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Exclusive Interview of

H.E. Mr. Suh Sangpyo
Ambassador of Republic of Korea

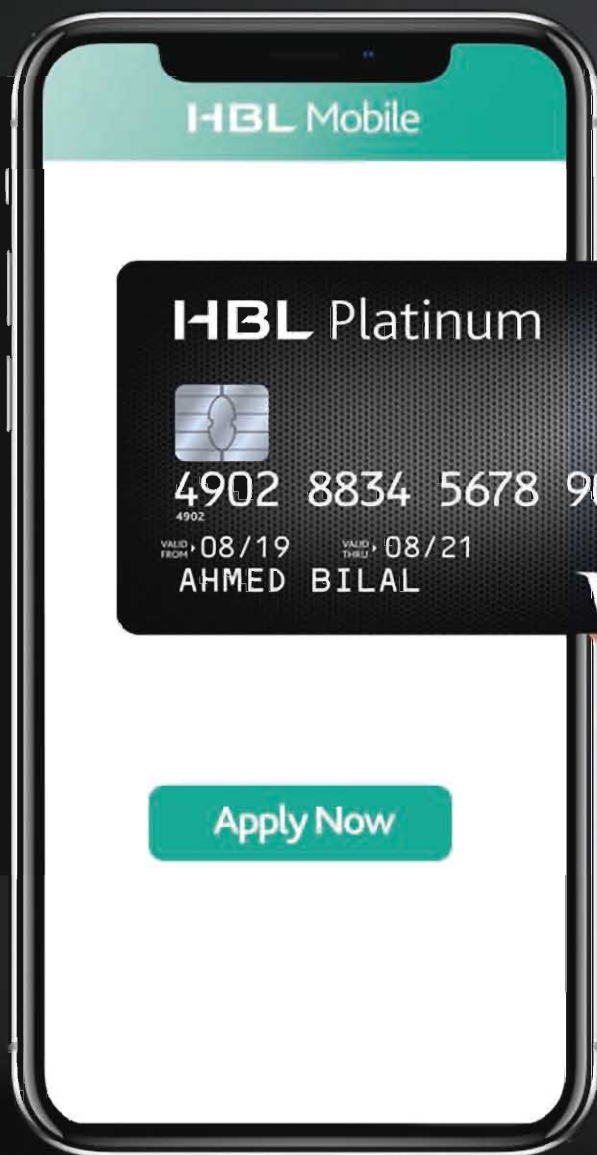
Republic of Korea, Pakistan seek to broaden ties in economy & energy

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
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




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09 Prime Minister Imran Khan Meets OIC Ambassadors to Discuss Combating Islamophobia and Promoting Inter-faith Harmony

Prime Minister Imran Khan met the Islamabad-based Ambassadors of countries belonging to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Recalling the two letters addressed by him to the leaders of the Islamic world last year, the Prime Minister briefed the envoys on Pakistan's efforts at the international level to create awareness about Islamophobia and the need to collectively address the phenomenon.

12 Statement by the Prime Minister Islamic Republic of Pakistan Imran Khan at the 10th D-8 Virtual Summit

President Dr Arif Alvi conferred the award of Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Civil) on outgoing Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan at a special investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-i-Sadr. Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Babar took charge as the new chief of Pakistan Air Force (PAF) at a change of command ceremony held in Islamabad. Outgoing Air chief Mujahid Anwar Khan pinned badges on the new air chief and presented him the command sword.

24 Pakistan deeply values its relations with Hungary

Hungary's Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade Mr. Péter Szijjártó called on Prime Minister Imran Khan today. The Prime Minister underlined the importance of developing a strong economic relationship commensurate with friendly bilateral ties and the potential of the two countries. The Prime Minister stressed the need for expanding beneficial cooperation in trade, energy, water resource management, food and agriculture, science & technology, and higher education.

38 Interview of H.E. Mr. Suh Sangpyo, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

All the appointments abroad were challenging and important to me, since my duty there as a diplomat is to cement and upgrade the ties with the countries. In my case to adapt myself to the countries, first of all, as soon as I arrived at the new post, I visited other diplomats who were already there. Their experiences surely were helpful to me. Secondly, I tried to meet local people as many as possible. More contacts with them gave me more insight on how to work there. Finally, I learned the national or official languages of the countries where I served.

66 The Embassy of the Republic of Iraq in Islamabad organizes a dinner reception in honor of the Arab Ambassadors Residents in Islamabad

In an atmosphere of friendliness, serenity and the necessary precautions for prevention, the Iraqi ambassador, H.E. Mr. Hamid Abbas Lafta, received their Excellencies Arab Ambassadors Residents in Islamabad. The Embassy of the Republic of Iraq held a dinner reception at the embassy building in the diplomatic enclave. The Ambassador delivered a welcoming speech at this important meeting, stressing upon that the Arab countries group in Islamabad could be an important factor in developing relations with the host country, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. His Excellency added that the preventive atmosphere from the Covid-19 epidemic requires everyone to take precautionary measures especially in public gatherings, but our meetings are important and must always be activated by using preventive measures and adhering to the correct instructions.

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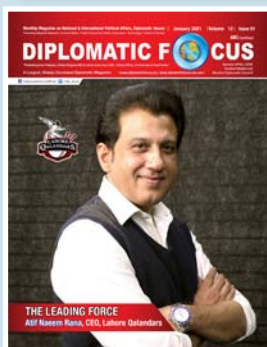
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Our previous Issues



Mian Fazal Elahi



To celebrate 70 years of diplomatic relations with Germany, Foreign Minister of Pakistan Shah Mehmood Qureshi visited Berlin and met his German counterpart Heiko Maas, who has invited him to visit Germany. Foreign Minister of Germany Heiko Maas also visited Pakistan on the invitation of his Pakistani counterpart. The visits are expected to help enhance collaboration in various sectors and the scope of relations between the two countries. It is the first ever visit by any Pakistani foreign minister to the country since 2012.

In October 1951, Pakistan was among the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with the young Federal Republic of Germany. Germany is now Pakistan's prime trading partner in the EU. For Germany, Pakistan is an important partner in efforts to find a political solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. Pakistan plays a significant role in questions related to regional stability in South Asia. This is why the political and security policy situation in the region figured prominently during the meeting of the two Foreign Ministers – along with bilateral cooperation in the seventieth year of diplomatic relations between Germany and Pakistan. Pakistan has strong social and cultural ties with its neighbour Afghanistan. The decades-long conflict in Afghanistan is also very much impeding Pakistan's efforts to promote stability and development at home.

Hungary's Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade Mr. Péter Szijjártó visited Pakistan on the invitation of his counterpart Foreign Minister of Pakistan Shah Mehmood Qureshi. The two Foreign Ministers jointly addressed the Pakistan-Hungary Economic Diplomacy event and encouraged business community of both countries to enhance mutual collaboration. Foreign Minister Qureshi highlighted Pakistan's economic security paradigm and underlined the shifting focus from geopolitics to geo-economics. He invited Hungarian companies to take advantage of the business friendly environment in Pakistan. The two Foreign Ministers witnessed signing of business agreements between Pakistani and Hungarian companies in the fields of dairy, pharmaceuticals and cyber security. The Hungarian Government has announced an exclusive credit-line of \$ 84 million for Hungarian companies to do business with Pakistan. A loan facility of \$ 50 million for projects in fisheries and food processing was announced by the Hungarian government.

The two sides will also work towards establishing direct air links. An MoU on Cooperation within the Framework of the Stipendium Hungaricum Program 2020-22 was signed between the two sides, under which the Hungarian Government will provide 200 scholarships annually to Pakistani students to study in Hungary. Pakistan and Hungary enjoy friendly relations and close cooperation at bilateral and multilateral fora. The visit of Foreign Minister Szijjarto will contribute to reinforcing bilateral economic partnership and enhancing mutual understanding on regional and international issues.

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

Important Announcement



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

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Prime Minister Imran Khan Meets OIC Ambassadors to Discuss Combating Islamophobia and Promoting Inter-faith Harmony

Prime Minister Imran Khan met the Islamabad-based Ambassadors of countries belonging to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Recalling the two letters addressed by him to the leaders of the Islamic world last year, the Prime Minister briefed the envoys on Pakistan's efforts at the international level to create awareness about Islamophobia and the need to collectively address the phenomenon. The Prime Minister stressed that Pakistan's initiatives were aimed at building mutual understanding and promoting inter-faith harmony. Noting that Islamophobic acts fan inter-religious hatred and disharmony among civilizations, the Prime Minister called for addressing the underlying reasons for the rise in such incidents worldwide. Falsely equating Islam with radicalism and terrorism, he added, was leading to the marginalization and stigmatization of Muslims. The Prime Minister emphasized that the vilification of Islamic precepts and religious personalities, wrongly justified under the garb of the right to freedom of expression or opinion, hurts the sentiments of 1.5 billion Muslims around the world. The Prime Minister urged the OIC to work together for making the international community understand the deep-rooted love and reverence of all Muslims for the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and the Holy Quran. The Prime Minister also underlined the need for instituting legal safeguards aimed at protecting the sensitivities of all religious groups. He underscored the imperative of OIC's collective efforts to project the true image of Islam, and its message of peace and tolerance. The Prime Minister reaffirmed that Pakistan remained committed to dialogue and cooperation with all members of the international community for promoting universal values of tolerance, mutual respect and peaceful co-existence among all nations and peoples.





