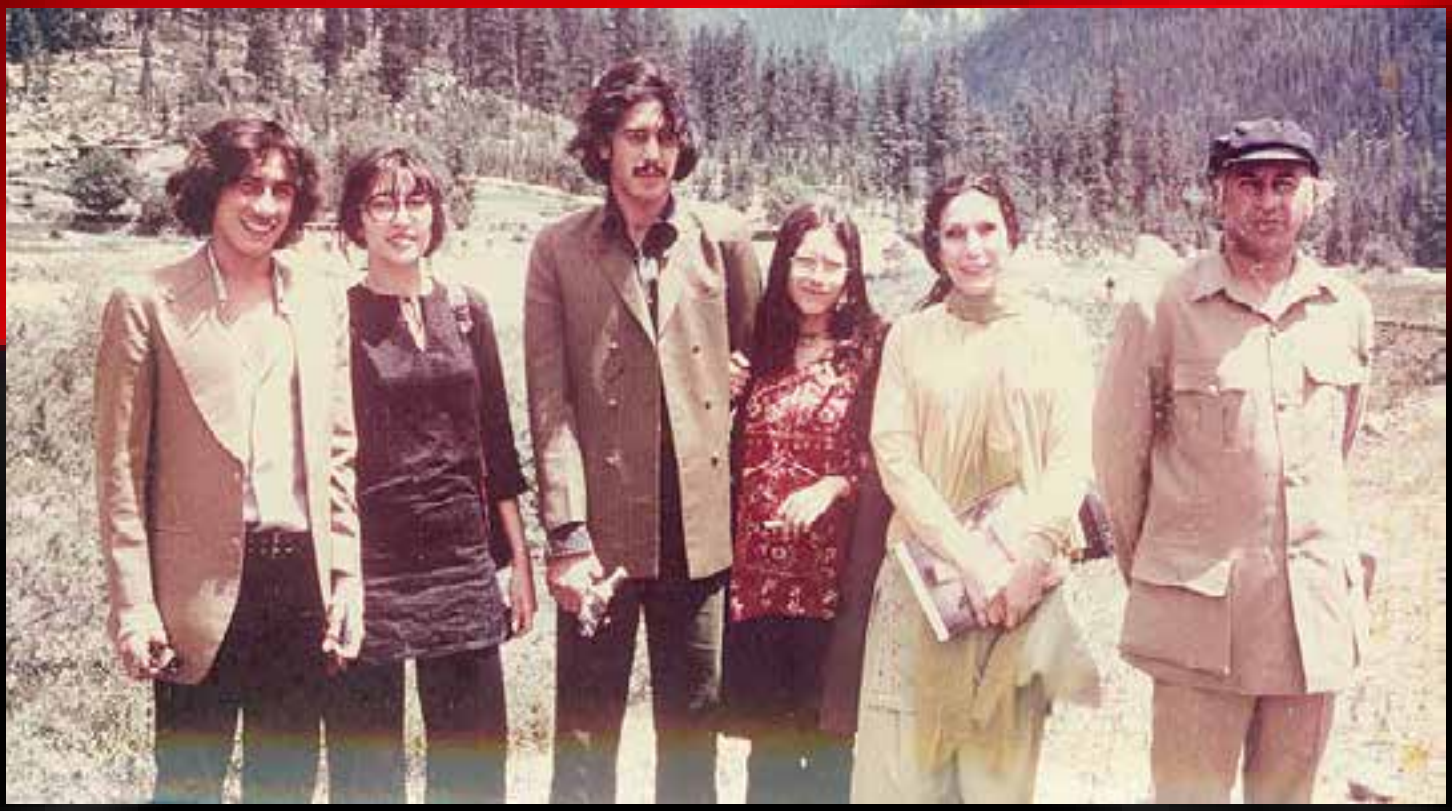
Later that year she returned to Pakistan, where her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, had been elected Prime Minister, but days after her arrival, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was imprisoned. In 1979 he was hanged by the government of General Zia Ul Haq.

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

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

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

Only two years into her first term, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dismissed Bhutto from office. She initiated an anti-corruption



campaign, and in 1993 was re-elected as Prime Minister. While in office, she brought electricity to the countryside and built schools all over the country. She made hunger, housing and healthcare her top priorities, and looked forward to continuing to modernize Pakistan. At the same time, Bhutto faced constant opposition from the Islamic fundamentalist movement.

In 1996, President Leghari of Pakistan dismissed Benazir Bhutto from office, alleging mismanagement, and dissolved the National Assembly. A Bhutto re-election bid failed in 1997, and the next elected government, headed by the more conservative Nawaz Sharif, was overthrown by the military. Bhutto's husband was imprisoned, and once again, she was forced to leave her homeland. For nine years, she and her children lived in exile in London, where she continued to advocate the restoration of democracy in Pakistan. Asif Ali Zardari was released from prison in 2004 and rejoined his family in London. In the autumn of 2007, in the face of death threats from radical Islamists, Benazir Bhutto and her husband returned to their native country.

Although she was greeted by enthusiastic crowds, within hours of her arrival, her motorcade was attacked by a suicide bomber. She survived this first assassination attempt, although more than 100 bystanders died in the attack. With national elections scheduled for January 2008, her Pakistan People's Party was poised for a victory that would make Bhutto Prime Minister once again. Only a few weeks before the election, the extremists struck again.

After a campaign rally in Rawalpindi, a gunman fired at her car before detonating a bomb, killing himself and more than 20 bystanders. Bhutto was rushed to the hospital but soon succumbed to injuries suffered in the attack.

In her political testament, Benazir Bhutto identified her son, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, as her choice to succeed her as Chairman of the PPP. At the time of her death, Bilawal was only 19, still an undergraduate at Oxford. Although Benazir Bhutto did not live to see the developments, the party she led and the causes she championed still play a major role in the political life of contemporary Pakistan.

Bhutto's autobiography, Daughter of the East, was published in 1988 (also published as Daughter of Destiny, 1989); she also wrote Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West, which was published posthumously in 2008.

Benazir Bhutto left a deeply polarizing legacy. Her career has been celebrated as a triumph for women in the Muslim world and for the global fight against Islamic extremism. Her efforts and struggle to champion democracy remain a lasting legacy that is deeply respected among her rivals.

Justice Gulzar Ahmed takes oath as 27th Chief Justice of Pakistan

Justice Gulzar Ahmed on Saturday took the oath as Chief Justice of Pakistan. In a ceremony held at Aiwan-i-Sadr in Islamabad, President Dr Arif Alvi administered the oath to Justice Ahmed.

Prime Minister Imran Khan, Chief of Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi, National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser, Senate Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Law Minister Farogh Naseem and various ministers attended the oath-taking ceremony.

Former chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhry also attended the ceremony. Justice Ahmed, who replaces Justice Asif Saeed Khosa as the chief justice, will serve till February 21, 2022, as the 27th chief justice. Justice Khosa retired on December 20, 2019. At a gathering before officially addressing a full-court reference organised at the Supreme Court on the eve

of his retirement, just a day after a special court released the detailed verdict in the high treason case against former dictator General retired Pervez Musharraf, Khosa said a malicious campaign has been initiated against the judiciary but the truth shall finally prevail.

Honorable Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Gulzar Ahmed was born on 2nd February, 1957, at Karachi, Pakistan, in the family of distinguished Lawyer of Karachi Mr. Noor Muhammed. He did his early education from Gulistan School, Karachi and obtained B.A. Degree from Government National College, Karachi and LL.B. Degree from S. M. Law College, Karachi. Enrolled as an Advocate on 18th January, 1986 and as an Advocate of the High Court on 4th April, 1988 and then as an Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan on 15th September, 2001. Elected as Honorary Secretary of the Sindh High Court Bar Association, Karachi, for the year 1999-2000. Practiced mainly on the Civil Corporate side and remained Legal Advisor of various Multinational and Local Companies, Banks and Financial Institutions.

Maiden visit of the Foreign Minister of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud to Pakistan

By M. Bilal Zafar

HH Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Foreign Minister of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, called on Prime Minister Imran Khan. During the meeting, views were exchanged on bilateral relations as well as regional developments. While welcoming the Saudi Foreign Minister, the Prime Minister underscored the special significance of the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia relationship based on close fraternal ties, historic links, and support at the gross-roots level. He recalled the visit of HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to Pakistan in February 2019 and the depth and substance that it imparted to bilateral cooperation in diverse fields. Prime Minister Imran Khan appreciated the growing economic ties between the two countries and the Saudi commitment for investment in various sectors, particularly petrochemicals, mining and renewable energy. The Prime Minister expressed the hope that the Saudi team for extending support in the development of tourism sector will visit Pakistan soon, as agreed with HRH the Crown Prince during the Prime Minister's recent visit to Saudi Arabia. The Prime Minister highlighted in detail the worsening human rights and humanitarian situation in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K). He also highlighted India's discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and underscored that the Indian Government was engaged in systematic efforts to marginalize and disenfranchise minorities, particularly Muslims. The Prime Minister added that, in addition, India's belligerent actions

on the LoC were stoking further tensions and imperiling regional peace and security. He stressed that the international community had to play its role in ensuring respect for the rights and freedoms of the Kashmiri people, facilitate a just solution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute, and take steps for the protection of minorities in India. The Saudi Foreign Minister conveyed the most cordial greetings of His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman to the leadership and people of Pakistan as well as their deep appreciation for the role being played by Pakistan for regional peace and stability. Underscoring the key importance of the "core relationship" between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, the Saudi Foreign Minister conveyed the firm commitment of the Saudi leadership to the further deepening of fraternal ties and multi-faceted cooperation between the two countries. Prince Faisal also reaffirmed the resolve to deepen bilateral collaboration in all fields, including trade, investments, energy and tourism sectors. The Saudi Foreign Minister also reiterated Saudi Arabia's steadfast support for Pakistan's core national issues. The enhanced role of the OIC in the context of Jammu & Kashmir dispute was discussed. This was the maiden visit of the Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud to Pakistan since assuming office. Both sides affirmed their commitment to maintain frequent high-level contacts and forge closer collaboration on bilateral matters and regional issues.

Prime Minister Imran Khan visit to Saudi Arabia

By Mian Fazal Elahi

As part of regular exchanges at the leadership level between Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Prime Minister Imran Khan visited Saudi Arabia. The Prime Minister held wide-ranging consultations with Crown Prince His Royal Highness Mohammed Bin Salman covering bilateral matters and developments in the regional context. The Prime Minister emphasized the strategic importance of Pakistan-Saudi Arabia relationship and termed it as a pivotal partnership for peace, progress and prosperity. The Prime Minister extended warm felicitations on Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's assumption of G20 Presidency. The Prime Minister said this was a reflection of the Kingdom's leadership role and stature in the international community. Pakistan wished Saudi Arabia a highly successful G20 Presidency. In the bilateral context, the Prime Minister underscored the unique strength of Pakistan-Saudi Arabia relations, based on mutual trust and understanding. The Prime Minister noted that high level visits were the hallmark of the relationship and Crown Prince HRH Mohammed Bin Salman's visit to Pakistan in February 2019 had ushered in a new era of deeper engagement across the economic, investment, energy, security and defence, and people-to-people domains. The two leaders expressed satisfaction at the ongoing bilateral cooperation between the two countries. It was noted that the establishment of the Saudi-Pakistan Supreme Coordination Council (SPSCC) had provided a firm institutional mechanism to advance bilateral cooperation in diverse fields in a robust manner. The two sides hoped to further advance this process during the second meeting of the SPSCC expected to take place early next year. The Prime Minister apprised Crown Prince HRH Mohammed Bin Salman of the latest situation in Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir, marked by continuous lockdown and other restrictions since 5 August 2019. This was accompanied by India's belligerent rhetoric and actions on the Line of Control. The Prime Minister thanked Saudi Arabia for its traditional support to the Kashmir cause, including its active role in the OIC Contact Group on Jammu & Kashmir. The two sides discussed ways of further advancing the Kashmir cause through the OIC and other means. In the context of the Middle East, the Prime Minister reiterated Pakistan's perspective that disputes and differences be resolved through political and diplomatic means. Pakistan would continue to facilitate all efforts in that direction with a view to precluding conflict, defusing tensions and preserving peace for the benefit of the region and the world. The Saudi side offered all possible support in the development of tourism sector in Pakistan. In this context it was agreed that Saudi team would undertake a visit to Pakistan soon. This was Prime Minister Imran Khan's fourth visit to Saudi Arabia since May 2019, reflecting the importance attached by Pakistan to this strategic partnership. The leadership on both sides remains determined to take Pakistan-Saudi relations to a new level.

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi visited Pakistan

By Mian Fazal Elahi

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, met with Prime Minister Imran Khan. His Highness the Crown Prince was accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising cabinet members and senior officials. In a special gesture, the Crown Prince was received by Prime Minister Imran Khan at the Nur Khan Airbase. Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed had earlier visited Pakistan in January 2019. Prime Minister Imran Khan and HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed held wide-ranging talks focusing on bilateral, regional and international issues. The discussions continued over the luncheon, hosted by the Prime Minister in honour of the Crown Prince and his accompanying entourage. The Prime Minister expressed satisfaction at the frequent exchange of high-level visits between Pakistan and the UAE and the steady development of cordial ties between the two fraternal countries. Underlining the strategic importance of the Pakistan-UAE special relationship, the Prime Minister stressed the imperative of deeper economic engagement. The Prime Minister highlighted the economic turn-around in Pakistan and the growing opportunities for foreign investment as well as fruitful trade and commercial engagement with key partner countries. Welcoming the UAE's interest in investing in myriad sectors in Pakistan, the Prime Minister assured maximum facilitation for UAE investments. Among others, the possibilities in the energy and tourism sectors were highlighted. Closer collaboration in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) sector was also underlined. The Prime Minister highlighted the positive contributions of more than 1.6 million expatriate Pakistani community, which considers UAE as their second home. Prime Minister Imran Khan also thanked the UAE leadership and its people for their commitment to Pakistan's socio-economic development, focused in particular on health, education and youth. The Prime Minister apprised Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed of India's inhuman lockdown in the Indian Occupied J&K, continuing for over 150 days. He also highlighted India's discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and their negative consequences. The Prime Minister underscored the need for the world community to take urgent steps to address India's state oppression in IOJ&K, immediate removal of the continuing lockdown and other restrictions, avoidance of escalation of tensions on the LoC, and peaceful resolution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions. The OIC's role in the advancement of the Islamic Ummah's causes was discussed. The Prime Minister also apprised the Crown Prince of Pakistan's efforts and positive contribution to the Afghan peace and reconciliation process. The Prime Minister underlined that a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan was in the interest of Pakistan and the region. His Highness the Crown Prince underlined the strategic importance of UAE- Pakistan relations and extended cordial greetings for the brotherly people of Pakistan and good wishes for their accelerated development in the year 2020 and beyond. He also underlined UAE's support for peace and stability in South Asia and peaceful resolution of issues. The Crown Prince also appreciated Pakistan's important role in the OIC. The visit of His Highness the Crown Prince was the first by a foreign dignitary to Pakistan in 2020, and reflective of the special relations between Pakistan and UAE, which continue to grow.

President Dr. Arif Alvi appreciated UAE's efforts for promoting regional peace and stability

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Islamabad The UAE Minister for Tolerance, Sheikh Nahayan Bin Mabarak Al Nahayan, held meetings with Pakistan's President Dr Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran Khan during his official visit to Islamabad on Friday.

Sheikh Nahayan, during his meeting with Dr Alvi, discussed the bilateral relations and further expansion of ties between the two brotherly countries in all fields including trade, investment, energy, culture and tourism.

Pakistan's president appreciated UAE's efforts for promoting regional peace and stability. Dr Alvi said that 1.6 million strong Pakistani community is a bridge between the two countries. Highlighting the contributions of Pakistani diaspora in the development of the UAE, he stressed more employment opportunities for Pakistani workers.

In his meeting with Imran Khan, the UAE minister discussed ways to further enhance bilateral relations. Several regional and international issues of mutual interest were also discussed. They also deliberated on cooperation in the investment, economic, cultural, developmental and agricultural fields.

"The visit came to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the two countries and underscores the great importance the UAE leadership attaches to the UAE-Pak relations which have witnessed growth and progress in various fields," according to an official statement from the UAE embassy.

During the meetings with Pakistani leaders, Sheikh Nahayan stressed adopting the values of tolerance, coexistence and pluralism. "UAE has always been a model for its policies towards openness and tolerance established by the founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan," he added.

At the Prime Minister House, the UAE minister planted a Ghaf tree — the tree chosen by the UAE government to represent its dedication to tolerance. The tree holds great significance "as an indigenous tree as a symbol of the stability of the desert and a witness to old customs."

H.E. Mr. Muhammad Aejaz Ambassador designated of Pakistan to Hungary calls on President Dr. Arif Alvi

President Dr. Arif Alvi talking to Ambassador-designate of Pakistan to Hungary Mr. Muhammad Aejaz, who called on him at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

Pakistan will never condone the blatant human rights violation in Indian-Occupied Kashmir at the hands of fascist Indian regime and will always stand by its Kashmiri brethren, said President Dr. Arif Alvi, while talking to Ambassador-designate of Pakistan to Hungary Mr. Muhammad Aejaz, who called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad today. He underscored that all High Commissioners/Ambassadors must highlight the true perspective on Kashmir issue and Indian oppression there. The President said that Pakistan attached great importance to its relations with Hungary and was keen to further enhance these relations both at the bilateral level as well as in the context of EU. However, he said that the current volume of bilateral trade between the two countries was not commensurate to the true potential. Therefore, there was a dire need to diversify the bilateral trade, he added. He further said that Pakistan offered a range of opportunities for investment, especially in energy, agriculture & food processing, and pharmaceuticals, hence the Ambassador-designate must make all-out efforts to promote Pakistan's economic and commercial interests in Hungary and utilize existing institutional mechanisms. The President highlighted that Pakistan's location at the cross roads of South, Central and West Asia made it a good strategic and economic partner for Hungary especially in the context of Hungarian policy of "Eastern Opening". He also appreciated that the Hungarian petroleum company Magyar Oil Limited (MOL) was doing profitable business in Pakistan and ambassador-designate should encourage other Hungarian companies to follow MOL's success model in Pakistan. While referring to the government efforts towards the promotion and development of tourism and archaeological heritage of Pakistan, he directed the ambassador-designate to encourage exchange of tourist and people-topeople contacts between the two sides. He also appreciated Hungarian government's initiative of offering 200 scholarships to Pakistani students. He emphasized that the ambassador must keep a close liaison with the Pakistani community in order to resolve their issues efficiently and efficiently. He wished Ambassador-designate success for his new assignment and hoped that he will work to the best of his abilities for enhancing relations between the two countries.

President Dr. Arif Alvi talking to High Commissioner designate of Pakistan to Bangladesh Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, who called on him at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

High Commissioner designated of Pakistan to Bangladesh calls on President Dr. Arif Alvi

By M. Bilal Zafar

Indian claims of being secular have been vociferously belied by the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2019 recently passed in Indian parliament, making it amply clear to the world that minorities in India, especially Muslims, are unsafe and under the sharp razor of discrimination, said President Dr. Arif Alvi, while talking to High Commissioner-designate of Pakistan to Bangladesh, Mr. Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, who called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad. He directed all High Commissioners/Ambassadors to highlight the true perspective of Kashmir issue and serious human rights violations at the hands of Indian forces. The President said that both countries were bound by fraternal relations and religious affinity and shared history provided a solid foundation for this relationship. He emphasized that both countries needed to move ahead, as both Pakistan and Bangladesh had enough challenges to occupy their time and energy and the two could be source of strength for each other, he added. The President highlighted that the current volume of bilateral trade between the two countries was not commensurate to the true potential. Therefore, both countries needed to utilize the existing established institutions/mechanisms to enhance bilateral relations and trade. The President also directed the High-Commissioner-designate to strive to further strengthen the existing bilateral relations by enhancing high level interactions and to make efforts to get Bangladesh's cooperation to holding the next SAARC Summit in Islamabad. He also directed the High-Commissioner to exert all-out efforts to highlight the tourism potential in Pakistan. He wished High Commissioner-designate a successful stay in Bangladesh and hoped that his tenure will bring more vigour and energy to the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Pakistan values its time-tested and all weather friendship with Saudi Arabia

By Mian Fazal Elahi

126 days long curfew and total media blackout in Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir at the hands of fascist BJP Government of India is a blatant violation of the fundamental right of the people of Kashmir, said President Dr. Arif Alvi, while talking to Saudi parliamentary delegation led by Chairman of the Shura Council of Saudi Arabia, Dr. Abdullah Bin Mohammed Bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh, who called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad

Prime Minister Imran Khan received Dr. Abdullah Mohammad Ibrahim Al Sheikh, Chairman Saudi Shura Council, and members of his delegation. The delegation is on a 3-day visit to Pakistan on the invitation of Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser. The Prime Minister highlighted the close brotherly relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and reaffirmed the resolve to further deepen bilateral cooperation in diverse fields. The Prime Minister added that the Saudi leadership was held in high esteem in Pakistan and the visit of the HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to Pakistan was memorable in terms of further fortifying the relations. The Prime Minister lauded the growing cooperation between the Parliaments of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The Prime Minister apprised the Chairman Shura Council of the dire human rights and humanitarian situation in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) marked by the inhuman lock-down and communications blockade, which had continued since 5 August 2019.

Kashmir issue warrants an immediate resolution otherwise would lead to a human catastrophe. Saudi Arabia supports the early resolution of the issue in accordance with the aspiration of people of Kashmir and UN resolution. This was stated by Dr. Abdullah Bin Mohammed Al-Sheikh, Chairman of the Shura Council of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia who called on Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser in Parliament House along with a delegation comprising Members of the Saudi Shura Council.

The Chairman Shura Council said that hearts of Saudi nation thump with their Kashmiri Brethren and their plight cannot be overlooked. He extended the Saudi support for holding an International Parliamentary Conference on Kashmir for drawing attention of the world

community towards the Indian atrocities and the predicaments of Kashmiri people. He said that the situation in Kashmir was further aggravating and immediate attention of the world was required to mitigate human sufferings. It was agreed that the International Parliamentary Conference would be held early next year in Islamabad. `

The Speaker Asad Qaiser while talking his Saudi Counterpart said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoy brotherly relations and the same transcends to the legislatures of the both the countries and have supported each other on international and regional parliamentary forums. The Speaker said that Pakistan attaches immense importance to its time tested and all weather friendship with Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He said that the brotherly relations between the two countries were intertwined in bonds of religion, history and culture. Paying gratitude to the Saudi Leadership, the Speaker said that they have always stood by Pakistan whenever needed.

Apprising the Chairman Saudi Shura about the present state of affairs in Kashmir, Speaker Asad Qaiser said that 123-days old lockdown in the Kashmir Valley had brought the Held Valley at the brink of a worst human catastrophe. He said that India had always backtracked from its international commitments, denied their constitutional rights and even was using force on innocent Kashmiris to suppress their genuine demand. The Speaker said that Kashmir issue is unfinished agenda of the patrician plan of India and required indulgence of International Community for its resolution. He also suggested for holding an International Parliamentary Conference on Kashmir to draw attention of the international community towards the issue and asked for Saudi Support in that regard.

Speaker National Assembly and Chairman Saudi Shura agreed for enhancing parliamentary interaction between both the legislative bodies. Saudi Shura Chairman suggested for active interaction between Standing Committees on Commerce, Trade and investment for suggesting ways and means for enhancing bilateral commercial, investment and trade activities. He said that immense opportunities exist in Pakistan and Saudi investors would certainly like to participate in the commercial activates for mutual benefit of both the nations. Speaker Asad Qaiser suggested for enhancing quota for Pakistani manpower in Saudi Arabia. He also expressed his gratitude to the Saudi Government for release of prisoners jailed in Saudi Arabia on petty issues.

Later, the Chairman Saudi Shura inscribed his remarks in the Guest book placed in the Hall of Honour of the National Assembly. The Chairman and his delegation also visited the National Assembly Hall.

Prime Minister Imran Khan visited the Kingdom of Bahrain on the invitation of King Hammad Bin Isa Al Khalifa

By Mian Fazal Elahi

At the invitation of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, His Excellency Mr. Imran Khan, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, paid an official visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain on 16 December 2019. The Prime Minister was accompanied by a high-level delegation. His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa received H.E. the Prime Minister of Pakistan at Sakhir Palace and conferred on the Prime Minister the Bahrain Order – First Class, in recognition of his remarkable leadership, outstanding achievements and contribution to further strengthening relations between the two countries.

H.E. the Prime Minister of Pakistan held talks with His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, at Gudaibya Palace. The Crown Prince also hosted a banquet in honour of the Prime Minister.

His Majesty the King expressed appreciation for the contribution made by the Pakistani expatriate community towards Bahrain's progress and economic development. H.E. the Prime Minister of Pakistan conveyed his deep appreciation to the Kingdom of Bahrain for hosting a large number of Pakistani citizens and expressed hope that Bahrain will continue to employ more Pakistanis across various sectors of the economy.

The following documents were signed during the visit:

MOD on Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research;

MOD on Medical Sciences

MOU on Cooperation in Youth Affairs and Sports

In light of the existing close ties between the two countries, a wide range of constructive

discussions were held. The discussions focused on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of common interest, with a view to further broadening and deepening bilateral engagement across all mutually beneficial fields. The leaders underscored the importance of further promoting political and economic relations, strengthening cooperation in the fields of public health, energy, education,agriculture, culture and tourism.

The two sides welcomed the regular exchange of high-level visits during recent years, and recalled the successful State Visit of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on 18-20 March 2014. The two sides noted that this visit laid a strong foundation to build a closer partnership between the two countries, and agreed further to follow up on the implementation of the agreements and the Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) signed during the visit. His Excellency the Prime Minister of Pakistan conveyed his deep appreciation on behalf of the people of Pakistan for the Royal gesture to establish King Hamad Nursing and Associated Medical Science University in Pakistan and agreed to operationalize the University at the earliest possible.

Both sides underlined the importance of continuing regular consultations through the existing institutional mechanisms and agreed to hold the second meeting of the Bahrain-Pakistan Joint Ministerial Commission in Manama in the first quarter of 2020. The two sides welcomed the recent signing of an Agreement on Military Cooperation, which will further Increase the sharing of information, intelligence and assessments.

Both sides denounced terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including state terrorism, and reaffirmed their desire to strengthen cooperation, at both a bilateral and multilateral level, in the fight against terrorism and the financing of terrorism, combating transnational organised crime, combating narcotics, and enhancing cyber security cooperation.

Expressing satisfaction regarding the growing economic cooperation between the two countries, both sides recognised the potential for greater trade and commercial exchanges and agreed to take all necessary steps to increase the volume of bilateral trade.

In light of the significant role played by investors, the two sides committed to providing favourable environments for investors from both countries and emphasised the need for a regular and timely exchange of information on available investment opportunities. Recognising the enormous growth potential of both economies, the Pakistani side encouraged Bahraini investors to take advantage of the favourable investment environment and consider investing in areas of high potential, including infrastructure development, energy, tourism industry, food processing and services sector. Additionally, the Pakistani side recognised Bahrain as an ideal gateway to GCC markets.

The two sides exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest, including the security situation in West Asia and South Asia. Both sides reiterated the importance of striving towards peaceful resolutions of all disputes, in light of international legitimacy and relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Acknowledging the immense commercial potential between Pakistan and GCC countries, Bahrain reiterated its support and commitment to further strengthening cooperation through the preparation of a joint action plan for the strategic dialogue between the GCC and Pakistan, as well as the finalisation of the Pakistan-GCC Free Trade Agreement.

His Excellency Mr. Imran Khan, the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, thanked His Majesty the King, His Royal Highness the Prime Minister and His Royal Highness the Crown Prince for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended to him and his delegation. The Prime Minister of Pakistan extended invitations to His Majesty the King, His Royal Highness the Prime Minister and His Royal Highness the Crown Prince to visit the Islamic Republic of Pakistan at their earliest convenience, which was gladly accepted.

Prime Minister Imran Khan's keynote address at the First Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in Geneva

By M Bilal Zafar

In his key-note address to the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) in Geneva today, Prime Minister Imran Khan warned of an imminent danger of refugee crisis in South Asia due to demographic changes engineered by India in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) following its illegal measures of 5 August 2019 as well as discrimination against Muslims codified in the recent Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens in Assam and planned elsewhere in India. Expressing grave concerns on the growing marginalization of Muslims in India, he drew similarities between Indian measures aimed at depriving citizenship rights with the Rohingya crisis. Citing old adage 'prevention is better than cure', the Prime Minister urged the United Nations and the international community to take urgent steps to prevent the imminent humanitarian crisis in IOJ&K as well as in India, which can not only lead to large scale displacement of population but also impact peace and security of South Asia and beyond. The Prime Minister paid tribute to the people of Pakistan for their warm and model hospitality to the Afghan refugees for 40 years, noting that this inspiration was drawn from Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), since he himself was a refugee. While noting that the Afghan refugee situation

represented the 2nd most protracted situation in the world, the Prime Minister stressed the need for their well-being and creating conditions in Afghanistan for their dignified return. He added that it was also in this spirit that Pakistan was making all out efforts to facilitate peaceful settlement of the conflict in Afghanistan. Prime Minister Imran Khan is the co-convener of the Forum along with leaders of Turkey, Costa Rica, Germany and Ethiopia. The UNHCR and Swiss Government are co-hosts of the Forum, taking place pursuant to the Global Compact on Refugees, adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 2018. On the sidelines of the Forum, the Prime Minister interacted with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and inter alia informed him about the convening of international conference on Afghan refugees in Islamabad in February 2020 and invited him to visit Pakistan.

Prime Minister Imran Khan met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the sidelines of Global Refugee Forum in Geneva. The two leaders held discussions on a wide range of subjects. The Prime Minister underlined the importance of the 6th Session of High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) to be co-chaired by the two leaders, early next year

in Islamabad. The Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's deep appreciation for Turkey's steadfast support on the Jammu and Kashmir issue, including Turkey's active role in the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir. The Prime Minister also lauded Turkey's measures to host the largest refugee population in the world and underscored the importance of the international community providing requisite support to the countries hosting large refugee populations. Both leaders also exchanged views on important regional and international issues and expressed satisfaction over commonality of views between the two countries on major issues.

The Prime Minister apprised the High Commissioner of the devastating impact of India's over 4-months long draconian lockdown of 8 million Kashmiris, as affirmed by independent observers across the world. The Prime Minister noted that the atrocities being inflicted on the Kashmiri people by India reflected the fascist ideology being pursued by its ruling party. The Citizenship Amendment legislation and National Registry of Citizens (NRC), aimed at depriving nearly two million people of their citizenship rights in Assam, were a clear manifestation of this mindset. The Prime Minister underlined that the United Nations and the international community must take cognizance of and take immediate steps to halt these dangerous policies to avert humanitarian catastrophe and growing dangers to South Asian peace and stability. Recalling the two Kashmir reports issued by the United Nations, he urged the High Commissioner to continue monitoring and reporting on the deteriorating situation in IOJ&K as well as in India. High Commissioner Bachelet shared the concerns outlined by the Prime Minister and recalled recent responses issued by her Office to the developments in Indian occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IOJ&K) and India. The Prime Minister invited the High Commissioner to undertake a visit to Pakistan.

DG Tedros appreciated efforts by Pakistan to eradicate polio virus and assured cooperation by the WHO in this endeavor. The Prime Minister underscored the special focus of the Government on ensuring universal health coverage to the people of Pakistan. He also discussed the Government's initiatives to counter malnutrition and stunting. DG(WHO) commended Government's efforts in this regard. Prime Minister also apprised him of his Government's holistic poverty alleviation programme including through the Ehsaas Programme. The Director General recalled his visits to Pakistan and reiterated his office's full support to the Prime Minister in his endeavors. He said he looked forward to visiting Pakistan early next year.

Pakistan will continue to sincerely play the role of facilitator in the Afghan peace process: Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi

By M. Bilal Zafar

The U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, called on Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi. Ambassador Khalilzad apprised the Foreign Minister of the latest situation in the Afghan peace process.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi reiterated Pakistan's steadfast support as well as facilitating role in the Afghan peace and reconciliation process. He said Pakistan believed that President Trump's decision to resume dialogue with the Taliban was a positive development, to help establish peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region.

The Foreign Minister underscored the importance of early and successful conclusion of the U.S.-Taliban peace deal and start of intra-Afghan negotiations. The Foreign Minister reiterated the importance of reduction in violence and all parties fulfilling their respective commitments. The Foreign Minister also underlined the need to be mindful of the role and activities of spoilers who did not wish peace to return in the region.

The Foreign Minister added that the vision of economic prosperity and connectivity could not be realized without a stable and prosperous Afghanistan. He assured that Pakistan will continue to play its positive role towards deepening bilateral trade with Afghanistan and realizing shared vision of regional connectivity.

Speech by the Hon Tun Dr Mahathir Bin Mohamad Prime Minister of Malaysia and Chairman of KI Summit

Thank you very much for participating in this round table session in which we are discussing "The Priority of Development and The Challenges"

INTRODUCTION

1. We have spoken at length on the state of affairs of the Muslim world. While we may not have been able to fully dissect all that had caused our pain and anguish, we are mostly in agreement that it is our inability to keep up with the progress and development of the non-Muslims that have left us in the lurch.

2. Due to that, Muslims the world over suffer and as many are dependent on the mercy and charity of the non-Muslims.

3. To my mind, we have no choice but to develop and progress as fast as possible if we are to remedy all the misfortunes that had befallen our Ummah.

4. We have witnessed how non-Muslim nations that were devastated by wars have been able to literally rise from the ashes and become developed and leading nations of the world.