Pakistan appreciated Russia's efforts in promoting the Afghan peace process

Foreign Minister of Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov called on Prime Minister Imran Khan today. Pakistan-Russia bilateral relations and issues of regional and global importance were discussed. The Prime Minister fondly recalled his interaction with President Vladimir Putin during the SCO Summit in Bishkek in June 2019, where he had underscored his desire to take the bilateral relationship to a new level. The Prime Minister reiterated the importance Pakistan attaches to its relations with Russia as a key foreign policy priority. He expressed satisfaction at the steady growth in bilateral ties, including deepening cooperation in trade, energy, security and defence.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve to expeditiously conclude the requisite legal process for the "Pakistan Stream" (North-South) Gas Pipeline project and commence the work as early as possible. Enhanced bilateral cooperation in the fields of energy, industrial modernization, railways and aviation was discussed. It was agreed that the Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC), due to meet in Moscow later this year, would closely pursue specific proposals and projects in this context. Views were exchanged on the health and economic challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Prime Minister congratulated Russia on its development of Sputnik-V vaccine and underscored Pakistan's procurement plans in this regard. In the regional



context, the Prime Minister stressed the importance of a negotiated political settlement of the conflict in Afghanistan. Pakistan appreciated Russia's efforts in

promoting the Afghan peace process including through the hosting of the recent meeting of Extended Troika in Moscow. With reference to the situation



in IIOJK, the Prime Minister shared Pakistan's perspective on issues of peace and security in South Asia, including the need for peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. Views were also exchanged on situation in West Asia, the Gulf, the Middle East, and the Asia-Pacific region. The Prime Minister reiterated his invitation to President Putin to visit Pakistan at his earliest convenience.

Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi received Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the Foreign Office. The two Foreign Ministers had wide-ranging talks covering bilateral relations and regional and global issues. Extending a warm welcome, Foreign Minister Qureshi recalled his earlier meeting with Foreign Minister Lavrov on the sidelines of SCO Council of Ministers in



people exchanges. The Foreign Minister added that the next meeting of the Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC) would cover a wide agenda encompassing economic, trade and energy cooperation between the two countries and must be result-oriented. Foreign Minister Qureshi also reiterated Pakistan's resolve to work with Russia for early commencement of the 'Pakistan Stream' Gas Pipeline project. Foreign Minister Qureshi congratulated Russia on developing COVID-19 vaccine and highlighted Pakistan's plans to acquire more Sputnik-V as well as to have joint venture for production of the vaccine in Pakistan. The Foreign Minister briefed his Russian counterpart on Pakistan's priorities relating to peace and stability in Afghanistan centered on an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process. He appreciated Russia's role in the Afghan peace process including through convening of the meeting of Extended Troika in Moscow in March 2021. The Foreign Minister dilated on the human rights situation in IIOJK and underlined Pakistan's approach to the issues of peace and security in South Asia and peaceful resolution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute. The Foreign Minister noted with appreciation the close cooperation between Pakistan



Pakistan congratulated Russia on its development of Sputnik-V vaccine

Moscow in September 2020. The Foreign Minister underlined that strengthening of relations with the Russian Federation was an important foreign policy priority for Pakistan and that Pakistan-Russia relations, were marked by enhanced mutual trust and understanding. Noting the important progress achieved in bilateral relations, the Foreign Minister agreed on the need to intensify efforts to deepen cooperation in all areas, including economy and trade, energy, counter-terrorism, security and defence, education, and people-to-

and Russia within the United Nations and at other multilateral fora including SCO. Matters relating to Security Council reform were also discussed. There were detailed exchanges on matters relating to South Asia, West Asia, the Gulf region, the Middle East, and the Asia-Pacific. The two Ministers also discussed the potential of Euroasian Economic Union (EEU) and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The Foreign Minister stressed that Pakistan remained committed to forge a closer, multi-dimensional relationship with Russia -- marked by trust and understanding. He added that Foreign Minister Lavrov's latest visit would help commence a new chapter in this direction.



Statement by the Prime Minister Islamic Republic of Pakistan Imran Khan at the 10th D-8 Virtual Summit

Honourable Heads of States and Governments, D-8 Secretary General, Excellencies, As-salam-o-Alaikum, I congratulate Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on assuming stewardship of the D-8 and commend President Erdogan for ably steering the Organization during the past four years. It is a pleasure for me to share my perspective on this Summit's focus on building partnerships to harness the "Power of Youth and Technology" in a transformative world. This theme is extremely significant today.

Excellencies, Our world today is at a defining moment because of the inter-connectedness, and the economic, social and environmental vulnerabilities created by this inter-connectedness.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused death of over 2.9 million people.

More than 250 million people became unemployed and lost their jobs.

Trillions of dollars were lost as a result of global economic contraction.

The virus has taken a heavy toll on poor countries and the poor in all countries. Also, inequalities have been accentuated within the countries and between rich and poor countries.

The developing countries are faced with the dilemma of not only saving people from the deadly virus, but also saving from hunger. Today, the world boasts the largest number of young

people in history. Even before the pandemic struck, around one-fifth of the global youth was unemployed and did not have the education and the skills to equip them for the 21st century.

We owe it to our youth to turn this around.

We have 550 million youth population in D-8 countries. Our youth has not only the potential to optimize our opportunities, but also overcome our common challenges. They are entrepreneurs, business innovators, technology pioneers, educators, activists, artists, and journalists. We must create new opportunities for this predominant component of our population. Harnessing technology, promoting innovation, investing in youth education, skills and training, is, therefore, an urgent imperative. We, in Pakistan, are pursuing these initiatives through programmes such as KamyabJawan, Hunarmand Pakistan, a Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme, and Digital Pakistan. Excellencies,

Around a hundred years ago, our poet philosopher Allama Iqbal had said "Stillness is elusive, only transformation is permanent in the Universe." In a century since the times of Iqbal, the world has changed tremendously. The pace of change has intensified in recent times. The rate of change has become exponential. Information and technology breakthroughs are fast

transforming science fiction of yesterday into today's reality. Only five years ago, the World Economic Forum had predicted that the Fourth Industrial Revolution "will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another." Today, as we meet on a virtual platform, already we can sense the arrival of such a revolution.

Excellencies,

? Contemporary global challenges of a changing world are a moving target. No single country can address these complexities in isolation.

Partnerships are essential.

I am happy that, in D-8, we have a platform to work together for mutual benefit and win-win solutions. In our view, the D-8 would do well to pay special attention to the following three areas while dealing with the rapidly transforming world: Firstly, as net producers of primary global commodities, the D-8 must conceive projects that harness technology for supply-side improvements, with special emphasis on efficiency and productivity. With costs of transportation and communications improving due to innovations, the D-8 members must partner to keep pace with logistics and global supply chains. Secondly, the D-8 should brainstorm ideas to insulate its members from disruptions in labour markets due to technology and innovations. As automation substitutes for labour across the world,



the labour-intensive economies of D-8 face challenges of unemployment and social disruption.

Thirdly, the D-8 should call for COVID vaccine to be treated as a global public good, ensure equity, affordability, enhanced production and timely supply to save lives. We must push back against vaccine nationalism and undue export restrictions. The global vaccine manufacturing companies must either speed up production or share their technology and expertise with developing countries for adequate vaccine supply.

Excellencies,

23 years ago, a shared vision motivated our countries to establish D-8 to improve member states' position in the global economy, diversify and create new opportunities in trade relations, enhance participation in decision-making at international level, and improve standards of living. Today, D-8 is a grouping of over one billion people, with a combined GDP of US\$ 4 trillion. We possess the two essential pre-requisites for growth – resources and enterprising people. As part of our endeavours to realise the vision of D-8 in these testing times, I propose the following five-pronged roadmap: One, we must mobilize financing and resources to recover robustly from the economic and health crises induced by the COVID pandemic. To address the

unique economic and financial challenges faced by developing countries as a result of the pandemic, I have already suggested a 5-point plan. This includes: debt relief; creation and re-distribution of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs); mobilization of climate finance; eliminating illicit financial flows; and return of stolen assets to developing countries. It was in this context that I called for a "Global Initiative on Debt Relief" last April.

I invite the D-8 members to consider these five points and join in advocacy for COVID related relief measures. Two, we must take concrete actions to achieve the target of expanding intra D-8 trade from currently around US\$100 billion to US\$ 500 billion by 2030. It should include measures like simplification of border procedures, enhancing institutional linkages, and operationalizing new initiatives. We welcome ideas like the D-8 Payment Card which would enable transactions in local currencies. Three, the D-8 should develop a "Youth Engagement Strategy" focused on promoting cultural, educational, and scientific and business exchanges. Linkages should be established between educational institutions through scholarships, skills development, trainings, fellowships, joint research, and exchange programmes for the youth, particularly in the field of science, technology and innovation.

Four, technological development is a gateway to economic prosperity, particularly in the post-pandemic period when reliance on technology would be greater than ever before in human history. To remain competitive, we must promote knowledge-based economies, increase expenditure on research and development, and focus on rapid digitalization.

Pakistan has recently hosted the inaugural meeting of the D-8 Network of Pioneers for Research and Innovation (NPRI). Five, we should make D-8 more relevant to the lives of our citizens by promoting food security, enhancing cooperation in health, holding joint sports events and helping each other during natural disasters. To achieve these goals, we need high level of commitment and mobilization of financial resources by both developed and developing economies. Partnerships between governments, international financial institutions, businesses and civil society are essential to leverage technology, innovation and skills to enable every young person to have all opportunities to realise their full potential.

I am confident that our collective wisdom and commitment will bring a new vigour to D-8.

I wish you all a blessed Ramzan.

I thank you.



Prime Minister addresses the Special High-Level Segment of the UN ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development

Prime Minister Imran Khan inaugurated the Special High-Level Segment of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Forum on Financing for Development (FfD).

In his opening remarks, the Prime Minister underscored that the Forum was an important opportunity to adopt decisions for mobilising finances needed by developing countries to recover from COVID-induced recession and maintain the path towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

While deploring “vaccine nationalism” and export restrictions, the Prime Minister called on the international community to ensure that the COVID-19 vaccine was “available to everyone, everywhere, as soon as possible.”

The Prime Minister recalled his five-point agenda for emergency financial

support to developing countries including debt relief and restructuring, creation and redistribution of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), larger concessional finance, and an end to illicit financial outflows from the developing countries.