MAKING DEVELOPMENTAL EFFORTS A PRIORITY

5. Let me share some of the development strategies that Malaysia had prepared for its future aimed at ensuring sustainable growth and progress. I am sure that you have your own strategies as well.

6. One of our strategy is our five-year development plans, of which, the 11th edition which started in 2016 is ending next year and the 12th edition will start in 2021. These plans provides a clear strategic direction to set the way forward for national development agenda.

7. On top of that, we have recently launched our national development blueprint called "Shared Prosperity Vision 2030. It is a document that outlines a 10-year goal to re-structure Malaysia's low-skill labour-intensive economy to a knowledge-based economy where its citizens enjoy a decent standard of living.

8. The blueprint is a commitment to make Malaysia a nation that achieves sustainable growth along with fair and equitable distribution across income groups, ethnicities regions and supply chains.

9. It is also a commitment at ensuring political stability, enhancing the nation's prosperity and ensuring that the citizens are united while celebrating ethnic and cultural diversity.

10. Further to that, any development efforts that we pursue today are not merely centred on growth and economic gains but must be in tandem with sustainability, human capital and environmental conservation.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AMID THE RAPID PACE OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT

11. One of the biggest challenge we face while drawing up development plans and strategies is dealing with the disruption caused by technological advancement.

12. The rapid pace of these technological advancements threatens to make obsolete some of the strategies and plans we chart today within a few years.

13. We are today witnessing almost daily, how some cutting edge technology and advanced economic ventures which are merely a few years old had been made inconsequential and that had led to some segments of our workforce being made irrelevant.

14. In that context, our challenge becomes two-pronged – firstly, to come up with development strategies and secondly, to make sure they are continuously upgraded so as not to be irrelevant when new technologies emerge.

15. In Malaysia, to deal with the fourth industrial revolution or I.R (Industry 4WRD), last year we introduced a national policy called Industry Forward. Industry Forward is mainly focussed on digitally transforming Malaysia's manufacturing sector and related services. The policy envisions Malaysia as a strategic partner for smart manufacturing, a primary destination for high- technologies and a total solution

provider for the manufacturing sector in the region.

CONCLUSION

16. Obviously, for the Muslim community, all these only serve to remind us of how far behind we are and how we have to work doubly hard to catch up with the rest of the world.

17. On one hand, we are dependent on the creations and technologies of the non-Muslims and when we managed to catch up, they are already ahead with new technological advancements that we now need to acquire and familiarise.

18. If we do not start creating and developing our own technologies we will forever be playing catch up with the rest of the developed nations.

19. We have no choice but to start working on this and I truly hope that at the end of this Summit, we will come up with tangible strategies and approaches.

Thank you.

Suffering of Muslims can be stopped with cooperation, proper leadership

Around 94% of the people killed in conflicts around the world are Muslims, but this can be prevented through cooperation and proper leadership, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said at the Kuala Lumpur Summit on Thursday, reiterating his calls to reform the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to better represent and defend the rights of all people.

Speaking at the opening session of the summit, which brings together intellectuals, academics and Muslim leaders to create solutions for problems faced by Muslims, Erdoğan highlighted the importance of solidarity and cooperation among the countries.

"One in three weapons sold globally are sent to the Middle East," the president said, noting that 94% of those killed in global conflicts are Muslims. He said that while Muslims continue to shoot and kill each other over trivial disagreements, Western arms dealers become wealthier because the former spend their money on weapons rather than education, health, research and development.

The president urged Muslim leaders to self-criticize and reminded them that they spend their energy on civil strife while others are busy talking about artificial intelligence, quantum computers and robotics.

"We need to focus on projects that will aid our shortcomings and realize our potential," Erdoğan told Muslim leaders, urging them to enhance cooperation in strategic areas including defense, energy, advanced technology and finance.

He noted that they will have the chance to discuss the situation of Muslims, who make up a quarter of the world's population.

The president also touched upon the issue of inaction following global meetings among Muslim leaders.

"The biggest problem of platforms that bring together the Islamic world under a single roof is the issue of implementation. This is the reason why we have not covered any distance in the Palestinian cause, are unable to stop the exploitation of our resources and cannot say stop as our region is torn apart through the rhetoric of sectarianism," Erdoğan said.

However, the Muslim world is not powerless,

according to the president, and they have the resources, the population and the geographic position to overcome obstacles with proper leadership.

"If a significant part of the Muslim population is dealing with hunger, famine, poverty and ignorance, despite all the opportunities, the oil, population and natural resources God has bestowed on us, then we need to put the blame on ourselves first," he said.

The president touched upon the issue of representation at the UNSC, noting that it fails to represent 1.7 billion Muslim people throughout the world because that system has "expired."

He also said an update of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) was also necessary to improve its effectiveness.

Cooperation in all areas, including trade, politics, diplomacy, the defense industry and technology is the prescription to cure the ills, according to Erdoğan, because there is great potential.

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad also pointed out that the Muslim world is passing through "a state of crisis" and noted that the summit "may find solutions, if not to end these catastrophes, at least to awaken the Islamic world, the Ummah, to the need to recognize the problems and their causes."

"Understanding the problems and their causes may enlighten us on the way to overcome or mitigate disasters that have befallen the Ummah," he added.

Mahathir, who is also chairman of the summit, said the objective of this year's event is "not to discuss religion, but the state of affairs in the Muslim world."

"We all know that the Muslims, their religion and their countries are in a state of crisis. Everywhere, we see Muslim countries being destroyed, their citizens forced to flee their countries, forced to seek refuge in non-Muslim countries. Many thousands died during their flight, and many more were refused asylum," he said.

"We are attempting to start small. And if these ideas, proposals and solutions are acceptable and prove to be workable, then we hope to take it up to the larger platform for consideration," the prime minister indicated.

Division within the Islamic world and the overall problems of the Muslim community have always been on Erdoğan's agenda.

"The fault lines among Muslims are further sharpened by the highlighting of differences in races, languages, sects and temperament," the president said back in November.

Noting that the Turkish nation never discriminates between the Rashidun Caliphs, referring to the 30-year reign of the first four caliphs following the death of Prophet Muhammad, Erdoğan said that Shiism and Sunnism are reflected as separate religions by some.

Mentioning that sectarian and interest-oriented approaches have prevented Muslims from finding common ground, Erdoğan stressed that an understanding that places self-interests above the interests of the ummah has nothing to offer to Muslims.

The problems of the Muslim world have been culminating since the end of World War I when Western states started occupying Muslim territories. Despite the fact that independence has been achieved for the most part in Muslim communities, problems continue to spread like a plague, causing the decline of Islamic civilization. However, recently, many pundits claim that a resurrection of the Islamic community is at stake with Turkey leading the Muslim world, while countries like Malaysia and Indonesia provide welfare with their economies.

50,000 refugees head to Turkey

Later in the day, President Erdoğan attended a roundtable meeting on the priority of development and challenges with Mohamad and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani as part of the summit.

Hundreds of government officials, businesspeople, representatives of civil societies and experts from different sectors across the Muslim world followed the meeting and asked the leaders questions.

"Turkey already hosts 4 million (refugees), now another 50,000 are heading to our land from Idlib, (Syria)," Erdoğan said, pointing at the challenges Turkey faces. "No one asks how Turkey handles these problems," the president underlined.

The escalating violence in Idlib has shattered a deal reached in September 2018 between Russia and Turkey to establish a buffer zone.

Despite eight months of calm provided by the Sochi deal, the regime, backed by Moscow, intensified its attacks starting on April 26 under the pretext of fighting the al-Qaida-linked Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) terrorists holed up in Idlib. Since then, the situation has gotten worse, taking more civilian lives with each passing day.

Answering a question on terrorism, Erdoğan said: "They say: 'we need to fight terrorism.' How will we fight terrorists? We cannot fight terrorism just using words. We need to take action."

"When we say 'we need to build a safe zone,' no one gives any support, but when it comes to weapons, the guns come," Erdoğan added.

According to the safe zone plan, 140 villages and 10 district centers will be established within the 30- to 40-kilometer deep safe zone in northern Syria, housing 5,000 and 30,000 inhabitants, respectively. The settlements will be provided with various facilities so the people living there will be able to have a normal life with every necessity met.

By establishing a safe zone in northern Syria, Turkey hopes to resettle displaced Syrians currently living in the country and get rid of the PKK and its Syrian affiliate, YPG terrorists, in the region.

Turkey has long been fighting to eradicate the presence of terrorist groups in northern Syria, conducting three cross-border operations there – Operation Olive Branch, Euphrates Shield and most recently Peace Spring. Following the liberation of areas in northern Syria, efforts to clear bombs and improvised explosive devices were launched, and administration duties were given to local councils. So far, thanks to these operations, 371.000 Syrians have returned to their hometowns.

National currencies crucial in trade

The president also mentioned the trade wars, saying that at a time when trade wars are being used as tools to pressure nations, the issue of using national currencies for bilateral trade has become urgent.

He said there is great potential among Islamic countries in the field of interest-free finance.

"We can establish a joint working group to realize this potential," Erdoğan said.

He expressed that Turkey reduced its foreign dependency to 30% in the defense sector from 80% in 2003.

"We are one of the four most developed states in the world in armed unmanned aerial vehicles," he said.

"We take care of our defense needs by producing warships, helicopters, tanks, armored vehicles, missile technology and even export them to friendly nations and allies," Erdoğan added.

Turkey, Russia and Iran have agreed to use their local currencies for trade between the three in September. The sanction policies by the U.S., particularly related to Turkey, Iran and Russia, have recently triggered the issue of looking for an alternative medium for financial transactions that can decrease the domination of the dollar in global trade.

Erdoğan said previously that Turkey was preparing to increase trade with its top trade partners, including Russia, China, Iran and Ukraine, in local currencies instead of the U.S. dollar, adding that they were also ready to do the same with European countries.

Amir participates in Kuala Lumpur Summit 2019

Kuala Lumpur: HH the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani participated in the opening session of the Kuala Lumpur Summit 2019, which carries the theme The Role of Development in Achieving National Sovereignty. HM King Abdullah Riayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah of Malaysia, HE President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan, HE President of Iran Dr. Hassan Rouhani, and HE Prime Minister of Malaysia Dr. Mahathir Mohammed participated in the summit.

The session that took place at Kuala Lumpur Convention Center was also attended by their excellencies ministers that are members of the official delegation accompanying HH the Amir, heads of the delegations of Islamic countries, a number of intellectuals and researchers in the Islamic world's issues.

The summit will focus on seven main topics, they are national development and sovereignty, integrity and good governance, culture and identity, justice and freedom, peace, security and defense, trade and investment, as well as technology and Internet governance.

HH the Amir gave a speech to mark the occasion, its transcript read as follows:

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

Your Majesties,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to thank His Excellency Dr. Mahathir bin Muhammad, the government and the people of Malaysia for the cordial reception, good preparation and organization of this promising summit and for providing it with all means of success.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This summit theme, "The Role of Development in Achieving National Sovereignty", reflects the great challenges facing the world in general, and the Muslim world in particular, with regard to issues of security, peace, development, good governance and human rights.

Various schools seeking to approach and address these issues have emerged, yet we cannot tackle them at this summit. Our meeting today does not emanate from a particular theoretical approach to these issues, but rather from the nature of the politicians and State leaders role that requires having faith in the political will and potential to effect change.

We cannot give up to structural difficulties or what are alleged to be cultural obstacles existing in our countries and societies. Also resorting to conspiracy theories to justify failure in any of the above areas is also a form of surrender. This does not mean that there are no external conspiracies and foreign interventions. But their use to justify failures and wrong choices is an expression of intellectual indolence and political incompetence. Also, the negative external factors, dubbed sometimes as conspiracies, often become effective and influencing under favorable domestic conditions.

Countries, where there is a Muslim majority, have proved by experience and practices that there is no contradiction between Islamic culture, development, good governance and human rights, and that, like other major civilizations, they can be incubators of enlightened and rational systems of governance; meanwhile other regimes justify underdevelopment, tyranny, and treading on human rights on the grounds of the Islamic culture of their peoples, although such

justification in itself is incompatible with the spirit of Islamic civilization.

We are not fundamentally different from other peoples and civilizations in the world. The approach that categorizes people into ranks according to their religions reflects a racist thinking which is not different from the thought that branded them into grades in the past according to their ethnicities.

We treasure our civilization and religion within the framework of our adherence to our humanity and universal values, and there is no contradiction between the two issues.

As we meet here to discuss the co-relation between development and sovereignty, we stress that national development, especially the one that takes human development into consideration, is not possible without national sovereignty in countries that own their decision. On the other hand, it is almost impossible to maintain national sovereignty and independence of decision in conditions of economic backwardness and dependency. Therefore, development is an essential pillar of independence and national sovereignty.

In this regard, the State of Qatar has placed development on top of its priorities by means of the National Development Strategy 2012/2017 and the Second Development Strategy 2018/2022 to achieve its National Vision 2030.

In our development policy, we consider that our trust in the national identity and adherence to our moral values and our true Islamic faith is consistent with rationality in social and economic planning, openness to the world, and the universal human view of justice and human rights issues. Also this means tolerance of other beliefs and accepting pluralism and diversity in our world as a reflection of Gods enduring laws that govern His creation. In any case, we see fanaticism as not only an evidence of lack of self-confidence but rather a proof of an identity crisis.

Out of our firm belief in the importance of international cooperation for achieving development as a pillar of regional and international security and stability, the State of Qatar has spared no effort in fulfilling its obligations to provide development assistance, that is unfettered by political agendas, to developing countries to enable them implement their development programs, combat poverty and unemployment, develop education and improve health care. (more)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The violent bigotry that some people try to attach to a particular religion and culture is, as the sequence of events in the modern time shows, a global problem that has not spared a society or culture from its affliction. It is a blight that may afflict all and is fueled by religious fanaticism, as well as non-religious ideology, despair, frustration, conditions of ignorance, poverty and unemployment. Therefore, its long-term confrontation must include addressing its roots.

Our topic is closely related to regional and international collective security issues, as stability is one of the most important conditions for development.

It requires balanced relations between States based on common interests, shared regional and international responsibilities, mutual respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, and no dictation on foreign policy.

Justice is one of the most important conditions for stability in conflict areas, so no settlements and solutions would last in the long run if they are not based on justice and fairness. In many cases, this is incomprehensible by many countries that are trying to impose disputes settlements according to the existing parameters of powers, and not according to the principles of justice. Therefore, our alignment with fair causes stems not only from the moral principles of international politics but also from the mutual interest in stability.

One of the most important sources of instability in our region is the neutralization and marginalization of the international legitimacy, and the attempt to dictate the will of the occupation by of force in Palestine, where annexation and settlement policies, including the Judaization of Jerusalem, continue. These are the policies that wipe out the Arab character of the city and provoke the feelings of Arabs and Muslims everywhere.

What disturbs the Arab and Islamic public opinion and a large part of the global public opinion regarding the cause of Palestine is that it is an unresolved issue of settler colonialism.

The Arabs have accepted a settlement through the Arab Peace Initiative and showed great willingness to cooperate with the international community for a just solution to the Palestinian issue, but the party that refuses to comply with the international will and international law, and rejects the fair peace offer, even if relatively, is Israel.

We suffer from double standards in more than one issue. There are double standards even in dealing with human rights, and the global conflict of axes makes some harbor war criminals who have perpetrated crimes against their own peoples, as allies, while being fought by others. However, situations may alter with the change of locations and interests.

Double standards also prevail in the case of armed militias that commit terrorist acts. Some forget their eloquence against terrorism and terrorists when they harbor armed militias that operate against domestic and international law and commit crimes against civilians.

We call for the endorsement of methods of negotiation and dialogue for resolving lingering issues, and we reject the use of methods of force, blockade, starvation and dictation of opinions. Adopting this approach requires a minimum of unanimity in granting greater power to international institutions where the right of veto does not prevail in favor of this or that country.

With the exception of justice based on international law, collective security requires a kind of rationality in the relations between States so that these international relations and other peoples' issues should not be subject to internal political rivalry between parties in each country, at a stage when populism and irrationality may become dominant in internal political considerations.

Incitement against Islam and Muslims has recently become a populist tool for gaining votes. These are short-sighted internal party politics, yet it would make the relations with other peoples subject to irrational policies and whims in domestic politics, which negatively affects relations between States.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It has become evident that the relationships with the other within each State and the dealing with him on an equal footing while respecting differences and disparities is a test of the extent to which this country is civilized and developed.

Just as we demand from communities in Western and other countries to deal with Islam and Muslims in accordance with the principles of democracy and human rights that they adhere to, and to criminalize racial abetting against Muslims as well, we should also expect Muslim States as well as Muslim and non-Muslim societies in the East to deal with their citizens and residents equally, regardless of race, religion and doctrines, and respect their religions and exclusivity.

We must also consider citizenship and equality before the law as regulators of the interaction between the individual and the State, regardless of race, religion, gender, or origin in Muslim countries as well.

In short, justice is indivisible. We demand justice and good governance within States, and we look forward to justice and good governance in international relations.

I pray to God Almighty to crown the deliberations of this summit with success and to guide our steps towards what is good for our peoples.

May God's peace, mercy and blessings be upon you.

Pro-active human rights diplomacy needed to project commitments for International obligations

Minister for Planning, Develpment and Speical Initative, Asad Umar addressing Seminar on Human Rights Diplomacy at Islamabad.

By M. Bilal Zafar

The Ministry of Human Rights organized a panel discussion on "Human Rights Diplomacy" in Islamabad. While addressing the audience, Federal Minister for Human Rights Dr Shireen Mazari spoke about the need to move beyond a traditional approach to human rights diplomacy that focuses narrowly on inter-state relations. Countries have voluntarily eroded their sovereignty by becoming party to International conventions and agreements. Pakistan has ratified most major international human rights conventions including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD); the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). It is becoming increasingly incumbent to account for various international organizations and forums in terms of human rights diplomacy. She also highlighted that the changing human rights paradigm warrants accounting for non-state actors such as the civil society, business community and corporations, which are important stakeholders in terms of human rights diplomacy. She emphasized the work that the Ministry of Human Rights is already doing in this regard in terms of drafting procedures for an action plan on business and human rights in Pakistan. In lieu of the changing human rights paradigm, it may be beneficial to shift to a more thematic approach to Human Rights Diplomacy, one in which states identify specific human rights issues such as women and child rights and develop policies on these issues. Such an approach may also be pivotal in addressing issues such as the ongoing siege in by Indian Occupation Forces in IOJK. The Ministry of Human Rights has raised this issue at several international forums and has approached 18 Human Rights Special Mandate Holders to take urgent action against the gross human rights atrocities in IOJK. This includes an urgent request to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affair (UNOCHA) to establish a humanitarian corridor for the flow of relief and aid services into IOJK. In the future we are considering seeking an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on this human rights crisis. Chief Guest of the event Federal Minister for Planning and special initiatives Mr. Asad Umar addressed the audience and said that morality should be part of decision-making processes. He also emphasized that Human rights should be central pillar of Pakistan's foreign relations. Pakistan should strive towards using international forums more effectively with this imperative. Ms. Ingrid Johnsoson, Swedish Ambassador to Pakistan was also part of the panel discussion. She spoke about feminist foreign Policy in Sweden which could serve as an example to promote and support gender equality. Mr. Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhary, Director General of Insitute of Strategic Studies also mentioned that traditional ways of diplomacy have been changed now. The term human rights can be used in positive and negative manner. The selective use of term is used to appreciate or bash countries. The Secretary of Ministry of Human Rights Ms.Rabiya Javeri Agha while moderating the panel discussion mentioned that Human rights Diplomacy is the skill of dealing with people and managing international relations through the lens of a human rights perspective. She further said Human Rights Diplomacy is steeped in our culture and in our religion. Our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) talked about equality, rule of law, rights of women and the protection of property. The Ministry of Human Rights is mandated to address all such human rights concerns both domestically and globally. The aim of the panel discussion was to create awareness among people on the importance of modern ideas of diplomacy in human rights. The audience included representatives of the government, diplomatic community, academia and media.

President Dr. Arif Alvi talking to High Commissioner designate of Pakistan to Sri Lanka Major General (R) Muhammd Saad Khattak who called on him at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

High Commissioner designated of Pakistan to Sri Lanka calls on President Dr. Arif Alvi

By M. Bilal Zafar

People of Pakistan stand by their oppressed Kashmiri brethren and condemn the fascist Indian Government for its inhuman treatment of its minorities, as manifested in the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2019 passed by Indian Lok Sabha, said President Dr. Arif Alvi, while talking to High Commissioner-designate of Pakistan to Sri Lanka Major General (Retd) Muhammad Saad Khattak, who called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad. He underscored that all High Commissioners/Ambassadors must highlight the true perspective on Kashmir issue and Indian oppression there. The President said that Pakistan attached great importance to its fraternal relations with Sri Lanka, based on trust and mutual understanding. He added that the warmth of bilateral relationship was reflected in the exchanges at the leadership level. However, the current volume of bilateral trade between the two countries was not commensurate to the true potential, he added. There was a need to re-invigorate our efforts to realize the goal of enhancing bilateral trade, he said. The President highlighted the successful visit of Sri Lankan Cricket team to Pakistan and said that first international test series in Pakistan since 2009 would also revive international cricket in Pakistan. Moreover, he said that we took pride in providing scholarships to Sri Lankan students. He also highlighted that Pakistan was home to rich Buddhist civilization and heritage. Pakistan held Vesak Festival every year, which was participated in by monks and academicians from Sri Lankan, he added. He also directed the High Commissioner-designate to work for promotion of tourism. He appreciated Sri Lankan Airline for operating on Karachi-Colombo and Lahore-Colombo sectors. This connectivity would contribute towards promotion of trade, travel tourism and people-to-people contacts between the two countries. He wished High commissioner-designate a successful stay in Sri Lanka and hoped that his tenure will bring more vigour and energy to the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Libya's GNA accepts Turkish offer of military support

By Monitoring Desk

UN-recognised government in Tripoli says it will boost cooperation with Ankara.

Libya's United Nations-recognised government has accepted an offer from Turkey for military and logistical support as it seeks to repel an offensive led by forces loyal to renegade military commander Khalifa Haftar.

The Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA) said in a statement that its cabinet had "unanimously approved the implementation of the memorandum of understanding on security and military cooperation between the GNA and the Turkish government signed on November 27".

The GNA, led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj, met in the presence of military officials. Further details about the terms of the agreement or the assistance Ankara could provide to pro-GNA forces not received yet.

Last month, the GNA and Turkey signed a deal on maritime boundaries and also signed another pact on military cooperation.

Haftar's forces in April launched a campaign to wrestle control of the capital, but have been unable to break through the GNA's defences. Haftar said that a "decisive battle" to capture the city would commence imminently. Turkish officials have previously said Ankara may send troops to Libya if the GNA requested it, but Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said that no such request had been made yet.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said his government was ready to help the GNA.

"We will speed up the process between Turkey and Libya. We told them that we are always ready to help if they need it. From military and security cooperation, to steps taken regarding our maritime rights - we are ready," Erdogan was cited as saying by broadcaster NTV.

Peace, Partnership and Prosperity themed of 8th Ministerial Conference of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process

By M. Bilal Zafar

Presidents of Afghanistan and Turkey H.E. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan inaugurated with their opening statements the 8th Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process Ministerial Conference convened in Istanbul.

Peace, Partnership and Prosperity themed the Ministerial Conference which brought together Foreign Ministers and high-ranking officials of 15 participating countries, 16 supporting countries and 12 regional and international organizations in Istanbul.

The opening statements of the two countries' Presidents were followed by a group photo of the event's participants and speeches delivered by the Afghan Acting Foreign Ministers H.E. Idrees Zaman and his Turkish counterpart H.E. Mevlut Cavusoglu.

Foreign Minister Zaman, commending the process and recalling the progress in some major regional projects, maintained that the region is still facing security challenges which require concerted regional effort to be overcome.

Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, underscored the need for achieving the goal of a secure and stable Afghanistan for the economic progress and prosperity of the entire region

"We continue to face the menace of terrorism. We witness an increase in activities of different terrorist groups in our region. This is a common challenge that we have to address together and by synergizing our efforts to combat this menace," said Acting Foreign Minister Zaman.

The participants of the conference in their interventions throughout the conference reiterated their support of an Afghan led and Afghan owned peace process and and expressed renewed commitments towards the shared vision of the Heart of Asia- Istanbul Process by endorsing the declaration of this important event.

The revised action plans of the seven confidence building measures (CBMs) were also adopted and a new CBM, Women Empowerment, was added to the existing ones.

Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, underscored the need for achieving the goal of a secure and stable Afghanistan for the economic progress and prosperity of the entire region. He made these remarks while addressing the 8th Ministerial meeting of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process held earlier today at Istanbul. Speaking on the occasion, Foreign Minister Qureshi said that neither any nation could claim to have stronger and more historic bonds with Afghanistan nor any country was more desirous of peace, stability and prosperity in Afghanistan than Pakistan. He added that Pakistan continued to host over 3 million Afghan refugees for the last four decades, and had been playing a critical role for the development and reconstruction of Afghanistan, including by committing over US$ 1 billion in development assistance. He highlighted the importance of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS) as an important institutional framework in strengthening bilateral relations between the two sides. The Foreign Minister underlined that recent resumption of efforts for reaching peace and stability in Afghanistan was a positive development, and expressed Pakistan's wish to see the peace process lead to inclusive intra-Afghan negotiations. At the same time, he cautioned against the "spoilers" in view of their vested interests. He urged the international community to seize the opportunity for achieving lasting peace in Afghanising by reaching a broad regional and international consensus. The Foreign Minister also called on H.E. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the side-lines of the meeting. Reiterating the historic and fraternal relations between the two countries, Foreign Minister Qureshi conveyed the warmest and sincerest wishes for the people and the Government of Turkey on behalf of the people and the Government of Pakistan on the occasion. Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi also held a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Turkey, Mevlut Cavusoglu. During the meeting, the two sides expressed their desire to continue expanding their relations to new areas of mutual interest, in particular by expanding bilateral economic relations. The Foreign Minister also held a brief interaction with the Acting Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia, Alice G. Wells, on the side-lines of the meeting during which matters relating to enhancing Pakistan-Afghanistan bilateral trade were discussed.

HEART of ASIA
ISTANBUL PROCESS

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens

President Dr. Arif Alvi talking to a delegation of British Arlan Trust UK led by Richard Hawkes who called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

President Dr. Arif Alvi talking to Ambassador of France to Pakistan, Marc Barely, who called on him at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

Dr. Maleeha Lodhi paid a courtesty call on President Dr. Arif Alvi at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

President Dr. Arif Alvi talkingto Director Oxford Poverty and Human Development initative Prof Sabina Alkire who called on him in Islamabad.

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser in Chief Guest at Regional dialogue on Role of Parliament in Cementing Regional Integration at PIPS Islamabad .

Federal Minister for National Histroy Shafqat Mahmood talking to Ambassador of Nepal to Pkaistan, Sewa Lamsal Adhikari, who called on him in Islamabad.

Federal Minister for Interior Brig (R) Ijaz Ahmad Shah met with European Union Ambassador H.E. Androulla Kaminara at Ministry of Interior Islamabad.

Special Assistant to PM on Informaiton & Braodcasting, Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan in a meeting with Mr. Mohamed Karmoune, Ambassador of Morocco in Pakistan, in Islamabad.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens

Ambassador of Czech Republic, H.E. Tomas Smetranka, called on Federal Minister for Defence Production, Ms. Zobaida Jalal at Rawalpindi.

Ambassador of Palestine Mr. Ahmed Jawad Rabei called on Deputy Speaker National Assembly Qasim Khan Suri at Parliament House.

Ambassador of US H.E. Mr Paul Jones called on Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research Makhdoom Khusro Bakhtiar in Islamabad.

Ambassador of France to Pakistan H.E. Dr Barety called on Federal Minister for Martime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi at his office in Islamabad.

Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui talking to Chimese Ambassadr to Pakistan Yao Jing.

Secretary Commerce Sardar Ahmad Nawaz Sukhera in a meeting with H.E. Professor Julius Kibet Bitok High Commissioner of Kenya in Islamabad.

Muhammad Usman Dar Special Assistant to PM on Youth Affaris met Ms. Androulla Kaminara, Ambassador of European Union at Islamabad.

Raza Bashir Tar, High Commissioner with Terry Duguid Members Canadian Parliament and Office Bearers of Jinnah Socieyt of North America during inaugural Jinnah Award Ceremony at Winnipeg Canada.

Chinese President Xi Jinping's 2020 New Year speech

Chinese President Xi Jinping has delivered a New Year speech in which he reviewed the achievements of 2019 and extended his New Year wishes for 2020.

Comrades, friends, ladies and gentlemen,

The year 2020 is arriving. From China's capital Beijing, I would like to extend my New Year wishes to you all!

In 2019, we sweated and we toiled as we pressed ahead with concrete efforts for achievements. Thanks to our steady pursuit of high-quality development, China's GDP is expected to edge close to 100 trillion yuan with the per capita figure reaching the level of 10,000 U.S. dollars.

Significant breakthroughs have been achieved in three tough battles.

Coordinated development in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region, the Yangtze River Economic Belt, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and the Yangtze River Delta, all accelerated. Ecological protection and high-quality development in the Yellow River basin have become national strategies.

About 340 impoverished counties and more than 10 million people have been lifted out of poverty. Our lunar probe Chang'e-4, for the first time in human history, landed on the far side

of the moon; the Long March-5 Y3 rocket was successfully launched; the Xuelong 2 icebreaker set sail on its maiden voyage to the Antarctic; the construction of the global network of the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System is sprinting towards the finish line; the commercial application of 5G technology is accelerating; the Beijing Daxing International Airport "phoenix spread its wings"… all these achievements are the result of the efforts and sweat of those who strive in the new era, and they demonstrate extraordinary Chinese splendor and Chinese strength.

Over the past year, reform and opening-up has continuously generated vigor for development. The reform of Party and government institutions has been successfully completed. We have set up another batch of pilot free trade zones, and expanded the Shanghai Pilot Free Trade Zone.

The Science and Technology Innovation Board was launched smoothly. We have cut taxes and fees by more than 2 trillion yuan, and raised the individual income tax threshold.

Many types of commonly-used medicines have seen their prices drop, while cheaper and faster internet connection has enabled faster flow of information. Garbage sorting is leading the new trend of a low-carbon lifestyle.

This year we have also streamlined the work of officials at the grassroots level. New changes are taking place everywhere and the country is taking on a fresh look.

Over the past year, we have steadily pushed forward reforms in our national defense and military systems. The armed forces have taken on a new look of a strong army in the new era. We held a grand military parade on National Day, celebrated the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the Navy and the Air Force, and also hosted the 7th Military World Games. The country's first self-developed aircraft carrier was commissioned. The people's army will always serve as a great wall of steel that guards our motherland. Let's salute those loyal soldiers who safeguard our home.

The most memorable moment of 2019 was the celebrations for the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. We cheered for the glorious achievements the People's Republic has made over the past 70 years, and were overwhelmed by the sheer force of patriotism. The formations during the military parade were powerful, and the mass pageant thrilling. Tiananmen Square was turned into a sea of happiness.

All of China was arrayed in red with proud smiles on all faces as the song "My Motherland and I" played throughout the streets and alleys. Patriotic feelings brought tears to our eyes, and patriotic spirit forms the backbone of the Chinese nation. All these merge into a surging current that sings an ode to New China and inspires us to work harder in the new era, filling us with boundless energy.

Over the past year, I have visited many places. Construction of Xiong'an New Area is progressing, Tianjin Port is booming, Beijing's sub-center is thriving, grasslands in Inner Mongolia are splendid, the Hexi Corridor, after thousands of years, is teeming with new life. The winding Yellow River, where the sky is high and waters are wide, sometimes turbulent, sometimes calm; on both banks of the Huangpu River, there is plenty and prosperity, and ribbons of light shine in the night.

Everything is flourishing across our motherland. I traced the routes of China's revolution to strengthen my original aspiration. From Yudu in Jiangxi Province where the Red Army gathered for their Long March, to the Revolution Museum in Xinxian County in Henan Province, the former capital of the Hubei-Henan-Anhui revolutionary base, from the Monument to the West Route Army in Gaotai, Gansu Province, to the revolutionary memorial site in the Fragrant Hills in Beijing, all these places aroused many feelings and thoughts in my mind. Our original aspiration and mission are our inexhaustible source of motivation during our Long March of the new era.

As usual, no matter how busy I was, I spent time visiting people in the countryside. People shared many of their innermost thoughts with me, and I always keep them in mind. I have also received letters from villagers of the Dulong ethnic group in Gongshan, Yunnan Province; residents of Xiadang township, Shouning County in Fujian Province; soldiers of the Wang Jie Squad; the graduate students of the Class of Champions at Beijing Sport University; and children and senior volunteers from Macao. In my reply letters, I applauded the achievements they had made and sent my best wishes.

Over the past year, many people and their stories touched us deeply. Zhang Fuqing has kept a low profile and stayed true to his original heart despite the great contributions he's made to the nation; Huang Wenxiu dedicated her youth and life to poverty alleviation; 31 fire fighters sacrificed their lives in the line of duty in Muli, Sichuan Province; Du Fuguo sacrificed himself to protect his teammates; and China's Women's National Volleyball Team won the World Cup in an eleven-match winning streak. Numerous unsung heroes, with neither complaint nor regret, with dedication. Ordinary people living extraordinary lives.

In the year of 2019, China continued to open its arms wide to embrace the world. We hosted the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, the Beijing International Horticultural Exhibition, the Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations, and the second China International Import Expo, showcasing a civilized, open and inclusive China to the rest of the world.