Addressing the need to transform the world economy into one that is development-oriented and environmentally sustainable, the Prime Minister highlighted the need for massive mobilization of public and private investment on sustainable infrastructure and climate finance, especially in the developing countries.

The Prime Minister noted that the United Nations was well placed to take the lead in formulating and coordinating the implementation of a plan to make the transition to a green global economy by creating an inclusive, multi-stakeholder mechanism.

The Prime Minister’s participation and statement in the ECOSOC FfD Forum today was a continuation of his global advocacy for the provision of fiscal space for developing countries’ recovery from the public health and economic crises triggered by the COVID-19 Pandemic, as well as for the promotion of “green” and sustainable development in the Global South.

The Prime Minister has been a leading voice internationally to enhance global cooperation and solidarity to promote these objectives.

The 4-day FfD Forum is being held from 12-15 April 2021, under Pakistan’s Presidency of ECOSOC. A number of world leaders are participating in the meeting to address the themes of resilient recovery, recurrent debt crises, pandemic response and recovery, liquidity for vulnerable countries, and a climate resilient future.



Uzbekistan & Pakistan agreed to enhance multi-faceted bilateral cooperation in all areas of common interest

By Monitoring Desk

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan H.E. Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan H.E. Mr. Imran Khan held their first Virtual Summit on April 14, 2021. 2. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Prime Minister Imran Khan reviewed the existing status of bilateral relations and discussed its enhanced future trajectory. They also exchanged views on issues of regional and global interest, including the situation of COVID-19 pandemic. Political Relations 3. Recalling the centuries-old linkages between the peoples of the two countries, the two leaders highly appreciated holding of the first Virtual Summit as a landmark event in boosting Uzbek-Pakistan relations. 4. The two leaders agreed to enhance their multi-faceted bilateral cooperation in all areas of common interest. They emphasized closer coordination at international fora on issues of mutual convergence. 5. The leaders also decided to regularly convene existing political and economic mechanisms between the two countries, including consultations between their respective Foreign Ministries and to strengthen parliamentary collaboration. Cooperation at International Fora 6. The two leaders expressed satisfaction on the level of bilateral cooperation within the framework of international organizations, including at the UN. They reaffirmed their resolve to continue to support each other at the UN, SCO, OIC, ECO and other international and regional fora. 7. As members of the UN Human Rights Council, the two sides also expressed readiness to support joint actions to curb human rights violations and combating Islamophobia as well as strengthening interfaith harmony. 8. They also underlined the significance of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as an important platform. 9. The two sides exchanged views on the Afghan peace process and reaffirmed their support for a negotiated political solution for lasting peace in Afghanistan and the region. Security and Defence Cooperation 10. The two leaders expressed their readiness for maintaining regular dialogue and building constructive cooperation in the area of security

and defence. They expressed satisfaction at the level of defence cooperation. In order to further promote cooperation in this area, the two leaders agreed to continue mutual participation in joint military exercises and trainings and to cooperate in the field of professional development, exchange of best practices, and collaboration between military institutions of the two countries. 11. The two leaders expressed readiness to expand cooperation between law enforcement agencies of the two countries, in particular in the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking. Trade and Economic Cooperation 12. The two leaders agreed that cooperation in the trade and economic sphere was a key priority to consolidate partnership between the two countries. They also recognized the enormous economic potential for a mutually beneficial relationship. 13. They agreed to enhance volume of bilateral trade through adopting joint measures by diversification of trade, increasing business-to-business contacts, exchange of trade delegations and extending visa facilitation. 14. They also noted interest to increase industrial cooperation between companies and entrepreneurs of Uzbekistan and Pakistan, especially the growing inter-provincial cooperation after the visit of Governor of Punjab to Namangan region of Uzbekistan. 15. The two sides agreed to fast track finalization and signing of the Preferential Trade Agreement to enhance bilateral trade by eliminating trade barriers. 16. The two sides recognized the presence of huge opportunities to cooperate in spheres of agriculture, pharmaceuticals, textile, leather and chemical industry, energy and information technology. They agreed to promote mutual collaboration in these sectors. Connectivity 17. The two leaders underscored the importance of regional integration and connectivity as cornerstone of economic development and progress. They welcomed exchange of high-level visits in the fields of trade, railway and aviation in this regard. 18. The leaders supported the project for the construction of "Termez – Mazar-e-Sharif – Kabul – Peshawar" Railway line, as an important initiative to establish railway connectivity from Central Asia to the Arabian Sea through

Afghanistan and Pakistani Sea ports of Karachi, Gwadar and Qasim. 19. The two leaders are in favor to resume regular flights between Uzbekistan and Pakistan by their respective airlines after stabilization of COVID-pandemic situation. 20. The importance of convening the Uzbekistan-Pakistan business week and business conference in Tashkent in July, 2021 was also discussed. Culture and People-to-People Contacts 21. President Mirziyoyev and Prime Minister Imran Khan recalled the long-standing cultural, historic, religious and spiritual links between the two countries. They agreed to further enhance cultural relations and people-to-people contacts and welcomed proposals to build up collaboration between leading universities, research institutions, libraries and museums of the two countries and to conduct joint research on Baburi heritage. 22. They further identified development of tourism as priority area of common interest in particular the spiritual (Ziyarat) tourism between the two countries. Agreements Signed 23. Following Agreements/MoUs were signed on the sidelines of the Virtual Summit: – MoU for Developing Further Cooperation in the Field of Agriculture. – Agreement on Mutual Recognition in the Fields of Conformity Assessment of Products, Standardization, Metrology and Technical Assistance. – MoU on Defence Cooperation. Conclusion 24. The two leaders highly appreciated the opportunity offered by the Virtual Summit for productive engagement and dialogue. They expressed confidence that the understanding reached during the Summit will further deepen bilateral cooperation and contribute towards developing cooperation in a frame of multi-dimensional relationship. They agreed to continue the Summit-level political dialogue in future. 25. The President of Uzbekistan re-confirmed his invitation to Prime Minister Imran Khan, to attend the high-level International Conference on regional connectivity to be held in July 2021. Prime Minister Imran Khan thanked the President and reiterated his invitation to him to visit Pakistan at a convenient time. 26. The present "Joint declaration of Uzbek-Pakistan Summit" was adopted as the outcome of the Virtual Summit on Wednesday, 14 April 2021.



Pakistan, Iran to make joint efforts for regional peace and stability

By Bilal Zafar

Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi held delegation-level talks with Foreign Minister Dr. Javad Zarif in Tehran. During the discussion, the two Foreign Ministers reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations, highlighting the commonality of views on important regional and international issues. Foreign Minister Qureshi reaffirmed resolve to enhance bilateral relations in all areas to the mutual advantage of both the countries. The Foreign Minister underlined that vast potential existed which could be tapped to further strengthen trade and economic relations. He called for regular exchanges of relevant mechanisms to tap their true potential. The Foreign Minister expressed satisfaction over the close coordination at the multilateral fora on issues of common interest. Drawing the attention to the human rights situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir, Foreign Minister Qureshi expressed gratitude for Iran's steadfast and vocal support to the Kashmiris, especially at the highest level. Foreign Minister Qureshi also discussed regional security situation with particular focus on latest developments in the Afghan Peace Process. Reaffirming Pakistan's



Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi met with the Custodian and Trust of the Shrine Hujjatul-Islam Val Muslemeen, Ahmed Marvi at Mashhad.





consistent support to a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan, the Foreign Minister highlighted convergence of views between Pakistan and Iran on the shared objective of an inclusive politically negotiated settlement. The

The Foreign Ministers expressed satisfaction over the close coordination at the multilateral fora on issues of common interest

Foreign Minister briefed Foreign Minister Zarif on Pakistan's initiative to combat Islamophobia and thanked for Iran's support in this regard. It was agreed that the two countries would continue to collaborate closely to counter rising trend of Islamophobia. Prior to the delegation-level talks, the two Foreign Ministers signed MoU on Establishment of Border Sustenance Marketplaces. Foreign Minister Qureshi thanked for Iran's support to border markets, which will help the local population on both sides by providing them with formal means to engage in mutually beneficial commerce. The opening of international border crossing point at Mand-Pishin was also highlighted as a step towards facilitating people on both sides of the Pakistan-Iran border. Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi is visiting Iran on the invitation of Foreign Minister Zarif.



Pakistan and Germany celebrations commemorating the 70 years of bilateral relations



By Mian Fazal Elahi

Foreign Minister, Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi, is on an official visit to Berlin on the invitation of his counterpart, German Foreign Minister Mr. Heiko Maas, from 12-13 April 2021. He visited the German Foreign Office, where he was received by the Foreign Minister. Extending a warm welcome, Foreign Minister Maas, termed the visit by Foreign Minister Qureshi as a great honour, in the face of the challenges posed by COVID-19, which had failed to deter him. He hoped that the visit would further strengthen and diversify the bilateral relations between Pakistan and Germany, especially in the wake of the celebrations commemorating the 70 years of bilateral relations, this year.

The two Foreign Ministers had an in-depth and comprehensive exchange of views on the entire gamut of relations and the possibilities for further deepening this cooperation, especially, in the fields of trade and investment, science and technology, alternate energy, education and legal migration. The Foreign Minister briefed his German counterpart about the vision of the Prime Minister shifting focus from geo-politics to geo-economics and highlighted three pillars of the government's overarching policy, namely: peace, development partnerships and connectivity.

Regional and international developments of mutual interest including Pakistan-India relations, grave human rights violations in IIOJK, Afghanistan peace process, CPEC and opportunities for investments in Special Economic Zones (SEZs), EU DisinfoLab, and FATF were also discussed. The Foreign Minister also announced the establishment

of a new Consulate General of Pakistan in Munich to harness the economic potential between the two countries and facilitate the Pakistan-origin diaspora, especially in the South of Germany. Foreign Minister Qureshi also highlighted the inordinate visa delays being faced by Pakistani students, businessmen and families and requested for their early resolution. During discussions on mitigating the impact of COVID-19, German Foreign Minister shared that Germany as the co-founder and biggest contributor to the COVAX initiative, is pleased to announce that Pakistan would receive 15 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, under COVAX, which would be delivered by May 2021.