I held meetings with many heads of state and government, sharing with them China's proposals, promoting friendship and deepening consensus. A few countries joined hands with us. The number of countries that have diplomatic ties with China now stands at 180. We have friends in every corner of the world.

2020 will be a year of milestone significance. We will finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and realize the first centenary goal. 2020 will also be a year of decisive victory for the elimination of poverty.

The bugle has sounded. We shall all of one heart "add oil." The greater the difficulties, the further we advance, strengthening our weak links even more and laying a more solid foundation to win the hard battle against poverty with determination, to lift all impoverished rural residents and counties out of poverty by current standards as scheduled.

Several days ago, I attended the celebrations marking the 20th anniversary of Macao's return to the motherland and felt heartened for the prosperity and stability in Macao. The successful practice of Macao indicates that the principle of "One Country, Two Systems" is fully applicable, achievable, and popular. In recent months, our hearts have been concerned about the situation in Hong Kong.

Without a harmonious and stable environment, how can people live in peace and enjoy their work! I sincerely wish Hong Kong well and our Hong Kong compatriots well. Hong Kong's prosperity and stability is the wish of Hong Kong compatriots and the expectation of people of our motherland.

Human history, like a river, runs forever, witnessing both peaceful moments and great disturbances. We are not afraid of storms and dangers and barriers. China is determined to walk along the road of peaceful development and will resolutely safeguard world peace and promote common development. We are willing to join hands with people of all countries in the world to build together the Belt and Road Initiative, and push forward the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, and make unremitting efforts for the creation of a beautiful future for mankind.

At this moment, many people are still at their posts, many people are safeguarding peace and security, and many people are working tirelessly. Your hard work is greatly appreciated.

Let's seize the day and live it to the full, and greet the arrival of the year 2020 together. I wish you all a happy new year!

Looking forward to a New Chapter of, China-Pakistan Friendship, Yao jing, Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan

As time flies, we are in the year of 2020. At this wonderful moment of welcoming the third decade of the 21st century, I, on behalf of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Pakistan, would like to extend my sincere New Year greetings to all Pakistani friends.

The year 2019 is of great historic significance for China's development. Over 1.4 billion Chinese people celebrated the 70th anniversary of the founding of the PRC. Over the past 70 years, under the strong leadership of the Communist Party of China, we adhere to the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and have scored remarkable achievements. China's GDP has broken through the threshold of 90 trillion RMB (13.6 trillion USD) in 2018, a great leap forward from over 60 billion RMB (12.3 billion USD) in 1949. The GDP per capita has increased from 119 yuan (23 dollars) to 64644 yuan (9732 dollars). China now stands firmly as the world's second largest economy. Over 700 million people have been lifted out of poverty.

In 2019, China fulfilled its international responsibility and injected positive energy into the international community. With major changes undergoing in the world, China adheres to the principles of peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation, holds high the banner of multilateralism, stabilizes relations with major powers, vigorously promotes mutually beneficial cooperation with neighboring and developing countries, continues to lead the global governance process, and actively promotes regional peace and stability.

China successfully hosted the second 'Belt and Road' Forum for International Cooperation, and advocated for open, green, and inclusive development with a view to achieve a high-quality and high-standard cooperation under the 'Belt and Road Initiative' with people's well-being at focus.

On the complicated international stage, China has become the mainstay for maintaining world peace and stability, and the main force for promoting global development and prosperity.

2019 is also a year of great development of China-Pakistan relations. This year, Prime Minister Imran Khan visited China twice and met with President Xi Jinping three times. The two sides exchanged experience and ideas on building a closer China-Pakistan community of shared future in the new era as well as jointly constructing the Belt and Road with high quality, and made a series of significant achievements.

Over the year of 2019, we have strengthened our mutual trust, mutual understanding and supported each other on issues related to our core interests. China firmly supports Pakistan in safeguarding its national sovereignty, territorial integrity and security, and highly commends Pakistan's efforts to combat terrorism and extremism. China and Pakistan jointly safeguard the important role of the UN Charter in international relations, oppose unilateralism and bullying, uphold international justice, and promote regional peace and stability.

Over the year, we have deepened bilateral cooperation in various fields and connected the Belt and Road Initiative with the 'Naya Pakistan' vision. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has progressed smoothly. We focused on social-economic, industrial and agricultural cooperation. We have finalized 27 priority projects of social development under the CPEC, of which 17 will be launched in the first half of 2020. The second phase of the Free Trade Agreement between China and Pakistan comes into effect on January 1, 2020, and Pakistan's exporting products such as leather, cotton and garment products will enjoy zero-tariff entry into China's market. A large number of Chinese enterprises have actively invested and established branches in Pakistan, covering textile processing, tire manufacturing, motorcycle production, agricultural plantation, steel and etc. It will help Pakistan to enhance its manufacturing and exporting capacity, and bring more job opportunities.

Over the year, we have promoted people-to-people exchanges and continued to strengthen the foundation of friendship between the two countries. 2019 is the year of Sino-Pak local cooperation and we have established 16 local-to-local partnerships. We have imported Pakistani films like 'Parwaaz Hai Junoon', provided training for Pakistani table tennis team in China, invited Pakistani cricket team to visit China. At present, 5 universities in Pakistan have established Confucius Institutes, and 58 universities have joined the CPEC University Consortium. Nearly 30,000 Pakistani students are studying in China with more than 7,000 scholarships.

2020 will be a landmark year of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. China will complete its thirteenth Five-Year Plan,

eliminate absolute poverty completely, build a moderately prosperous society in all respects, 2020 will also be a historical year to usher in a new chapter of win-win cooperation between China and Pakistan. As an iron brother, Pakistan will always be the prior partner in China's external relations.

China and Pakistan will strengthen mutual support and strategic cooperation. As good neighbors, good friends, good partners and good brothers who share weal and woe, we will continue to build upon our mutual trust with the guidance of high-level exchanges, deepen coordination and cooperation on major strategic issues, promote exchanges of governance experience, support each other on issues involving our respective core interests and major concerns, firmly safeguard sovereignty, territorial integrity and national dignity.

China and Pakistan will enhance cooperation to achieve common development. We continue to promote the high-quality development of the CPEC. We will deepen cooperation in trade and investment, support the development of manufacturing industry in Pakistan, increase employment and expand exports, and help Pakistan to accelerate integration into the international industrial chain. China would like to increase technology transfer to Pakistan and expand cooperation with Pakistan in areas such as environmental protection, climate change and water resources management.

China and Pakistan will encourage more people-to-people contacts. In 2020, China will provide 1,800 training opportunities to Pakistan, help build and upgrade more than 50 schools, 50 vocational training centers and 30 hospitals in all areas of Pakistan. We will provide 20,000 scholarships for Pakistan students in the next 3 years. Both sides will hold the 2nd Forum on local-to-local Cooperation between China and Pakistan and carry out more cultural activities. China welcomes more Pakistani friends to visit China, learn more about Chinese culture and promote mutual understanding between two civilizations. China and Pakistan will consolidate international cooperation to work for regional peace. The two countries will strengthen coordination and cooperation on major international and regional issues, jointly safeguard the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, support multilateralism and win-win cooperation, and highlight the representation and voice of developing countries on international affairs.

Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founding father of Pakistan once observed that, only through united efforts can we turn our ideals into reality. Today, China and Pakistan both shoulder the historic mission of achieving national rejuvenation and realizing the great dream of building a prosperous country and a better society. Let's work together to seize the opportunities, overcome the challenges, pursue common development and build upon the China-Pakistan all-weather strategic cooperative partnership forwards a China-Pakistan community of shared future. May Pakistan enjoy prosperity!

CPEC moves successfully as year 2019 ends

By Monitoring Desk

The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is picking up the pace, as the year 2019 comes to an end. The CPEC projects will move on with success and flourish without any odds, reports Gwadar Pro App.

Both, Pakistan and China worked hard with joint efforts to make the outgoing year of economic cooperation and bring maximum benefits to their people. The prime focuses of CPEC in 2019 were developing infrastructure sector and alleviating Pakistan's energy shortage. Most of the CPEC's projects of phase-I have either been completed or are near completion.

For instance, the 230-kilometer-long Lahore-Abdul Hakeem Motorway M-3 and the 392-kilometer-long Multan-Sukkur Motorway (M-5) have been completed and inaugurated.

Senior officials from Pakistani and Chinese governments attended the Multan-Sukkur Motorway during 9th JCC Meeting of CPEC in November 2019.

In the same month, Prime Minister Imran Khan attended the inauguration of Havelian Mansehra Section of KKH Phase II (Thakot -Havelian Section) at Havelian.

In terms of energy project, the Prime Minister Imran Khan also inaugurated the 1,320 MW China Hub Power Generation Plant at Hub, Balochistan. While, Hakla D.I Khan Motorway (285 Km) has most of its work completed so far.

In 2019, the New Gwadar International Airport has made important progress. There was a groundbreaking ceremony of the Airport in March, and its construction work started in October. In Gwadar, the 300 MW Coal Power plant, Faqeer Middle School Expansion Project and Gwadar Port Authority Commercial Complex Project all started construction.

The successful completion of phase I of CPEC projects in 2019 had set a strong foundation for its phase II, which would focus on the development of Special Economic Zones (SEZ), strengthening trade and cultural ties through joint ventures and exchange of delegations.

The second phase of China Pakistan Free Trade Agreement (CPFTA) also developed in 2019 as both the countries completed the legal procedures and formalities to implement the agreement. Under the agreement China granted duty-free access for export of 313 goods, which is expected to help increase exports by tapping Pakistan's potential in agriculture, textile, food, minerals, engineering, and other sectors.

Practices in the past five years have proved that the CPEC construction is not targeting specific regions or groups, but for the whole country of Pakistan and to benefit all the people of Pakistan. CPEC is a win-win model and past few years have proved that if something is done with sincerity and good intentions, result definitely come as desired. Hopes must be kept high that in coming year 2020 and years after, this CPEC will surely prove a fate changer to Pakistan. (Courtesy to Pak Observer)

China gifts old embassy building to Pakistan

By Staff Reporter

China on Friday gifted its old China Embassy building to Pakistan where Foreign Ministry has decided to set up a Foreign Service Academy.

According to details, as a goodwill gesture the Chinese Embassy will hand over the building to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after its complete renovation and will bear the expenses incurred on the renovation of the building. The Foreign Service Academy will be relocated to the building gifted by China after renovation. Sources reported that the renovation of the old building has already been started. In this regard, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi visited the building where he was welcomed by Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan, Yao Jing. The Foreign Minister also extended special thanks of Prime Minister Imran Khan for this good move of China.

Technology transfer, CPEC and agro industry

Naveed Aman Khan

Pakistan expects to use the multi-billion-dollar Chinese investment to significantly enhance its industrial capacity and economic productivity backed by greater energy supply. It anticipates doing this through improved geographical linkages and upgraded road, rail and air transportation systems that facilitate a higher volume of trade flow. It is also eyeing opportunities of transfer of knowledge and technology with its Chinese counterparts. There has been significant progress in the twenty one industrial, eight infrastructure and twelve Gwadar-related projects that have commenced under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) banner with several industrial projects now being operational. Four rail-based mass transit and six provincial projects are also in different stages of feasibility and beyond. In addition to this, nine Special Economic Zones have also been proposed to be set up as part of the CPEC to boost industrial development.

The federal government will set up two SEZs, including the development of an industrial park at Port Qasim near Karachi with 1,500 acres of land. The second SEZ will be in the Islamabad Capital Territory; FATA, AJK, GB and the provinces will have one SEZ each, as well. Punjab aspires to set up an Economic Zone along the M-2 motorway in Sheikhupura district (5,000 acres). Sindh will establish its Special Economic Zone at Dhabeji, 80 km from the Karachi airport (1,000 acres). Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will set up Rashakai Economic Zone at Nowshera (1,000 acres) for fruit, food packaging, textile, stitching and knitting industries. Balochistan will set up an SEZ in Bostan, 23 km from Quetta airport (1,000 acres with 200 acres being developed already) for industries of fruit processing, agriculture machinery, pharmaceuticals, motorbikes assembly, cooking oil, ceramics, cold storage and electrical appliances. Gilgit-Baltistan will establish an SEZ at Moqpondass (250 acres) while AJK will establish a SEZ at Bhimber. In FATA, a boundary wall has been constructed around the Mohmand Marble City with 60 per cent of the site having been developed and the remaining expected to be completed very soon.

There is a wide scope for joint ventures between Pakistani and Chinese SMEs, especially in the fields of logistics, trucking, warehousing, fisheries, horticulture, minerals, food processing, construction dairy and livestock, ICT and allied service, light engineering, apparel and cold storage and supply chain business, etc. The corridor offers enormous opportunities for industry-led economic growth in Pakistan if we are able to take advantage of the emerging opportunities.

Productivity enhancement issue has been focused for every country of the world so as to increase the agricultural supply. The average annual growth attained by Pakistan is attributed to technological progress along with investment in agricultural related physical infrastructure and agricultural research and extension. During Green Revolution, most of the countries in Asia experienced the pivotal role of technological change in enhancing agricultural productivity. Among all types of agricultural expenditures, agricultural research and development is the most important in increasing agricultural productivity and ensuring food security. Various studies have been conducted to explore relationship between public investment and agricultural productivity. In case of Pakistan, a few attempts have been made to determine the relationship between agricultural research and agricultural output with the conclusion that agriculture research has a positive and significant impact on agriculture productivity and yields high rate of return.

The real constraints to transforming Pakistan's agriculture are related to weak and fragmented markets with substantial government intervention especially non-performing land markets, inefficient allocation and use of irrigation water, regulatory environment that discourages investment and reduces market efficiency, primitive rural non-farm economy and limited interface with the modern business practices, rapidly declining public investment with serious under-investment in research and technology development and almost non-existent extension and outreach.

It is further projected that there will be immense pressure on limited surface as well as ground water resources. These challenges could be managed through adopting soil and water conservation technologies, enhanced use of high efficiency irrigation systems, developing drought resistant varieties and introducing climate smart agriculture.

Pakistan needs to upgrade its industry and agriculture technologically. To meet the national needs appropriately conservative ways and means will never work. China has achieved the goal of self sufficiency by opting latest technology. Conservative ways and means have gone obsolete. To meet the needs of 1.35 billion Chinese, the Government of China has decided to go by modern technology. On an emergency basis Pakistan will have to shift its agriculture and Industry on most modern and sophisticated means by all means. (The writer is a freelance journalist based in Islamabad)

Can Chinese aid go green?

Feng Hao

China has come under a great deal of criticism for its funding of carbon intensive projects under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), but some within China see its future in renewables as necessary, both in environmental and economic terms.

China's Energy Research Institute has proposed a "2C Asia" initiative to survey energy supply and demand in Asian nations and work with them to decarbonizes energy systems and meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Researchers believe that China's foreign aid needs to be better targeted and that funding for the initiative could come from the South–South Climate Cooperation Fund set up in 2015, or the China Clean Development Mechanism Fund, which currently supports low-carbon growth domestically.

Rethinking China's foreign investment

How China invests in countries signed up to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) will be crucial to the success or failure of the Paris Agreement. These investments are skewed towards coal power, meaning China is driving countries down higher emission pathways not aligned with the Paris Agreement, according to a recent report by institutions including Tsinghua University.

At the second Belt and Road forum earlier last year, Chinese leaders stressed the BRI should have a "green undertone" and promote sustainable investment. But so far there have only been preliminary discussions about an overseas low-carbon policy framework.

The 2C Asia Initiative is similar to the East Asia Low-Carbon Community proposal put forward in 2016 by another Chinese think-tank, the National Centre for Climate Change Strategy. That didn't garner much attention but it would have brought together the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the Silk Road Fund, the South-South Cooperation Fund and the China Clean Development Mechanism Fund to support low-carbon investments and capacity building in Southeast Asia. Developed economies, such as Korea and Japan, would also have been invited to participate.

Directing aid at clean energy

Researchers say China's aid could support subsidies like feed-in tariffs, which have driven spectacular growth in China's renewables sector, to promote renewable energy across Asia. At the moment, China's climate-related aid is focused on building low-carbon generation – primarily hydropower, with some wind, solar and geothermal too. China also provides aid and equipment, such as solar panels, to Africa, as part of its South–South cooperation efforts. But China's foreign aid has rarely involved supporting or funding macro activities such as energy sector policy and planning. They (researchers) think China may consider shifting foreign aid from traditional infrastructure projects which have high labour costs, towards early-stage funding for clean energy.

Coal power firms on government 'blacklist'

Aid is only a small part of China's foreign spending. The commercial programmes funded by Chinese policy banks have the biggest impact on emissions in Asian nations.

The government can exert some control over policy bank financing through the State Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC) which is responsible for overseeing China's state-owned firms. Since 2017, it has been tightening up overseas investment, with stricter checks on processes, risks and returns and which sectors get financed.

Taking Indonesia as an example, recent research by Greenpeace and Shanxi University of Finance and Economics found that by 2022 many parts of the country will see a surplus of coal power – meaning any Chinese coal power investments there run the risk of becoming uneconomical.

Researchers believe that environmental standards will tighten and carbon costs will become a factor as Belt and Road countries align themselves with the Paris Agreement. Meanwhile, the cost of renewables is falling, increasing the risk that China's overseas coal power assets will fail to be profitable.

Chinese firms investing in power projects overseas have their own concerns. As state-owned enterprises, they have an obligation to increase the value of their assets, and to provide jobs. Some Chinese companies and academics hold that too strict a blacklist will harm both company competitiveness and the broader national interest.

To these concerns researchers say, "The strategic significance of the Belt and Road Initiative goes far beyond the interests of a dozen or more coal-fired power plants. Overall, China has no need to develop or export coal technology, because the country's renewables technology is lower-carbon, greener and more competitive."

Support for renewables firms investing overseas

When it comes to renewable energy firms, overseas investment should be encouraged through simpler approval processes. But as things stand, Chinese renewables developers often struggle in overseas markets, where they lack the subsidies and other forms of support they received domestically. With limited assets, these small firms struggle to obtain bank loans and cannot shoulder much risk. Furthermore, their overseas investments have been hampered by a lack of capital because of delayed subsidy payments from the Chinese government for domestic projects, researchers suggest.

Chinese companies looking to invest overseas must also overcome domestic concerns about the effect of renewables on grids. Looking again at Indonesia, the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources targets 23% of the country's energy mix to be drawn from renewable sources by 2025. But many of its power generators do not want to see a major expansion of wind and solar, citing intermittency concerns.

Yan Bingzhong of the China Renewable Energy Engineering Institute has been involved with China's plans for energy investments in Asian Belt and Road countries. He says particular attention needs to be paid to the scale of renewables development, and coordinated development of power grids and power sources, to ensure local economic needs are met.

(The writer is a researcher at China Dialogue and this article was first published in the magazine)

Pakistan and Germany have friendly bilateral relations

H.E. Mr. Bernhard Schlagheck, German Ambassador called on Federal Minister for Defence, Mr.Pervez Khattak at Islamabad. Federal Minister stated that Pakistan and Germany have friendly bilateral relation and Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Germany. Germany has been helping Pakistan in social sector development. Both the sides appreciated positive growth of Pak-German Bilateral Relations and emphasized on further enhancing their bilateral ties

especially, defence. Federal Minister for Defence, Mr.Pervez Khattak also appreciated the special efforts of German side for market access to Pakistan's products in EU countries and bilateral concessions.

International Conference on "Cross-Regional Media Fusion among the Belt and Road Partners"

By staff Reporter

Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad organized an International Conference on "Cross-Regional Media Fusion among the Belt and Road Partners" at Hotel Margala, Islamabad. Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan - Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information & Broadcasting was the Chief Guest of the occasion.

The Guest Speakers of the Conference included prominent international speakers with media background from Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Iran, Kyrgyz Republic, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan who provided valuable insight regarding the topic.

The session commenced with the opening remarks by Major General Syed Khalid Amir Jaffery HI(M), (Retd), President CGSS who stated that BRI is a comprehensive project to promote regional connectivity.

Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan dilated on the significance of media fusion of BRI states. She stated that President Xi Jinping's vision of BRI is a harbinger of new era of connectivity and will bridge the gap between North and South. Sustainable progress is being made in the CPEC project and emphasis is being made on socioeconomic development and agriculture sector. BRI and CPEC are reshaping the geo-economic landscape and bringing prosperity not only for Pakistan but shared development for the entire region. CPEC has created twenty thousand scholarships for the students of Pakistan and one thousand schools will be developed under this project. Scope of CPEC has been broadened to benefit the people of Pakistan. Dr. Firdous appreciated the positive role of media in Pakistan to eliminate the negative propaganda against CPEC. She stated that organization of such conferences and discussion forums is the major way to exterminate such misconceptions. BRI is the future of the region.

Madam Pang Chunxue, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the People's Republic

of China, Islamabad stated that China is the engine of economic growth and has brought more opportunities for shared development for all partners. China is building a new model that features no conflict, rejects cold war, power politics and creates win-win situation for all. China has promoted peaceful diplomacy and cooperation that aims at building a world with shared prosperity. In a nutshell, peace and stability is the need of the time and BRI is important to achieve this goal. BRI will cut the global cost on trade.

From Uzbekistan, Mr. Ismailov Muzaffar, Chief Editor, UZREPORT, Tashkent presented his views on Uzbekistan's new strategy of development through media integration. He stated that Uzbekistan is working diligently for media development and many new government and private channels have been launched with the objective to create awareness among the masses regarding the real facts of the BRI project. The main focus is to promote useful information and discuss it from methodological point of view.

Representing Azerbaijan, Mr. Shahin Jafarov, Senior Correspondent, Azerbaijan State News Agency, Baku stated that BRI is not only a financial project but is also a cultural project that helps in connecting different communities and promotes regional integration and mutual cooperation. He stated that we have gained infrastructural achievements through BRI and have established six new international airports.

Mr. Asad Inam, CEO, X2O (PVT) Ltd stated that Asia in the past had no comparison with the other continents but through China's initiative of BRI, Asia is now considered as the biggest economies in the world. All this progress that has been made can be promoted through media. Advertising can play a very vital role for BRI. He stated that interaction must be developed on the Government level and international markets must be established to promote regional cooperation.

Mr. Uladzislau Sychevich, Journalist, Publishing House "Belarus Today", Minsk from Belarus in his speech highlighted the strategic importance of Belarus. He stated that geographical position of Belarus is very significant for BRI. In 2016, media international forum was established to promote exchange of information and cooperation. BRI is the key to regional transformation. He stated that Belaurs24 is being broadcasted in 100 countries of the world and telecasts positive news in the BRI information sphere.

Ambassador Akbar Gasemi – Ministry of Foreign Affairs from Iran stressed upon Iran's strategic partnership with Beijing, He stated that we are experiencing international regional development in its critical condition. Pakistan has decisive role being a regional actor for security and development. Media has its constructive role to promote exclusive cooperation in west and Asian region.

Mr. Mudassar Tipu, Director General China, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad highlighted the regional cooperation through the platform of Media. He stated that CPEC is a priority project. Pakistan's media is very vibrant but we must make sure that the news that is being reported is objective and not false. We believe that CPEC is a guaranteed progress initiative and will bring a qualitative shift for Pakistan's image.

The second session commenced with the speech by Dr. Moeed Yusuf, Chairperson Strategic Policy Planning Cell (SPPC), Prime Minister Secretariat, Islamabad who was Guest of the Honor. He stated that BRI must not be observed on infrastructural basis rather it must be analyzed in terms of connectivity. Prime Minister Imran Khan's vision is based on economic diplomacy through integration with global market. South Asia is the least integrated region in the world. BRI is the key pillar in establishing people to people contact. Acceptance and celebration of diversity is the need of the time and information sharing platforms must be developed regarding the BRI project.

Dr. Hunag Chu-xin, Deputy Director General & General Secretary, New Media Research Center, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), Beijing from China presented recommendations on how to deeply integrate media of different regions. He stated that we must make better use of different cooperation platforms in the aspect of more targeted news convergence and distribution and video programs production.

Mr. Noorul Ameen Izzadeen, Deputy Editor, The Sunday Times, Colombo while representing Sri Lanka presented insight on the inter linkages between media industry to strengthen China - Sri Lanka alliance. He stated that BRI is playing a very positive role in promotion and enhancement of bilateral and multilateral relations, promotion of justice, shared values and cooperation. He stated that more awareness must be created regarding BRNN amongst the BRI partners as very less people knows about it. China is the biggest trading partner of Sri Lanka and also the largest donor which will be further enhanced through BRI. From Kyrgyz Republic, Mr. Adilet Adenisov, Expert from President Press Service, Bishkek presented speech on Belt and Road Initiative and opportunities through media exchange. He stated that BRI aims to improve economy of more than 60 countries. BRI covers almost the 75% population of the world and wide range of area is now joined by BRI.

From Tajikistan, Mr. Qanoatullo Saifulloev, "Khovar" News Agency, Dushanbe stated that the goal of BRI is integrated common development. Revival of new Silk Road has created a new phase in the Tajikistan and China relations. Imperative points for Tajikistan is improvement of the transit, construction of highways, tunnels and multilateral cooperation.

Mr. Saeed Javed, Director General External Publicity Wing, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Islamabad stated that BRI is increasing the growth potential of approximately 4.6 billion people contributing 61% of the world's population. BRI is essential for promoting trade and business linkages and absorption of immense resources. BRI is boosting regional cooperation and transportation system. Pakistani media consists almost hundred of of TV channels and thousands of trade publications, therefore electronic media is essential to convey factual information regarding BRI initiative.

Approximately 300 people including diplomats, policy experts and media personalities attended the Conference.

Prime Minister of Pakistan H.E. Imran Khan holds telephonic conversation with Prime Minister of Canada H.E. Justin Trudeau

Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan holds telephonic conversation with Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau to felicitate him on his party's success in the recent general elections and forming the government for the next term.

Prime Minister Imran Khan telephoned his Canadian counterpart Justin Trudeau and felicitated him on his party's success in the recent general elections and forming the government for the next term.

During the conversation, Prime Minister Imran Khan said that, under the leadership of Prime Minister Trudeau, the relationship between Pakistan and Canada would be further broadened.

He apprised the Canadian prime minister of the latest developments in the Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir and the dire human rights and humanitarian situation there.

Prime Minister Imran underlined the need for the immediate removal of the lockdown and other restrictions in place for over four months, defusing tensions in the region, and peaceful resolution of the dispute.

High Commissioner Raza Bashir Tarar and Mrs. Siddiqa Tarar with PM Justin Trudeau during holiday dinner reception hosted by Foreign Minister of Canada, Francois Philippe Champagne at Ottawa.

Pakistan and Turkey are embracing strong relations with every passing day

By Staff Reporter

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser has congratulated the nation on revival of Test Cricket in Pakistan after a decade. The Speaker said that it was a true depiction of the peaceful and prosperous Pakistan.

The Speaker said that Pakistan had been subjected to worst terrorism which affected the peace and stability of the country however, with the concerted counter terrorism strategy of Government, the Armed Forces and law enforcing agencies, successfully uprooted the menace. The Speaker credited Pakistan and Sri Lankan Cricket Board as well as the players of both team to bring test Cricket back to Pakistan. The Speaker wished good luck to both cricket teams and hoped that test Cricket series between Pakistan and Sri Lanka will provide opportunity to Pakistani Cricket fans to witness good cricket at their home ground. He termed Cricket series between Pakistan and Sri Lanka, a good omen and hoped that other Cricket Teams would follow the suit.

Boris Johnson's Conservative Party wins majority in UK election

Boris Johnson

VS

Jeremy Corbyn

By Mian Fazal Elahi / Monitoring Desk

Boris Johnson has done it. The UK Prime Minister has surprised political analysts by leading his Conservative Party to score one of the country's most dramatic electoral victories in decades. The result is a vindication of Johnson's strategy to campaign on a single promise to "get Brexit done."

The Conservatives had secured 365 of the 650 seats in the House of Parliament, well ahead of Labour's 203 seats. The Liberal Democrats have 11 seats, while the Scottish National Party posted big gains in Scotland, with 48 seats.

That gives Johnson a comfortable majority in the House of Commons and paves the way for Brexit to take place at the end of January.

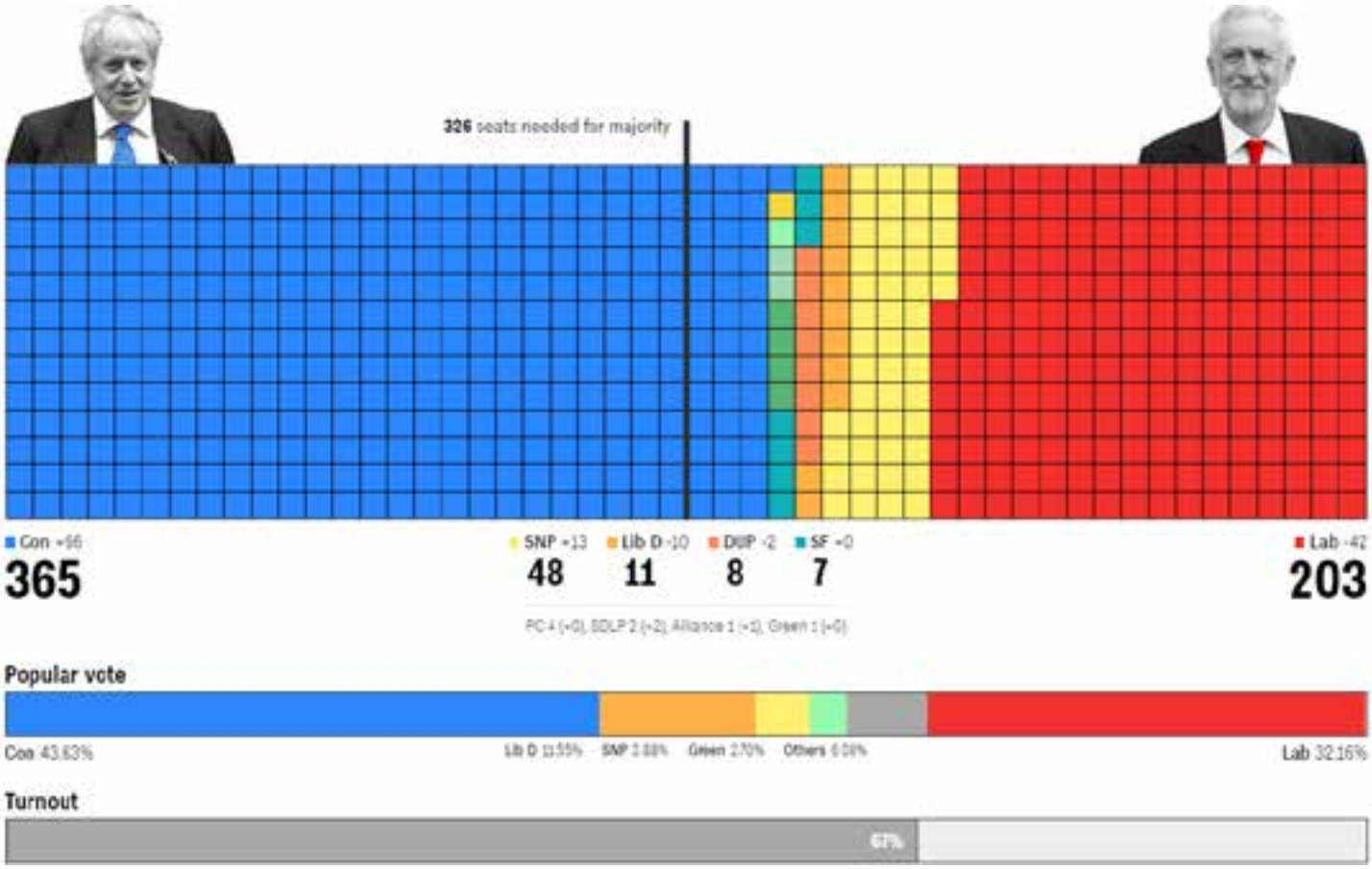
"We did it," the PM said at a victory rally. "We broke the deadlock, we smashed the roadblock," he told a cheering room. "A new dawn rises on a new day.

We did it," the PM said at a victory rally. "We broke the deadlock, we smashed the roadblock," he told a cheering room. "A new dawn rises on a new day.

"You may only have lent us your vote, you may not consider yourself a natural Tory," Johnson said. "Your hand may have quivered over the ballot paper before you put your cross in the Conservative box and you may intend to return to Labour next time round. And if that is the case, I am humbled that you have put your trust in me and that you have put your trust in us.

"I, and we, will never take your support for granted," Johnson added.

It was a crushing defeat for the opposition Labour Party, whose leader, Jeremy Corbyn, said he would step down after a "process of reflection." And the leader of the pro-Remain Liberal Democrat party, Jo Swinson, lost her seat, as the Scottish National Party swept the board in Scotland.



He said the results mean Brexit will happen by January 31 "no ifs, no buts" and that it has put an end to "all those miserable threats of a second referendum."

"I will make it my mission to work night and day, flat out, to prove that you were right in voting for me this time, and to earn your support in the future."

More female MPs won seats in this election than ever before, according to the Press Association news agency, breaking the previous record of 208 set in 2017. A total of 221 women have been elected.

Female Conservative candidates won 86 seats -- the most the party has ever had -- and more than 50% of Labour MPs are now female. Women, however, still make up just over a third of lawmakers.

The theme of the night became clear early on when one of the first constituencies to declare a result, Blyth Valley, went to the Conservatives. The Labour Party had held the seat since it was created in 1950. This was a big victory for the Tories -- and one of many more to come.

It was a scene that repeated itself throughout the night in parish halls, leisure centers and gymnasiums across the country. The Labour crowd was left watching jubilant Conservatives snatching away one seat after another.

As the results trickled in, the scale of the collapse in the Labour vote became apparent. In Workington, Labour's Shadow Environment Secretary Sue Hayman lost her seat to Conservative Mark Jenkinson, another sign that Johnson's strategy had worked.