He was pleased to announce this during the visit of the Foreign Minister. Foreign Minister Qureshi expressed the hope that his visit to Germany would turn a new page in the relationship and set in motion a series of substantive activities/ engagements leading up to the visit of the Prime Minister. He also extended an invitation to Foreign Minister Maas to visit Pakistan, which he was pleased to accept. Following this

meeting, Foreign Minister Qureshi also met Mr. Wolfgang Schauble, the President of German Bundestag (National Assembly). The Foreign Minister briefed him in detail about Afghanistan, India-Pakistan situation, grave human rights violations in IIOJK and COVID. The two leaders also discussed ways to promote Parliamentary exchanges in order to strengthen the democratic ideals between the two countries. The President greatly appreciated and agreed to the proposal of the Foreign Minister to hold bilateral Parliamentary exchanges, online, pending the resolution of the COVID pandemic. These virtual sessions could finalize the agenda for formal meetings to be held when in-person meetings begin as Corona situation improves. Mr. Joe Kaeser, CEO Siemens Energy called on the Foreign Minister and discussed areas of potential investment in Pakistan and transfer of technology particularly in the power sector. The Foreign Minister invited Mr. Kaeser to Pakistan to work on concrete projects on optimizing the usage of electricity which would help in bringing down the electricity tariffs, to which he agreed.





SAUDI MINISTER FOR MEDIA INVITES FAWAD TO VISIT SAUDI ARABIA

By M. Bilal Zafar

The Saudi Minister for Media Dr. Majed bin Abdullah Al-Kassabi, has invited Minister for Information & Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain to visit Saudi Arabia. Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan H.E Mr. Nawaf Bin Saeed Al-Maliki called on the Information Minister here Monday and conveyed the invitation on behalf of the Saudi Media Minister. In his letter, the Saudi Minister stated on the occasion of Holy Month of Ramazan, he desired to invite the Minister to visit Saudi Arabia and perform Umrah and visit the Mosque of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in Medina. Further, he said the visit would also afford both sides the opportunity

to discuss ways and means for strengthening media cooperation. The Information Minister accepted the invitation and said he would visit Saudi Arabia soon. He said that Pakistan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia enjoyed deep fraternal ties based on common faith, culture, traditions and values and he would like the media dimension added to these ties. During discussion with the Ambassador emphasis was laid on the revival and implementation of MOUs signed between the two countries to strengthen cultural cooperation. Chaudhry Fawad Hussain said that collaboration in field of culture is imperative to understand each other's values and for bringing the brotherly people of the two nations closer. The Information

Minister stressed enhanced cooperation in the fields of media and information. Both sides also discussed the situation arising out of Covid-19 and exchanged views on utilizing each other's experiences and best practices to cope with the pandemic. The Minister also informed the Ambassador about Pakistan's strategy of smart lock down which was internationally acknowledged. He said that the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan to care for both lives and livelihoods of the poor strata of the society proved instrumental in tackling the challenge of Covid-19. He further said that Government is fully determined to take further measures to protect the people from the Corona pandemic.

United Kingdom affirmed to further strengthen economic and business linkages with Pakistan

His Excellency Dr. Christian Turner, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan called on the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Mr. Shaukat Tarin, at the Finance Division. Secretary Finance Division and Secretary EAD were also present during the meeting. While extending a warm welcome to H.E. Mr. Christian Turner, the Finance Minister stated that Pakistan attaches special importance to bilateral relations with the United Kingdom and affirmed to further strengthen economic and business linkages between the two countries. The Finance Minister also thanked the High Commissioner for the support extended by the British government and its people for the people of Pakistan during the on-going COVID-19 pandemic. In his remarks, the Finance Minister apprised the High Commissioner about working of flagship Ehsaas Emergency Cash program regarding direct cash transfers to under-privileged women. The Ehsaas program has played a significant role in mitigating the economic hardships of the marginalized groups of the society amid COVID-19. The Finance Minister also underlined the various measures taken by the Government to stimulate economic recovery



during these testing times. He commended the Pakistani diaspora abroad for sending in record remittances which enhanced the foreign exchange reserves and strengthened Pak-Rupee. The Pakistani diaspora in the United Kingdom are the real asset for the country, he added. The Finance Minister reiterated the firm commitment of the Government in implementing vital economic reforms and achieving macro-economic

stability with the help of development partners to build a better future for the people of Pakistan. His Excellency Mr. Christian Turner discussed the issues of mutual interest and assured the Finance Minister of the full support of the British Government and its people to the Government and people of Pakistan. He also felicitated the Finance Minister on assuming new responsibilities on the occasion.

Pakistan attaches great importance to its fraternal relations with UAE

By Muhammad Bilal Zafar

Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi met His Excellency Ahmed bin Ali Al Sayegh, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs at the UAE's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in Abu Dhabi. The Foreign Minister conveyed warm wishes to the UAE's leadership from the Prime Minister. He reaffirmed Pakistan's longstanding fraternal ties with the UAE and expressed his desire to further strengthen and solidify bilateral cooperation in myriad fields.

The Minister of State warmly reciprocated the sentiments and emphasized the importance accorded by the UAE to its relationship with Pakistan. During the meeting, the Foreign Minister and the Minister of State reviewed all facets of bilateral relations, in particular in the fields of trade and investment. They agreed to work on ways to enhance bilateral cooperation in mutually beneficial areas, especially through economic diplomacy. Expressing satisfaction at the existing cooperation in multilateral fora, Foreign Minister and the Minister of

State agreed to continue close collaboration in regional and global organizations.

Foreign Minister Qureshi emphasized the need to reinvigorate and nurture the strong foundations of fraternal ties laid by the leadership of the two countries. He shared his ideas on jointly harnessing the true potential of both countries, showcasing the achievements thus far, and planning the future trajectory of bilateral relations. The Foreign Minister lauded the positive role of Pakistani expatriates in the UAE in strengthening the bonds between the two countries. The Minister of State acknowledged the value of Pakistani Diaspora for the diverse fabric of the UAE's society.

The Foreign Minister also apprised him of issues faced by the Pakistani expatriates, in particular the visa restrictions applicable on some categories. The Foreign Minister will be meeting his UAE counterpart later tonight before departing the UAE tomorrow morning.

Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi met the UAE's Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence and Commissioner General of EXPO 2020 Dubai, His

Excellency Sheikh Nahyan Mubarak Al Nahyan. Acknowledging Sheikh Nahyan's contributions to bilateral relations between the two countries, the Foreign Minister termed him as a 'True Friend of Pakistan'. He appreciated the role played by Sheikh Nahyan in strengthening people to people linkages between the two countries, encouraging UAE's investment in Pakistan and promoting the welfare and well-being of 1.6 million strong Pakistani Diaspora in the UAE.

The Foreign Minister discussed the prospects of enhancing bilateral cooperation, in particular in the fields of investment, tourism and related infrastructure and strengthening the bonds of amity between the peoples of the two countries. Lauding the solid foundation of the Pakistan-UAE friendship laid down by His Highness Late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the Foreign Minister stressed the need to nurture and further strengthen close bilateral ties. The two Ministers also exchanged views on the importance of tolerance and co-existence in presenting the true image of Islam and the Islamic society. Foreign Min-





ister Qureshi highlighted the positive role played by the Pakistani expatriates in the development of both countries. Thanking the UAE's leadership for their considerate approach towards expatriates, the Foreign Minister briefed Sheikh Nahyan about the issues faced by the Pakistani community, in particular the restrictions on visa-related matters.

He stressed the importance of resolving them at the earliest. Sheikh Nahyan acknowledged the positive contribution of the Pakistani expatriates to the UAE's progress and agreed on the need to strengthen people to people linkages. The two Ministers exchanged views in detail on the EXPO 2020 Dubai. Lauding the one-of-its-kind mega event in the region, Foreign Minister Qureshi thanked the UAE's support in setting up the Pakistan Pavilion in the EXPO.

He discussed ideas regarding optimal utilization of the pavilion with a view to successfully showcasing Pakistan's 'Hidden Treasure' – the theme of Pakistan's pavilion in Dubai EXPO 2020. Sharing his initiative of holding a major event in the EXPO in October 2021, the Foreign Minister requested Sheikh Nahyan to grace the event, which was warmly accepted.

Sheikh Nahyan has played a key role in the well-being of Pakistani community in the UAE for decades. He is the patron-in-chief of Pakistan community schools in Abu Dhabi region. He is also a major investor in the banking and telecommunications sectors in Pakistan. In 2005, he was awarded 'Hilal-e-Pakistan' for his valuable contribution to Pakistan-UAE relations.





MoU signs between the Pakistani Foreign Service Academy and the Iraqi Foreign Service Institute in Islamabad

By Mian Fazal Elahi

The Undersecretary for Political Planning Affairs and the Dean of the Foreign Service Institute, Dr. Saleh Hussein Al-Tamimi, signed on Thursday 8/4/2021 a Memorandum of Understanding between the Pakistan Foreign Service Academy and Iraqi Foreign Service Institute. The signing ceremony took place at the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs headquarter in the presence of the Iraqi delegation and Pakistani Minister of Foreign Affairs, Director General of the Foreign Service Academy, Ambassador Imran Ahmed Mirza and other dignitaries of the Ministry.

For his part, Dr. Saleh praised the levels achieved by this academy and the qualitative development it has gained in several areas, stressing upon keenness to enhance joint cooperation in many areas of training, such as building knowledge through scientific

curricula that today constitute the main pillar of diplomacy and its pillar towards understanding reality and surrounding paths that the world is taking due to the acceleration of its decision-making steps.

Taking advantage of the importance of establishing many applied programs for the two countries, which raise the quality of the scientific aspect in the level of diplomatic work and the related protocol obligations, and various mechanisms in dealing with world diplomats at all levels.