The traditionally Labour, pro-Brexit constituency was a key target for the Tories. "Workington Man," a white, older, working-class man who supports Brexit, became a key demographic in the campaign.

This was very much a Brexit election and, in the end, Johnson's campaign promise to "Get Brexit Done" appears to have swayed the vote.

The result is a clear indication that voters are tired of the country being stuck in a limbo and want to move on. Johnson has already struck a Brexit "divorce" deal with Brussels, but failed to pass it through Parliament after Remain-backing Conservatives rebelled.

Having purged the rebels from his own party, and with his newly acquired majority, that should no longer be a problem. Once the UK leaves the European Union, Johnson plans to immediately start negotiating a new trade agreement with the bloc.

He pledged to secure a deal by the end of 2020, before the end of the so-called transition period during which the UK will be formally out of the EU, but still subject to all its rules and regulations. The transition period is designed to prevent a hard landing. This election result will undoubtedly shape the trade negotiations, and could lead to a softer version of Brexit -- one that would see the UK staying more aligned to the EU. That's because his large majority means Johnson will no longer need to please the hard-line Brexiteers in his party in order to get his legislation through Parliament.

Photo by: Ramzan Mughal

Interview by Mian Fazal Elahi

Austria-Pakistan's Bilateral Trade Relations on an Upswing

H.E. Mr. Nicolaus Keller, Ambassador of Austria to Pakistan

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

Your Excellency! Being appointed as an ambassador in Pakistan. How do you find conduct of people in Pakistan and what was your opinion about Pakistan before moving here?

Pakistan was the country of my choice; I applied for this posting since I wanted to discover the rich culture and history of this region of the world. What I didn't expect to this extend is the incredible hospitality of Pakistanis and this applies to all parts I went to, since I first arrived more than one year ago. From Karachi to Lahore, Peshawar to Multan and the Salt range till Skardu, everywhere I found helpful and friendly people wanting to show me their country.

How do you see the bilateral ties between Pakistan and Austria? What are the incentives you have taken in your ongoing tenure for the betterment of bilateral relation?

It is of outmost importance to exactly know each – that's why I am travelling a lot, to learn to know Pakistan and all its regions – and to speak with each other, so we can join forces in addressing issues and solve problems we might encounter. Nevertheless Austria as a little country –compared to Pakistan – is channeling most of its efforts through EU programs and policies, so we have the necessary leverage and means to interact and help. I think it is important for Pakistan to understand the way EU Members work together and that most of the added value European countries can provide to Pakistan is based on a common approach and projects by the EU.

As Ambassador your role is very crucial in the bilateral ties and have keen eye on International relations. My questions is that how do you see the current polarization in bilateral ties among the nations?

Austria and the European Union are in favor of so called Multilateralism, what means that all concerned parties and countries should be in dialogue with each other to tackle and solve our common problems. With global warming and other big challenges ahead, this is the way to go to ensure, that our children will inherit a livable world from us.

Your Excellency! In terms of bilateral trade with Pakistan would you like to share the information of volume for trade and the products which are import/export between the two countries? And how do you see the export opportunities for Pakistani businesses to Austria?

ÖSTERREICHS AUSSENHANDEL:

LÄNDERGLIEDERUNG

Jänner - Dezember 2017/2018

Quelle: STATISTIK AUSTRIA; Endgültige Werte

Ursprungs-/Bestimmungsland	EINFUHR 2017 in 1000 Euro	EINFUHR 2018 in 1000 Euro	Veränderung z.Vj. in %	AUSFUHR 2017 in 1000 Euro	AUSFUHR 2018 in 1000 Euro	Veränderung z.Vj. in %
ASIEN:						
China	8.505.433	9.110.251	7,1	3.698.899	4.055.487	9,6
Japan	2.149.015	2.240.202	4,2	1.382.183	1.529.406	10,7
Südkorea	845.460	860.099	1,7	1.289.719	1.328.256	3,0
Indien	825.372	946.150	14,6	754.553	923.529	22,4
Vereinigte Arab.Emirate	154.473	97.593	-14,7	610.470	554.140	-9,2
Malaysia	357.914	376.104	5,1	504.900	539.838	6,9
Hongkong	137.712	222.037	61,2	530.775	506.467	-4,6
Taiwan	678.541	744.938	9,8	384.318	499.640	30,0
Singapur	141.090	181.380	28,6	388.933	416.445	7,1
Israel	169.938	188.827	11,1	398.636	371.991	-6,7
Saudi-Arabien	64.196	59.722	-7,0	367.693	343.654	-6,5
Thailand	610.650	639.773	4,8	282.440	278.152	-1,5
Iran	119.301	457.465	283,5	301.685	268.273	-11,1
Indonesien	279.669	290.819	4,0	247.773	231.449	-6,6
Vietnam	858.462	820.479	-4,4	252.802	225.673	-10,7
Pakistan	166.563	168.907	1,4	151.558	171.958	13,5
Kasachstan	944.841	1.452.838	53,8	148.933	137.324	-7,8
Philippinen	139.762	173.037	23,8	178.382	137.252	-23,1
Katar	21.997	17.412	-20,8	105.623	116.077	9,9
Kuwait	1.272	2.504	96,8	85.095	113.474	33,4
Georgien	8.066	9.283	15,1	55.283	96.474	74,5
Usbekistan	2.470	4.302	74,1	42.274	83.550	97,6
Bangladesch	697.339	746.038	7,0	77.258	76.246	-1,3
Irak	339.388	274.783	-19,0	83.590	68.103	-18,5
Sri Lanka	83.290	108.161	29,9	42.536	62.372	46,6
Oman	1.235	2.140	73,3	88.693	59.176	-33,3
Aserbaidschan	362.359	367.637	1,5	59.582	54.263	-8,9
Libanon	3.883	4.390	13,1	54.066	52.077	-3,7
Bahrain	30.648	39.579	29,1	34.782	44.415	27,7
Jordanien	7.829	4.701	-40,0	51.185	35.900	-29,9
Laos	4.594	2.936	-36,1	48.186	27.834	-42,2
Armenien	4.382	7.703	75,8	17.570	21.203	20,7
Mongolei	2.379	6.462	171,6	10.748	21.038	95,7
Turkmenistan	966	1.610	66,6	29.559	20.949	-29,1
Myanmar	87.413	112.069	28,2	15.288	9.663	-36,8
Syrien	896	980	9,3	7.629	9.651	26,5
Kirgisistan	1.268	214	-83,2	9.057	8.876	-2,0
Kambodscha	223.705	238.979	6,8	2.131	8.159	282,8
Afghanistan	230	444	92,8	8.546	6.773	-20,7
Jemen	275	84	-69,6	7.216	5.627	-22,0
Malediven	1.937	1.238	-36,1	5.557	5.423	-2,4
Tadschikistan	106	300	183,5	9.335	4.407	-52,8
Nepal	2.928	2.509	-14,3	4.995	4.034	-19,2
Macau	2.108	941	-55,4	2.488	3.346	34,5
Besetzte palästin.Gebiete	150	187	24,2	3.624	2.004	-44,7
Timor-Leste	0	1	-	788	1.181	49,9
Brunei	123	205	65,9	378	1.026	171,4
Bhutan	127	46	-64,2	2.878	702	-75,6
Nordkorea	925	1.069	15,5	14	60	337,0
ASIEN	**19.002.685**	**20.989.526**	**10,5**	**12.840.605**	**13.543.020**	**5,5**

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

In the past we had quite a strong presence with Austrian specialties like Woerle/ Happy Cow Cheese, Rauch Fruit Juices and the famous energy drink Red Bull. We are also invested in the petroleum industry with OMV and try help developing the hydropower business in Pakistan, with the world leading company with Andritz Hydro.

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

Austria does not only want to contribute bilaterally to the cultural life in Pakistan with exhibitions, film festivals or concerts. We also plan to form together with other EU-countries a new EUNIC cluster by 2020, where European Union National Institutes for Culture work together to realize common projects, presenting European culture. Soon you should see the first EUNIC projects starting nationwide.

Is there any high level delegation expected to come to Pakistan from Austria in near future?

Since at the moment we have an expert government and after the recent elections, coalition negotiations to form a new government are on the way, there is no high ranking visit planned to date, since no new government is in place.

Your Excellency! Would you like to share the agreements in education sector between

Pakistan and Austria government? What is the role playing by Austrian Government for their development and nurturing

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

Towards the beginning of my career I was posted in countries which went through challenging times, like for example the civil war in Macedonia in 2001 or the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2005. But it is in such periods, that diplomats can play a really important role by facilitating negotiations and understanding between the respective parties and also by reporting accurately and so helping to shape the position of our respective government and so helping to resolve conflicts.

Your Excellency! How do you see the role of 'Diplomatic Focus' in enhancing the bilateral ties of Pakistan with other countries of the world? And any message you want to give to the readers of the 'Diplomatic Focus?

The Diplomatic Focus plays an important role in the diplomatic community in Islamabad and beyond, since we all get quality journalism and accurate information about Pakistan's relations to the world and important happenings within the country. Keep up the good work!

Thanks a lot Your Excellency! For giving us some of your precious time from your busy schedule and of course for your nice talk

Group Photo of Foreign Diplomats at Graduation Ceremony of 27th junior diplomatic course hel at Ministry of Foreign Affaris, Islamabad.

Graduation Ceremony 27th Junior Diplomatic Course at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

By Staff Reporter

The graduation ceremony of 6-week long junior diplomatic course was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Ms. Andleeb Abbas was the Chief Guest. Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood also attended the graduation ceremony. They also distributed the certificates. Parliamentary Secretary, in her address, said that the Junior Diplomatic course was an excellent step towards building bonds of friendship and cooperation between Pakistan and the countries that were represented by the diplomats. She also underlined the importance of diplomacy as fundamental tool to promote peace and strengthen relations. She added that the diplomats of these countries would be ambassadors of Pakistan in their countries. Highlighting Pakistan's special focus on the African continent, the Parliamentary Secretary termed it as "continent of the future". She said that Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized an Envoys Conference on "Engage Africa", to chart out a roadmap to further strengthen and deepen its relationship with Africa. She said that Prime Minister Imran Khan was ambassador of peace and his vision of "peaceful neighbourhood" was a cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy. Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher, Director General, Foreign Service Academy (FSA), said that the course helped to create better understanding of Pakistan's foreign policy and conducive economic environment in Pakistan. He said that the course also provided a unique networking opportunity. He further said that the Academy was imparting training not only for Pakistani diplomats but also for the foreign diplomats since 1981 and have trained over 1400 FSP officers and 1372 diplomats from 107 Countries. He congratulated the participants to become part of FSA Alumni. The Mauritian diplomat, speaking on behalf of the participants, said that the course would create a network between our countries and help in strengthening bonds of durable relations. She said that Junior diplomatic course was a testimony of the strong desire and commitment of the Government of Pakistan to strengthen relations with friendly countries. She also said that all diplomats benefitted from the experience and knowledge of senior Pakistani diplomats, eminent scholars and personalities. Nineteen diplomats from fourteen friendly countries i.e. Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guinea Iran Madagascar, Maldives Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Nepal, Nigeria, Palestine and Tunisia participated in the course.

Door to Japan Opens for Pakistani Youth

By M. Bilal Zafar

1st MOC signed between Japan and Pakistan on import of Pakistani workforce. A new Visa category is being launched for the Pakistani workforce willing to work in Japan. - "Skilled Category Visa" will enable Pakistani employees to work in 14 different sectors of Japan including Information Technology, Agriculture, Nursing, Information Services, Industries and others. "This MOC will enable young Pakistani workforce to have easy access to new jobs in Japan" Zulfi Bukhari. "Japan requires 300,000 workforce in future, this memorandum will fulfill the desired need of Japan" 1st MOC signed between Japan and Pakistan on import of Pakistani workforce. Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis and HRD, Zulfi Bukhari and Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, H.E. Mr MATSUDA Kuninori witnessed the signing ceremony. The Special Advisor to Japanese President for Foreign Affairs, H.E Mr Sonoura Kentaro signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with Federal Secretary of the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis, Amir Hassan. Under this MOC, a new Visa category is being launched for the Pakistani workforce willing to work in Japan. "Skilled Category Visa" will enable Pakistani employees to work in 14 different sectors of Japan including Information Technology, Agriculture, Nursing, Information Services, Industries and others. The knowledge of the basics of Japanese language would be mandatory to apply for the respective category Visa. Under the memorandum, Japan to build a network with Language University in Pakistan to carry out 3 to 6 months Japanese language proficiency course so as to help Pakistani workforce to apply in Skilled Visa Category. These courses will also facilitate Pakistanis living in far flung areas by providing e-learning facility and provide equal opportunities to maximum number of Pakistanis to work in Japan. While addressing at the ceremony, Bukhari said "Pakistan's 65% population falls below 35 years of age. This MOC will enable young Pakistani workforce to have easy access to new jobs in Japan. In return, it will bring prosperity to Pakistani population. Japan requires 300,000 workforce in future, this memorandum will fulfill the desired need of Japan." He further asked young Pakistanis to focus more on information technology due to growing trends towards this very sector for future reference. The Special Advisor of the Japanese President, H.E. Mr SONOURA Kentaro said that Pakistan and Japan have strong diplomatic ties for past 70 years. Currently, more than 80 Japanese companies are working in Pakistan. Japan wishes to invest more in industrial sector in future. Till now, 1500 Pakistanis have been sent to Japan through Overseas Ministry. This Memorandum will open new pathways for Pakistanis to work in Japan.

> Japan requires **300,000** workforce in future, this memorandum will fulfill the desired need of Japan,
>
> Zulfi Bukhari

Citizenship Amendment Bill: India's new 'anti-Muslim' law

By Monitoring Desk

India's parliament has passed a bill which offers amnesty to non-Muslim illegal immigrants from three neighboring countries. The bill provides citizenship to religious minorities from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. The government, led by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), says this will give sanctuary to people fleeing religious persecution.

Critics say the bill is part of a BJP agenda to marginalise Muslims. The Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) passed the upper house of parliament, where the BJP lacks a majority, by 125 votes to 105 on 11 December. It had cleared the lower house two days earlier.

The bill has already prompted widespread protests in the north-east of the country which borders Bangladesh, as many people there say they will be "overrun" by immigrants from across the border.

What does the bill say?

The CAB amends the 64-year-old Indian Citizenship law, which currently prohibits illegal migrants from becoming Indian citizens. It defines illegal immigrants as foreigners who enter India without a valid passport or travel documents, or stay beyond the permitted time. Illegal immigrants can be deported or jailed.

The new bill also amends a provision which says a person must have lived in India or worked for the federal government for at least 11 years before they can apply for citizenship.

Now there will be an exception for members of six religious minority communities - Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian - if they can prove that they are from Pakistan, Afghanistan or Bangladesh. They will only have to live or work in India for six years to be eligible for citizenship by naturalisation, the process by which a non-citizen acquires the citizenship or nationality of that country. It also says people holding Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards - an immigration status permitting a foreign citizen of Indian origin to live and work in India indefinitely - can lose their status if they violate local laws for major and minor offences and violations.

Why is the bill controversial?

Opponents of the bill say it is exclusionary and violates the secular principles enshrined in the constitution. They say faith cannot be made a condition of citizenship.

The constitution prohibits religious discrimination against its citizens, and guarantees all persons equality before the law and equal protection of the law. Delhi-based lawyer Gautam Bhatia says that by dividing alleged migrants into Muslims and non-Muslims, the bill "explicitly and blatantly seeks to enshrine religious discrimination into law, contrary to our long-standing, secular constitutional ethos". Historian Mukul Kesavan says the bill is "couched in the language of refuge and seemingly directed at foreigners, but its main purpose is the delegitimisation of Muslims' citizenship". Critics say that if it is genuinely aimed at protecting minorities, the bill should have included Muslim religious minorities who have faced persecution in their own countries.

What is the history of the bill?

The Citizen Amendment Bill was first put before parliament in July 2016.

The legislation cleared parliament's lower house where the BJP has a large majority, but it did not pass in the upper house, after violent anti-migrant protests in north-eastern India. The protests were particularly vocal in Assam state, which in August saw two million residents left off a citizens' register. Illegal migration from Bangladesh has long been a concern in the state.

The CAB is seen as being linked to the register, although it is not the same thing. The National Register of Citizens (NRC) is a list of people who can prove they came to the state by 24 March 1971, a day before neighbouring Bangladesh became an independent country.

In the run-up to its publication, the BJP had supported the NRC, but a changed tack day before the final list was published, saying it was error-ridden. The reason for that was a lot of Bengali Hindus - a strong voter base for the BJP - were also left out of the list, and would possibly become illegal immigrants.

How is the citizens' register linked to the bill?

The two are closely linked, because the Citizenship Amendment Bill will help protect non-Muslims who are excluded from the register and face the threat of deportation or internment.

This means tens of thousands of Bengali Hindu migrants who were not included in the NRC can still get citizenship to stay on in Assam state.

Later, Home Minister Amit Shah proposed a nationwide register of citizens to ensure that

"each and every infiltrator is identified and expelled from India" by 2024.

"If the government goes ahead with its plan of implementing the nationwide NRC, then those who find themselves excluded from it will be divided into two categories: (predominantly) Muslims, who will now be deemed illegal migrants, and all others, who would have been deemed illegal migrants, but are now immu nized by the Citizenship Amendment Bill if they can show that their country of origin is Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan," Mr Bhatia said.

Taken together, the NRC and CAB have the "potential of transforming India into a majoritarian polity with gradations of citizenship rights," said sociologist Niraja Gopal Jaya.

Indian occupied Kashmir remains under siege

By M. Bilal Zafar/ Monitoring Desk

On December 31st, the lockdown imposed in occupied Kashmir on August 5 by the Indian government crossed 140 days. The security and communication clampdown has now entered its fourth month.

With international pressure mounting to restore freedoms, Indian authorities claim they have 'eased' some restrictions, such as lifting roadblocks and restoring landlines and some mobile phone services. The scenario for 12.5 million Kashmiris, however, is far from normal.

The shutdown disrupted business and schools and demoralised the people. Mass arrests of Kashmiri leaders were made as the government announced revoking the special status of occupied Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Indian constitution.

Frustration, anger and fear have been growing in occupied Kashmir. When the Hindu nationalist-led government of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi stripped the region of its semi-autonomous status and imposed a curfew and a communications blackout.

The Indian government deployed thousands of troops to the already heavily militarised region to quell potential dissent. It also cut off internet access, put politicians under house arrest and shut down schools. Millions have been left isolated from the world, with concerns raised about lack of medical supplies in the area. The crisis has upended the education of millions of children in the disputed Himalayan region, and many have been caught up in street violence.

Reports from the region also suggest that children some as young as 14 have been injured in actions by government forces.

Following the move, protests broke out in the occupied region. Several elected representatives as well as journalists and lawyers were arrested or detained. Indian security forces had arrested thousands of people. The same day Prime Minister Imran Khan questioned whether the global community would have the "moral courage" to stop a possible genocide from taking place in Indian-occupied Kashmir. Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the disputed territory was stripped of its autonomy to free it from "terrorism and separatism". United Nations chief Antonio Guterres called for India "to refrain from taking steps that could affect the status of Jammu and Kashmir".

As the restrictions continued, journalists were unable to report from the ground and were forced to hand-carry dispatches out of the disputed region. Pakistan formally downgraded its trade relations with India to the level of Israel with which Islamabad has no trade ties at all. It also suspended Samjhauta Express train service between Pakistan and India as well as other train and bus services.

Continuing its effort to highlight the Kashmir issue, Pakistan observed Independence Day as 'Kashmir Solidarity Day'. The next day, on August 15, India's day of independence was observed as Black Day in Pakistan to protest the ongoing brutalities and human rights abuses in occupied Kashmir.

Simultaneously, thousands of people, many waving Pakistani and Kashmiri flags, protested outside the Indian High Commission in London in support of the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir. As the protests continued, for the first time since 1965, the UN Security Council (UNSC) held a meeting on exclusively on occupied Jammu and Kashmir, nullifying India's claim that this was an internal matter.

As world leaders issued condemnations, among them was UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet who said that she was "deeply concerned" about the situation in the region. Even so, reports continue to surface of deaths and detentions, painting a grisly picture of what life in the Valley has become for Kashmiris and how the world looks on.

Dozens of journalists held a sit-in protest against the ongoing communication blackout in the disputed Himalayan region, describing the blockade of the internet and mobile phones as a government-imposed gag. The journalists, holding placards and wearing black bands, said the government was muzzling the press in the region and demanded that the internet and mobile connectivity be restored.

A joint statement issued by 11 Kashmir-based journalists' associations read: "How long can the journalists of Valley rely solely on official releases and occasional press briefings that have always been a one-way communication?"

Currently, the Supreme Court of India is hearing multiples pleas challenging the communication blockade in occupied Kashmir, the illegal detention of children, and the impact of restrictions on healthcare. So far, however, no order has been passed as petitioners and the people of occupied Kashmir await some relief.

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

QATAR NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATED IN ISLAMABAD

The Embassy of the State of Qatar to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan held a reception hosted by His Excellency Saqr bin Mubarak Al-Mansouri, Ambassador of Qatar in Islamabad on the occasion of Qatar National Day. The ceremony was also attended by a number of ambassadors of Arab & foreign countries and a number of members of the diplomatic corps, ministers of state, regional ministers, members of the parliament & the Senate, a number of businessmen & directors of the Pakistani Foreign Ministry and senior officials of the state & Pakistani society.

During the ceremony, a number of cultural and media programs were played, as well as a special pavilion for publications that highlighted the various aspects of the renaissance and the State's march and the achievements made in various fields.

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Mr. Nizar Ahmed Nabih, Chargé d'Affaires of the State of Libya, hosted the meeting of the ambassadors of the African Group accredited in Pakistan _ on Monday 9/12/2019. The meeting was attended by the ambassadors of (Algeria - Tunisia - Morocco - Somalia - Palestine - Nigeria - Kenya - Mauritius - Egypt - Sudan) The meeting was chaired by Ambassador Julius Pettock, High Commissioner of the Republic of Kenya

The Speaker NA Asad Qaiser credited Pakistan and Sri Lankan Cricket Board & players of both team to bring test Cricket back to Pakistan

By Staff Reporter

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser has congratulated the nation on revival of Test Cricket in Pakistan after a decade. The Speaker said that it was a true depiction of the peaceful and prosperous Pakistan.

The Speaker said that Pakistan had been subjected to worst terrorism which affected the peace and stability of the country however, with the concerted counter terrorism strategy of Government, the Armed Forces and law enforcing agencies, successfully uprooted the menace. The Speaker credited Pakistan and Sri Lankan Cricket Board as well as the players of both team to bring test Cricket back to Pakistan. The Speaker wished good luck to both cricket teams and hoped that test Cricket series between Pakistan and Sri Lanka will provide opportunity to Pakistani Cricket fans to witness good cricket at their home ground. He termed Cricket series between Pakistan and Sri Lanka, a good omen and hoped that other Cricket Teams would follow the suit.

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

56th Anniversary of Independence Day of Republic of Kenya

H.E. Prof. Julius Bitok High Commissioner of Republic of Kenya to Pakistan celebrated 56th anniversary of Independence Day of Republic of Kenya in Islamabad. Cake cutting ceremony also took place on the event. Chairman of special committee on Kashmir Syed Fakhar Imam was the chief guest on the occasion. Members from diplomatic community, High dignitaries, Government officials and media persons also graced the occasion.

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

INDEPENDENCE DAY OF KAZAKHSTAN

Ambassador of Republic of Kazakhstan H.E. Akan Rakhmetullin hosted a dinner reception on the Independence Day of Kazakhstan. Federal Minister for privatization Mohammad Mian samroo was the chief guest on the occasion. Cake cutting ceremony also taken place on the occasion of Independence Day. Members from diplomatic community, High dignitaries, Government officials and media persons also graced the occasion.

Day of the
Republic

Republic

Republic

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Anniversary of His Majesty the King's Accession to the Throne and the National Day of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain H.E. Mr. Mohamed Ebrahim Mohamed Abdulqader celebrated the Anniversary of His Majesty the King's Accession to the Throne and the National Day of the Kingdom of Bahrain at Serena Hotel. Sheikh Rasheed was the chief guest on the occasion. Members from diplomatic community, High dignitaries, Government officials and media persons also graced the occasion.

of His Majesty the
Throne and the
dom of Bahrain

Celebrating
King's A
National

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

The National Day of the Kingdom of Thailand and Thailand's Father's Day Celebrated in Islamabad

The Royal Thai Embassy in Islamabad held a ceremony to pay tribute to His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej in commemoration of His Birthday Anniversary, the National Day of the Kingdom of Thailand and Thailand's Father's Day in Marriott Hotel. After the ceremony, H.E. Mr. Pornpop Uampidhaya, the Ambassador of Thailand, hosted dinner to celebrate Thai National Day with Thai participants Members from diplomatic community, High dignitaries, Government officials and media persons. Minister of science and Technology Mr. Fawad Chaudhry was the chief guest on the occasion.

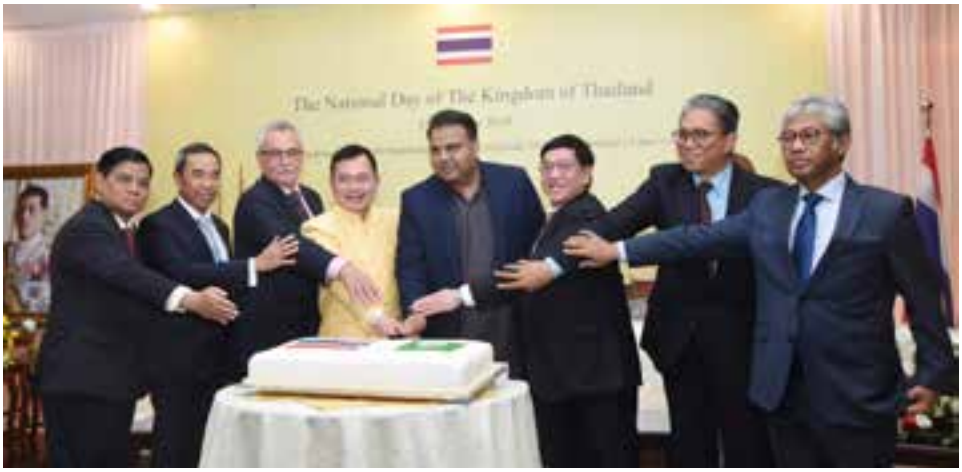


Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Mountain Film Festival "Nuovimondi"

H.E. Stefano Pontecorvo Ambassador of Republic of Italy to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan organized the best of Nuovimondi festival at the grand Ambassador Hotel Islamabad. Sayed Z. Bukhari Special Assistant to PM of Pakistan on Overseas Pakistanis & HRD Chairman National Tourism Board was the chief guest on the occasion. H.E. Stefano Pontecorvo renewed thanked to Sayed Z. Bukhari for having honored joining Mountain Film Festival and for his impressive impromptu address. Ambassador also added, it is a real pleasure and privilege to cooperate with you in concretely furthering our bilateral cooperation on tourism and youth.

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Palestine celebrated 31st Independence Day

Embassy of Palestine celebrated 31st Independence Day in Islamabad and 7th anniversary of Palestine accepted as non-member observer state in Islamabad Serena Hotel. Ghulam Sarwar Khan Federal Minister for Aviation was the chief guest on the occasion. Cake cutting ceremony also taken place on the occasion of Independence Day. Members from diplomatic community, High dignitaries, Government officials and media persons also graced the occasion.

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Tribute to National Leaders

Tree Plantation Ceremony & Seminar on "Education Policy of Heydar Aliyev and Muhammad Ali Jinnah" held at National Library of Pakistan in Islamabad, on December 11, 2019

and dedicated it as a Remembrance Day of National Leader of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan H.E Ali Alizada, Dr. Nadeem Malik, Dr. Haider Ali Khan, was the keynote speaker on the occasion. Mr. Shafqat Mahmood Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training was the chief guest on the occasion.

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Telenor, Serena Hotels collaboration

By Staff Reporter, To ensure seamless connectivity for tourists and guests, Telenor Pakistan, in partnership with Serena Hotels Pakistan, has launched a revolutionary, first-of-its-kind digital platform.

The solution, called 'S TEL,' will be a complimentary service for Serena Hotel guests allowing them to enjoy free international and local calls along with 4G internet and hotspot options, all packed in a dedicated smartphone placed in their rooms. S Tel was unveiled at an event held at Serena Hotel here where management of both organisations was present alongside their teams.

Telenor's 'S TEL' works as seamlessly as it meets the connectivity challenges of travelers while on the move. Through this platform, the guests will be able to stay in touch with the hotel for their basic amenities and also connect with their friends and family around the world. "Telenor Pakistan's 'S TEL' is an innovative breakthrough not only in Pakistan's but the region's hospitality industry," said Irfan Wahab Khan, CEO Telenor Pakistan and Head of Emerging Asia Cluster Telenor Group, while sharing his thoughts on the development. "We pride in being industry leaders in introducing technological innovations and after our digital interventions on agriculture and social inclusion fronts, we are now aiming to transform businesses by providing them state of the art solutions that makes their processes more efficient. I'm pleased to partner with Serena Hotel for this solution and hopeful that this partnership will go a long way in setting new trends that are necessary to boost the tourism and hospitality industry in Pakistan." Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels – South & Central Asia, said his organisation was ecstatic to have partnered with Telenor Pakistan for making the digital platform a reality.

Photo by Ramzan Mughal

Mahathir Mohamad Prime Minister of Malaysia gifted a Proton car to PM Imran Khan

Prime Minister Imran Khan has been gifted a Proton car by Malaysian counterpart, Mahathir Mohamad, according to sources. The X-70 Proton will be handed over to PM Imran Khan in a ceremony. The car will be received by the Financial Advisor on trade, Razzak Dawood. The Malaysian Prime Minister had announced the gift for Prime Minister Imran Khan during his visit to Pakistan earlier in August. Mahathir Mohamad had also announced to set up an assembly plant of the vehicle manufacturer in Pakistan. PROTON Holdings Berhad is a Malaysian automotive company and automobile corporation active in automobile design, manufacturing, distribution and sales.

INVISIBLE BRACES

Now in Pakistan

DENTAL IMPLANTS

Dr. Abrar & Associates

D E N T A L S U R G E O N S

House # 6-A. Ismail Zabeeh Road, (Service Road Parallel to Faisal Avenue) F-8/3, Islamabad.
e-mail: abrar_associates@ yahoo.com | www.drabrarassociates.com
Ph: +92 51 228 7691 / +92 51 228 7692 | Fax: +92 51 228 7693

freeline MOVERS

PACKING, SHIPPING & FREIGHT FORWARDING

Our strength is "thinking in the box" !!!

At Freeline Movers, we do not replicate the mainstream just for the sake of it but value your possessions by handling them with an extra care & responsibility because we know, they are your life.
When the whole world is thinking out of the box,
"we think in the box"
To reaffirm our commitment that we really care !

IATA IAM FIDI FIATA ERC TÜV AUSTRIA CERTIFIED EN ISO 9001

www.freelinemovers.com

TOPS

Since 1969

For the First Time
in Pakistan
Now Available in a
Convenient
New Pouch Pack

The Secret
Ingredient
is Fruit

TOPS
NR 300ML
NOW
AVAILABLE IN
RING PULL
CAP

murreebrewerycompany

www.murreebrewery.com

SERENA HOTELS

telenor 4G

S-tel, makes your stay easy

Connectivity | Mobility | Convenience

A revolutionary service brought by Telenor Pakistan in Partnership with Serena, offering unlimited 4G internet, local and internatioal calls, hotspot options and access to hotel services even when you are away.

serenahotelsofficial

serenahotelsofficial

serena_hotels

SINCE 1973

SPC

SAEED PROPERTY CENTRE (PVT.) LTD.

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Wishing You & Your Family
Warmest Season's Greetings

47 Years In Real Estate

Sheikh Abdul Waheed
CEO
Saeed Property Centre (PVT) LTD.
&
Former Vice President
Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Cell: 0333-5117775

Sheikh Tayyab Saeed
Director Marketing
Saeed Property Centre (PVT) LTD.
Cell: 0323-5117775

Suite # 3, 1st Floor, Block C, Super Market, F-6 Markaz, Islamabad-Pakistan. Ph: +92-51-2277793-94,
Fax: +92-51-2277000: Email: saeedproperty@hotmail.com, Web: www.saeedproperty.com

Archive
Technologies (Pvt) Ltd.

WORLD CLASS
Barcoded Document Storage Facility

Now In Islamabad

Archive Technologies

Document Archiving & Storage Facility

Paperless office environment

OUR SERVICS

- Scanning & Digitization
- Physical Document Storage
- Documents Pick & Drop
- Office Autonation

FOR MORE Info

051 4447740-36
+92 307 8887373
Support@archivetechnologies.com.pk
www.archivetechnologies.com.pk
Plot no. 200, Street no. 1 Sector: I-10/3,
Islamabad Pakistan.

ROLEX

THE COSMOGRAPH DAYTONA

Engineered for endurance drivers, the Cosmograph Daytona's chronograph functions and tachymetric bezel continue to make it one of the most iconic racing watches ever designed. This is a story of perpetual excellence, the story of Rolex.

#Perpetual

OYSTER PERPETUAL COSMOGRAPH DAYTONA

KAHF INTERNATIONAL

KARACHI
SADDAR: **Tel 35655 081-83**
CLIFTON: **Tel 3582 0644**
ISLAMABAD
BEVERLY CENTRE: **Tel 282 4751, 282 4901**
E-mail: kahf@kahfintl.com
WWW.KAHFINTL.COM