After that, Dr. Saleh Hussain Al-Tamimi made an official visit to the building of the Pakistani Foreign Service Academy accompanied by the Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq to Islamabad and a number of embassy employees.

On the other hand, His Excellency Ambassador Imran Ahmed expressed his appreciation to Mr. undersecretary and his

accompanying delegation, affirming his pride in the strong relations that bind the two countries, and their common eagerness to develop all aspects of cooperation between the two countries towards broader horizons, such as consolidating the culture of dialogue and establishing principles of peace, wishing Iraq more progress and prosperity.

Stressing the importance of bilateral cooperation in various fields, calling for activating the joint Iraqi-Pakistani commission, the Foreign Undersecretary for Political Planning Affairs, and the Acting Dean of the Foreign Service Institute meets with the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

The Foreign Undersecretary of the Republic of Iraq for Political Planning Affairs and the Acting Dean of the Foreign Service Institute and his accompanying delegation also paid a courtesy call upon the Minister of Foreign



Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Shah Mahmood Qureshi at the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs headquarters in Islamabad.

The Foreign Undersecretary conveyed the greetings of Dr. Fuad Hussein, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq to his Pakistani counterpart, stressing upon ways to strengthen and develop bilateral relations between the two countries in mutual interest and in a way that achieves the common interest of the two friendly countries.

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Pakistan is a key partner with regard to Iraq and they are bound by long-standing relations and common factors, including confronting terrorism and extremism.

On the other hand, the two sides stressed upon the need to activate the Iraqi-Pakistani joint ministerial commission and to expedite the completion of pending agreements and memorandums of understanding between the two countries.

His Excellency the Minister assured his government's support for the sovereignty, political unity and territorial integrity of Iraq, calling for the exchange of Pakistani and Iraqi experiences to benefit from them in various fields.

The two sides also discussed the issue of a mechanism to facilitate the granting of entry visas to Iraq to Pakistani investors wishing to work in Iraq, in addition to promoting the issue of religious tourism.

In conclusion, Dr. Saleh extended his thanks and appreciation to the Pakistani government for sending three aircrafts loaded with medical aid to Iraq to fight Corona virus.





Pakistan deeply values its relations with Hungary

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Hungary's Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade Mr. Péter Szijjártó called on Prime Minister Imran Khan today. The Prime Minister underlined the importance of developing a strong economic relationship commensurate with friendly bilateral ties and the potential of the two countries. The Prime Minister stressed the need for expanding beneficial cooperation in trade, energy, water resource management, food and agriculture, science & technology, and higher education. The Prime Minister also impressed upon the Hungarian business community to take advantage of the business friendly climate of Pakistan and bring further investment into the country. Views were exchanged on the adverse economic impact of Covid-19 pandemic. The Prime Minister appreciated the Government of Hungary's efforts in vaccinating its population. He underlined that Pakistan's efforts have been aimed at ensuring saving people from dying from the virus, and at the same time preventing them from dying from hunger, by stimulating the economy. On Afghanistan, the Prime Minister reiterated his conviction that there was no military solution to the conflict and that a negotiated political settlement

was the only way forward. The Prime Minister underscored the importance of responsible withdrawal and steady progress by the Afghan parties towards a political solution. The Prime Minister added that peace and stability in Afghanistan would yield other significant dividends including enhanced trade and regional connectivity. Foreign Minister Szijjártó thanked the Prime Minister for receiving him and conveyed greetings from the Hungarian

Prime Minister. He also briefed the Prime Minister on his Government's foreign policy and economic priorities. Foreign Minister Szijjártó highlighted that he was accompanied by a high-level business delegation comprising 17 leading businessmen to explore business opportunities in Pakistan, which was a manifestation of growing economic ties with Pakistan. The Prime Minister renewed his invitation to Hungarian Prime Minister Mr. Viktor Orbán



to undertake a visit to Pakistan, while Foreign Minister Szijjártó extended an invitation to the Prime Minister to visit Hungary.

Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi held wide-ranging talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, Mr. Peter Szijjarto, today. The talks covered bilateral relations and exchange of views on regional and international issues. Foreign Minister Szijjarto is visiting Pakistan accompanied by a high-level official delegation as well as 17 businessmen. The Foreign Minister fondly recalled his earlier interaction with Foreign Minister Szijjarto during the inauguration of Hungary-Pakistan Trade and Economic Window (HPTEW). The two Foreign Ministers held one-on-one meeting, which was followed by delegation-level talks. The Foreign Ministers reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations and explored ways to deepen existing cooperation across diverse areas such as trade, economic, agriculture research, food industry, aviation, energy, water resource management, science & technology, and higher education. It was agreed to work together to forge a strong bilateral economic partnership. Foreign Minister Qureshi apprised Foreign Minister Szijjarto of Pakistan's steadfast support for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan and positive contributions to the Afghan peace process.

The Foreign Minister underlined the importance of reduction in violence leading to ceasefire. He also underlined the imperative of responsible withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan and continued engagement of the international community to help Afghanistan's reconstruction and economic development. The Foreign Minister stressed that the Afghan stakeholders must seize this historic opportunity and engage constructively to work out an inclusive, broad-based and comprehensive political solution, through an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led process.

Regarding Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK), the Foreign Minister highlight-



ed the serious human rights situation. Foreign Minister Qureshi added that the recent reaffirmation of ceasefire understanding on the Line of Control (LoC) was in line with Pakistan's consistent position on maintaining regional peace and security. The Foreign Minister underscored the importance of peaceful resolution of Jammu and Kashmir dispute, stressing that the

The Hungarian Government has announced an exclusive credit-line of \$ 84 million for Hungarian companies to do business with Pakistan

onus was on India to create an enabling environment for dialogue. He also mentioned that as a gesture of solidarity with the people of India in the wake of the current wave of Covid-19, Pakistan had offered to provide relief support to India.

Earlier, the two Foreign Ministers jointly addressed the Pakistan-Hungary Economic Diplomacy event and encouraged business community of both countries to enhance mutual collaboration. Foreign Minister Qureshi highlighted Pakistan's economic security paradigm and underlined the shifting focus from geo-politics to geo-economics. He invited Hungarian companies to take advantage of the business friendly environment in Pakistan.

The two Foreign Ministers witnessed signing of business agreements between Pakistani and Hungarian companies in the fields of dairy, pharmaceuticals and cyber security. The Hungarian Government has announced an exclusive credit-line of \$ 84 million for Hungarian companies to do business with Pakistan. A Loan facility of \$ 50 million for projects in fisheries and food processing was announced by the Hungarian government.

The two sides will also work towards establishing direct air links. An MoU on Cooperation within the Framework of the Stipendium Hungaricum Program 2020-22 was signed between the two sides, under which the Hungarian Government will provide 200 scholarships annually to Pakistani students to study in Hungary. Pakistan and Hungary enjoy friendly relations and close cooperation at bilateral and multilateral fora. The visit of Foreign Minister Szijjarto will contribute to reinforcing bilateral economic partnership and enhancing mutual understanding on regional and international issues



Pakistan and Germany enjoy cordial relations based on shared interests



Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi received Germany's Foreign Minister Heiko Maas, during his brief visit to Islamabad. Recalling his own recent visit to Berlin, Foreign Minister Qureshi expressed gratitude for the warm welcome accorded to him and appreciated the fruitful outcome of the visit. Foreign Minister Qureshi underlined the importance of regular high-level exchanges between Pakistan and Germany and maintaining a steady upward trajectory in the relationship. The two Foreign Ministers reviewed bilateral cooperation and exchanged views on the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic. Foreign Minister Qureshi underscored the importance of enhancing mutual cooperation, and collaboration to combat the pandemic in a holistic manner. He thanked the German side for its efforts to ensure earliest possible provision of vaccine through the COVAX initiative. Foreign Minister Qureshi apprised his German counterpart on Pakistan's steadfast support for a peaceful and

stable Afghanistan and positive contributions to the Afghan peace process. He underscored the importance of responsible withdrawal and

Foreign Minister Qureshi underlined the importance of regular high-level exchanges between Pakistan and Germany and maintaining a steady upward trajectory in the relationship

steady progress by the Afghan parties towards a negotiated political settlement. He added that all efforts must be made for reduction of violence leading to ceasefire. The Foreign Minister stressed that the Afghan stakehold-

ers must engage constructively to work out an inclusive, broad-based and comprehensive political solution, through an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led process. Cautioning against the role of 'spoilers', the Foreign Minister also underlined the importance of commitment and perseverance in the efforts for peace. The Foreign Minister underscored that peace in Afghanistan would yield other significant dividends including enhanced trade and regional connectivity. The Foreign Minister also highlighted Pakistan's shifting focus from geo-politics to geo-economics, within the perspective of economic security paradigm. Pakistan and Germany enjoy cordial relations based on shared interests. The two Foreign Ministers have regularly been interacting bilaterally as well as at the international fora. The year 2021 marks the 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Germany. A range of events are envisaged by the two governments to celebrate this milestone in a befitting manner.



Bilateral meeting between Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and Turkey

By Zainab Arshad

Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi met with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu on 23 April 2021 in Istanbul. During the meeting, the two Foreign Ministers discussed various dimensions of bilateral relations -- including political and diplomatic engagement, economic cooperation, as well as the regional security situation. Foreign Minister Qureshi highlighted excellent bilateral relations between the two countries, based on shared history and commonality of views. The two sides discussed the ongoing preparations for the 7th Session of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) that will be held in Turkey post Ramadan. Foreign Minister Qureshi also reiterated

Foreign Minister Qureshi also reiterated appreciation for Turkey's principled and steadfast support on the issue of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir

appreciation for Turkey's principled and steadfast support on the issue of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir. During the meeting, the two Foreign Ministers also exchanged views on the Afghan peace process, Istanbul Conference, and the US announcement on withdrawal of foreign troops. Highlighting Pakistan's abiding interest in a peaceful, secure and stable Afghanistan, Foreign Minister Qureshi underscored Pakistan's consistent efforts to facilitate the Afghan peace process. He expressed the hope that the Afghan parties would realize the opportunity and workout an inclusive politically negotiated settlement. The Foreign Ministers also lauded Turkey's invaluable efforts to re-energize the Afghan peace process. It was the third meeting between the two Foreign Ministers in 2021. Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu had visited Pakistan in January 2021 and the two Foreign Ministers also met on 29 March 2021 on the sidelines of 9th session of Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process Ministerial Conference in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The frequency of high-level exchanges between the two countries reflects the strength of the bilateral relationship.





By Maleeha Lodhi

NOW that a backchannel between Pakistan and India has been confirmed by a senior official it would be appropriate to evaluate its nature and implications. Efforts to de-escalate tensions between the two nuclear neighbours are always welcome. But given the history of false starts and the one step forward, two steps backwards engagement in this long-troubled relationship it is important to take into account lessons of the past and on-ground realities, especially as the dire situation created by India in occupied Kashmir remains unchanged.

There is nothing unusual about a backchannel. It is frequently used when formal dialogue between countries is suspended. This was often the case in the past when Pakistan and India demurred from engaging in open talks. Backchannels are useful to confidentially probe, explore and assess how much give there is in the other's position. This is harder in a formal forum where negotiating parties stick to maximalist positions at least at the start. During the Musharraf period backchannel negotiations on the Kashmir dispute took place over three years to find an interim settlement. This marked the most serious effort in recent decades to find a political solution of Kashmir. The talks were conducted by civil servants who enjoyed the confidence of president Pervez Musharraf and prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

What has been disclosed about the current backchannel is that talks are being conducted by the chiefs of intelligence of the two countries. This isn't the only difference from past backroom efforts. The Musharraf era process began with a public acknowledgment by both sides of the resumption of formal talks. The joint statement of Jan 6, 2004 stated that "the resumption of the composite dialogue will lead to peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, to

Terms of Engagement

the satisfaction of both sides". The backchannel subsequently set in train was an accompaniment to formal talks that covered all issues of priority for both sides. Negotiators on the backchannel were publicly named.

While information about the present backchannel has been revealed by Pakistani officials this has been met by silence on the Indian side. There have been no background briefings or leaks by Indian officials. This one-sided admission may have unwittingly created the impression of over-eagerness by the Pakistani side. Moreover, making public disclosures at a preliminary stage of sensitive talks raises the question of whether it is prudent before anything significant has been agreed.

As the present engagement is being cast as 'talks about talks' it might be useful to keep the following factors and principles in view.

One, Pakistani interlocutors should seek to test and verify — assess if the Indian move is tactical or strategic and proceed cautiously. Our officials claim India is prepared to talk on all issues. What should be ascertained is what exactly is meant by that. Whether it means Indian willingness for substantive discussion on outstanding disputes including Kashmir or just a 'dialogue of the deaf' and re-statement of its familiar position that Kashmir is India's 'internal matter' and the 'new' status quo created by its Aug 5, 2019, action is non-negotiable.

Two, Pakistan must maintain its red lines on its principled position on Kashmir especially as Indian media reports suggest that Delhi's expectation is for Pakistan to cease insisting on reversal of the illegal annexation of Kashmir. While pursuing the near-term aim, as identified by Pakistani officials, of providing 'relief to the Kashmiri people', presumably through CBMs, this should be done in tandem with and not as substitute for substantive talks on the issue. Again, past experience is instructive. Kashmir-specific CBMs agreed in the composite dialogue during 2004-08 were an accompaniment to and not replacement of negotiations on Kashmir.

Three, 'process' in the backchannel should not be mistaken for substance. It has long been India's aim to draw Pakistan into a process with no outcomes in settling disputes and thus to demonstrate to the world how reasonable it is without conceding anything. Delhi has sought to

achieve normalisation on its terms without resolving disputes and instead prioritising the two T's, terrorism and trade. From this perspective, normalisation for the sake of normalisation should be avoided as this will be transient, lack substantive content and therefore durability. De-escalation of tensions is an aim worth pursuing but that is different from normalisation, which should be predicated on efforts and progress in resolving differences. Normalisation can only come about gradually and should be distinguished from managing tensions. Four, the backchannel should not become the sole track of Pakistan-India engagement. It should lead to the resumption of formal and comprehensive dialogue. India's apparent suggestion in the backchannel that issues should not be 'bundled up' in a composite dialogue is fraught with risk. It seems a way for Delhi to focus mainly on its priority areas and avoid a broad-based, integrated dialogue that Islamabad has long wanted.

Revival of track one peace talks is also necessary because engagement confined only to a backchannel will give the other side much wriggle room precisely because informal talks may not bind parties to any commitment. In any case agreements reached in track two have to be formalised in 'front channel' talks. Diplomatic negotiations should be conducted by experienced diplomats who are best equipped to deal with them. The foreign ministry should also be consulted and kept fully on board on backchannel talks.

Five, announcements should only be made once there is progress in the backchannel and through mutual agreement by both sides. Significantly, conciliatory statements by Prime Minister Imran Khan and army chief Gen Qamar Bajwa have not been reciprocated by Indian leaders. This as well as Delhi's lack of comment on the backchannel may be designed to convey that Pakistan is keener on normalising ties owing to its domestic vulnerabilities and compulsions. This plays off an unwitting impression created by some Pakistani officials who have said the country's weak economy is the principal motivation for its peace overture to India.

Last but not least, peace with honour should remain the immutable principle of Pakistan's engagement with India.

The writer is a former ambassador to the US, UK & UN.



European Parliament resolution reflects lack of understanding, says FO

By Monitoring Desk

EU Parliament adopts resolution calling for review of Pakistan's GSP+ status over blasphemy law abuse

The EU Parliament "calls on the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to immediately review Pakistan's eligibility for GSP+ status in the light of current events and whether there is sufficient reason to initiate a procedure for the temporary withdrawal of this status and the benefits that come with it, and to report to the European Parliament on this matter as soon as possible", according to the resolution.

Member of European Parliament (MEP) Charlie Weimers of Sweden, who co-authored the resolution, in his speech during the parliament's latest session cited various incidents of members of religious minorities killed or imprisoned in Pakistan over accusations of blasphemy. Responding to the European Parliament's resolution, the Foreign Office had expressed disappointment over the development.

"The discourse in the European Parliament reflects a lack of understanding in the context of blasphemy laws and associated religious sensitivities in Pakistan – and the wider Muslim world. The unwarranted commentary about Pakistan's judicial system and domestic laws are regrettable," read a statement by the FO.

"Pakistan is a parliamentary democracy with a vibrant civil society, free media and independent judiciary, which remains fully committed to the promotion and protection of human rights for all its citizens without discrimination," the Foreign Office had added.

The FO had said Pakistan is proud of its minorities who enjoy equal rights and complete protection of fundamental freedoms as enshrined in the Constitution. Judicial and administrative mechanisms and remedies are in place to guard against any human rights violations.

"Pakistan has played an active role in promoting freedom of religion or belief, tolerance and inter-faith harmony. At a time of rising Islamophobia and populism, the international community must exhibit a common resolve to

fight xenophobia, intolerance and incitement to violence based on religion or belief and work together to strengthen peaceful co-existence."

Responding to the passage of the resolution, Human Rights Minister Shireen Mazari while apparently referring to Weimers said: "It is unfortunate that the co-sponsor of the EU's anti-Pakistan resolution was a member of a party that the Swedish PM Stefan Lofven referred to as 'a neo-fascist single-issue party' with 'Nazi and racist roots'."

She said the pertinent question now was "whether GSP Plus is getting muddled in Islamophobia?"

"We have issues to resolve but there has been more movement now on our Human Rights International Convention commitments than in previous governments. The way forward is dialogue & negotiations, which we have been doing, not extreme public positionings. Unfortunate," she wrote, tagging the EU ambassador to Pakistan in her tweet.



H.E. The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea's visit to Peshawar

H.E. The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Suh Sangpyo called upon prominent governmental and civil services figures of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during his visit to Peshawar on the 29th and 30th April, 2021.

H.E. Mr. Suh Sangpyo called upon the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, H.E. Mr. Mehmood Khan who was accompanied by the Minister for Health and Finance of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mr. Taimour Salim Jhagra and Minister for Local Government and Law, Mr. Akbar Ayub Khan. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest and the measures being taken for providing a more conducive environment for Korean investments to various areas including hydropower. Various matters regarding to the promotion of Buddhist tourism in the province were also discussed in the meeting.

H.E. Mr. Suh Sangpyo similarly called upon the Inspector General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, Mr. Sanullah Abbasi and

the Deputy Inspector General of Counter Terrorism Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, Mr. Javed Wazir to discuss matters of security cooperation to enhance the inflow of Korean tourists into the province.

H.E. Mr. Suh Sangpyo additionally called upon the Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Higher Education and Information, Mr. Kamran Khan Bangash to discuss possible areas of educational cooperation between universities of both countries and to encourage student to student exchanges.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea hoped that these meetings would prove to be instrumental in enhancing cooperation between the Government of Korea and the Provincial Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and would pave the way for enhanced foreign investments, increased tourism and educational cooperation.

Islamabad



Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



World Bank Country Director in Pakistan Mr. Najy Benhassine called on special Assistant to the Prime Minister's on Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam at the Ministry of Climate Change in Islamabad



World Bank Country Director in Pakistan Mr. Najy Benhassine called on the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Muhammad Hammad Azhar at the Finance Division, Islamabad



Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Mr. Nawaf Bin Said Al Malki calls on Prime Minister's special assistant on climate change Malik Amin Aslam at the Ministry of Climate Change in Islamabad



Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Mr. Nawaf Bin Said Al Malki calls on Federal Minister for Interior, Sheikh Rashid Ahmed in Islamabad



Ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan, Lis Rosenholm calls on Minister of State for Climate Change Zartaj Gul Wazir at the minister of Climate change, Islamabad



Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan H.E. Kuninori Matsuda calls on the Federal Minister for Finance Revenue, Industries and Production, Muhammad Hammad Azhar, at the finance division, Islamabad



Ambassador of Hungary, H.E. Mr. Bela Fazekas called on Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad.



UK High Commissioner to Pakistan His Excellency Dr. Christian Turner calling on Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed in Islamabad

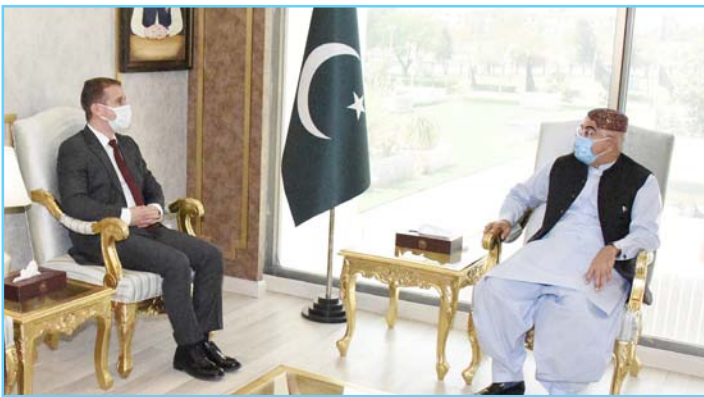
Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



H.E. Mr. Borhene El Kamel, Tunisian Ambassador to Pakistan pays a courtesy call on the Prime Minister Imran Khan at Islamabad



Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Baber Sidhu called on Prime Minister Imran Khan in Islamabad



Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjari, exchange views with Ambassador of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ali Alizada at Parliament House Islamabad



Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi held a meeting with H.E. Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of Tolerance and Commissioner General of Expo-2020 Dubai, in Abu Dhabi



Federal Minister for Energy Mr. Hammad Azhar in a meeting with H.E. Nawaf Bin Saeed Al-Maliki, Saudi Arabia Ambassador to Pakistan in Islamabad



Launching ceremony of Food distribution Project Ramadan in Balochistan province 2021 held at Islamabad. Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf Bin Saeed Al Malki, Delivered gifts in the presence of Ms. Zobia Jalal, Federal Minister for Defence Production



Ambassador of Palestine to Pakistan, Ahmed Jawad A.A. Rabei meeting with Special Representative to Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and Middle East, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmod Ashrafi in Islamabad



Foreign Minister, Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi held a meeting with Bundestag President, Mr. Wolfgang Schauble in Parliament House, Berlin (Germany)

Biden pledged to work with global leaders to accelerate innovation and tackle the Climate change crisis



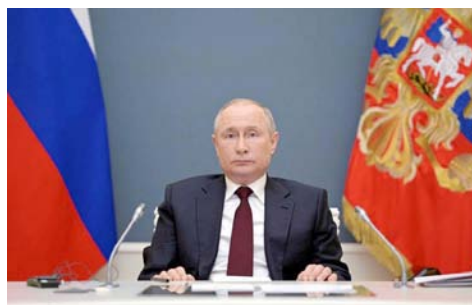
By Muhammad Bilal Zafar

US climate envoy John Kerry closed the two-day summit with a call to action, pressing the importance of making good on green promises made by many of the 40 country leaders that attended the virtual event. “These next 10 years are the critical years,” said Kerry. November’s international climate summit in Glasgow, known as COP26, “is the last best hope we have to galvanise the world to move in this direction and get the job done.”

Two days of discussions, including business and trade union representatives and youth activists, contrasted ambitious new pledges from Japan, Canada and South Korea with continued foot-dragging by fossil fuel reliant nations such as Australia, Mexico and Brazil. This was politely described as “a lack of will power in some places,” by Kerry.

Key points in the event were:

- US pledge to cut emissions by 50-52 per cent by 2030, compared with 2005 levels.
- Japan set a new climate goal, promising to cut its emissions by 46 per cent in 2030, compared with 2013 levels.
- Canada upgraded its plan to reduce emissions by 40-45 per cent by 2030, relative to 2005 levels.
- China’s Xi Jinping said he would “strictly control” the country’s coal-fired power plant construction over the next five years and “phase down” coal consumption in the five years from 2025 — but did not set a new emissions goal.





- South Korea said it would stop its state institutions financing coal power overseas.
- The US secretary of energy, Jennifer Granholm, delivered a rallying cry for clean energy, outlining plans to cut the cost of four key green technologies, including hydrogen power, carbon capture systems, batteries and solar energy.
- IEA reminder that carbon emissions are set to rise in 2021 despite rhetoric
- Biden pledged to work with global leaders to accelerate innovation and tackle the crisis, noting that his “disagreements” with Russian premier Vladimir Putin do not need to stand in the way of co-operation on climate. Oil and gas producing nations to form another club

Canada, Norway, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the US, representing 40 per cent of global oil and gas output between them, said on Friday they intended to form a “net zero” producers’ club, in an announcement that coincided with the summit.

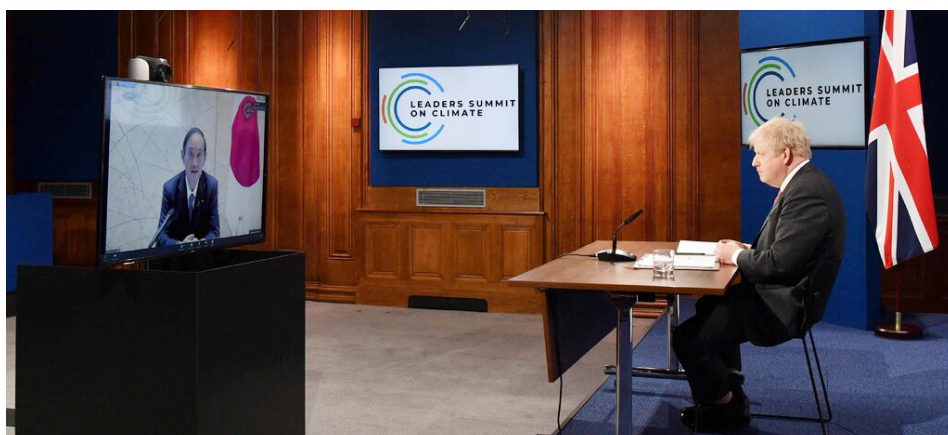
While the oil producers forum has not set a time-frame, the countries said they would focus on strategies for reducing the potent greenhouse gas methane, developing carbon capture technologies and ways to reuse carbon, as well as pursuing economic diversification. Each of these themes loomed large at the Biden event.

“To achieve our global climate goals we need co-operation from all major emitters, including oil and gas producing nations, to identify and act on solutions to phase out unabated fossil fuel emissions, while reducing emissions to the maximum extent possible in the interim,” the US department of energy said in a statement. This followed a spirited presentation earlier in the day by US secretary of energy, Jennifer Granholm, advocating for clean energy and setting out goals to cut the cost of four green energy solutions, including hydrogen power, carbon capture systems, batteries and solar energy.

Biden caps summit with green jobs and global co-operation message
US president Joe Biden again put the creation of new, high quality jobs at the heart of his green energy push on Friday, while pledging to work with other countries to accelerate innovation. Biden said governments and business leaders should embrace the “opportunity that addressing climate change provides,” which included the chance to create “millions of good paying jobs around the world.”

“We must ensure that workers who have thrived in yesterday’s and today’s industries have as bright a tomorrow in the new industries,” he said, in a final appearance at the two-day summit.

Biden outlined plans to work with countries in-



cluding the UK, and the United Arab Emirates on decarbonising key sectors such as power and agriculture. He also nodded to comments made by Vladimir Putin on Thursday, in which the Russian leader said he was “genuinely interested in galvanising international co-operation” to find solutions to climate change, such as carbon capture and storage.

“I’m very heartened by president Putin’s call yesterday for the world to collaborate,” said Biden. “The US looks forward to working with Russia and other countries.”

He returned to Putin one more time, just before closing the summit, reflecting on the opportunity for international collaboration that the climate challenge presented. Acknowledging that he and the Russian president “have our disagreements,” Biden said the two countries could “co-operate and get something done” to the benefit of all.

Countries must stay focused and work in harmony to collectively solve the problem, he added: “I hope we don’t lose focus . . . This is about what we can do together.”

Reality check on 2021 carbon emissions comes from IEA

The head of the International Energy Agency supplied a reality check at the summit, warning that despite the welcome climate commitments from national leaders “the data does not match the rhetoric.”

While the global commitment to fighting climate change had “never been higher”, Fatih Birol said, greenhouse gas emissions were still rising regardless.

“I will be blunt. Commitments alone are not enough. We need real change in the real world. Right now, the data does not match the rhetoric, and the gap is getting wider and wider” he said. The IEA’s latest forecast found that energy-related carbon emissions were on track for their second largest ever rise in 2021. This will see another 33bn tonnes of carbon dioxide added to the atmosphere.

“We are not recovering from Covid-19 in a sustainable way,” said Birol.

Reaching net zero emissions by 2050 would depend in large part on the use of technologies that were not yet ready to be used at scale, such as carbon capture and storage and the use of clean hydrogen as fuel, he added. “Make no mistake, this is a Herculean task.”

US secretary of energy launches plans on clean tech for estimated \$23tn market

Charismatic US secretary of energy, Jennifer Granholm, delivered a rallying cry for clean energy at the summit and launched new goals to cut the cost of four key green technologies, including hydrogen power, carbon capture systems and batteries.

Granholm said the development of cleaner energy technologies would unlock a “\$23tn market” by 2030.

The key areas that the US government would seek to develop, in partnership with academics and industry were hydrogen, carbon capture, industrial fuels and batteries, as well as solar energy, she said.

The US aimed to halve the price of solar energy by 2030, said Granholm, upgrading a previous goal set by the department.

It would also look to lower the cost of “clean, re-



newable” hydrogen power by 80 per cent before 2030. And it wanted to “slash battery cell prices in half again and reduce the need for critical materials.”

Lower battery costs would make electric vehicles cheaper, she added. Her department would also pursue developments that would “dramatically reduce the cost” of atmospheric carbon capture technology, Granholm said.

“This is our generation’s moonshot,” she added. Choosing between climate and the economy had “for too long” been viewed as a zero-sum game. “No longer.” In an upbeat speech, Granholm said what was needed “perhaps most of all” was “a mindset that overcomes resistance to change.”

John Kerry says Biden climate plan opens doors to ‘world’s largest market’

Climate envoy John Kerry kicked off the second day of the US climate summit by touting the potentially vast financial and economic opportunities from a shift to cleaner energy.

“The world’s largest market in history is opening before our own eyes,” said Kerry. The transition would create “millions of high paying, good jobs” in countries around the world: “No one is being asked for a sacrifice, this is an opportunity.”

Kerry described a series of new pledges made the day before, including more ambitious emissions reduction goals set by the US, Canada and Japan, as “inspiring.”

But he also acknowledged the “polite but obvious frustration” expressed by small countries — that had contributed little to climate change but were already experiencing its devastating impacts — about the inadequacy of action from larger nations.

“We are not yet behaving as if it is an existential threat. That is the challenge of today,” he said. Coal lands on doorstep of Lloyd’s as insurers confront risks. Climate protesters dumped a pile of fake coal outside Lloyd’s of London on Friday morning, the world’s leading insurance market, providing a visual reminder of the rising pressure on insurers that enable carbon-intensive industries.

Campaigners tipped the rubble from the back of a truck in front of the iconic Richard Rogers-designed building — albeit slightly deserted as most of the City of London remains working from home — before sticking signs in it reading “Do Not Insure The West Cumbria Coal Mine”



and “#StopAdani”, the latter referring to the operator of the Carmichael coal mine in Australia. A steady stream of Lloyd’s syndicates have come out in recent months to pledge that they will not underwrite the project.

The 10 million-tonne per annum thermal coal mine is the focus of environmental concerns about its potential carbon output as well as risks to local indigenous communities. At least 25 syndicates have ruled out insuring the mine, according to figures last week from Insure Our Future, a campaign group.

The group’s European co-ordinator Lindsay Keenan earlier this month called on the London market’s chief executive John Neal to “make a clear statement that no Lloyd’s members will continue to insure Adani Carmichael,” referring to the operator of the project.

In the UK, the coal project in Cumbria has also come in for mounting criticism and the local authority decided earlier this year to reconsider the planning permission awarded last year. The new mine runs counter to the UK’s carbon emissions pledges, as the country prepares to host the next global climate summit in November in Glasgow.

Lloyd’s has asked market participants to no longer provide new insurance cover for thermal coal mines, oil sands and other carbon-heavy industries from 2022, and to phase out renewals of existing policies by 2030. Lloyd’s said it was “committed to accelerating its transition towards a more sustainable insurance and reinsurance marketplace” and was aligned with the Paris accord which seeks to limit post-industrial global warming to 1.5C. It was “actively involved in constructive engagement.”

Prime Minister Imran urges same standards for holocaust, blasphemy



Western governments should treat the people who insult the Prophet (peace be upon him) the same as those who deny the Holocaust, Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Saturday. Speaking after the government banned the religious party that turned violent while demanding the expulsion of the French ambassador to protest against President Emmanuel Macron's support for the cartoons' publication, PM Khan said insulting the Prophet (PBUH) hurt Muslims across the world.

"We Muslims have the greatest love & respect for our Prophet," he tweeted. "We cannot tolerate any such disrespect & abuse."

The group Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) was banned after days of violent protests during which four policemen were killed, compelling the French embassy in Islamabad to recommend its nationals leave Pakistan, a call that appears to have gone largely unheeded.

Mr Khan tweeted: "I... call on Western govts who have outlawed any negative comment on the holocaust to use the same standards to penalise those delib-

erately spreading their message of hate against Muslims by abusing our Prophet." Denying the Holocaust is illegal in several European countries including Germany and France and offenders can be jailed. The prime minister suggested the government had not banned the TLP because it disagreed with TLP's motivation, but rather its methods.

"Let me make clear to people here & abroad: Our govt only took action against TLP under our anti-terrorist law when they challenged the writ of the state and used street violence & attacking the public & law enforcers," he said.

"No one can be above the law and the Constitution."



Imran Khan ✓ @ImranKhanPTI · Apr 17, 2021



Let me make clear to people here & abroad: Our govt only took action against TLP under our anti-terrorist law when they challenged the writ of the state and used street violence & attacking the public & law enforcers. No one can be above the law and the Constitution.



Imran Khan ✓ @ImranKhanPTI

My message to extremists abroad who indulge in Islamophobia & racist slurs to hurt & cause pain to 1.3 bn Muslims across the globe: We Muslims have the greatest love & respect for our Prophet PBUH who lives in our hearts. We cannot tolerate any such disrespect & abuse.

11:51 AM · Apr 17, 2021



H.E Mr. Suh Sangpyo

DATE OF BIRTH: May 12, 1965

EDUCATION:

Feb. 1991 B.A. in Communications, Seoul National University, Seoul, Korea

Feb. 2021 M.A. in North Korean Studies, University of North Korean Studies, Seoul, Korea

CAREER:

Apr. 1993 Passed High Diplomatic Service Examination

May 1993 Joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)

Jul. 2002 First Secretary, Korean Permanent Delegation to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris, France

Jun. 2005 Counsellor, Korean Embassy in the Republic of Gabon

Jan. 2009 Director, Economic Organization Division, International Economic Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT)

Feb. 2011 Assistant Secretary, Office of the President

Jan. 2012 Chief Administrative Officer, Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), Seoul, Korea

Aug. 2012 Deputy Director-General, Energy, Climate Change and Environment Division, International Economic Affairs Bureau, MOFAT

Dec. 2013 Minister-Counsellor, Korean Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, U.S.A.

Jan. 2016 Deputy Director-General, Multilateral Economic Organizations Division, International Economic Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)

Aug. 2018 Dean of Education and Training, Korea National Diplomatic Academy (KNDA), MOFA

AWARDS :

Dec. 2000 Prime Minister's Citation

Jun. 2011 Service Merit Medal



Interview of

H.E. Mr. Suh Sangpyo, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Exclusive Interview by Mian Fazal Elahi

DF: *Having served at various positions in the Foreign Office as a South Korea missions abroad tell us about your most challenging and enriching appointments? Also, how easy or difficult it is for a career diplomat like yourself to adapt quickly in line with the requirements of different appointments, as in your case?*

All the appointments abroad were challenging and important to me, since my duty there as a diplomat is to cement and upgrade the ties with the countries. In my case to adapt myself to the countries, first of all, as soon as I arrived at the new post, I visited other diplomats who were already there. Their experiences surely were helpful to me. Secondly, I tried to meet local people as many as possible. More contacts with them gave me more insight on how to work there. Finally, I learned the national or official languages of the countries where I served. Learning the local languages helped me to understand the countries more profoundly. Other than English speaking countries, I had foreign services in two French speaking countries, France and Gabon. So I learned the French there. And here in Islamabad, I began to learn Urdu.

DF: *Your Excellency! You are appointed as an ambassador in Pakistan recently. How do you find people conduct in Pakistan and what was your opinion about Pakistan before moving here? In addition to this question, can you please tell me what would be your main focal point to further enhance relationship between*





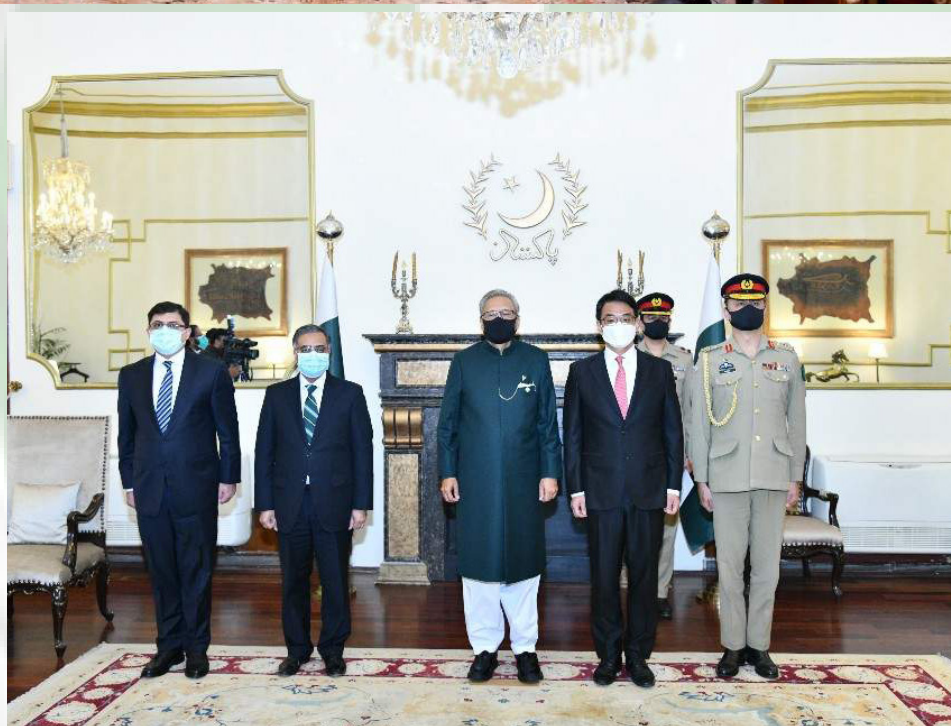
Ambassador Suh Sangpyo presented his credentials to President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr and called on the president to exchange views on ways of enhancing bilateral relations.

Pakistan and South Korea?

Pakistan is a geopolitically important country, since it is a gateway between Europe and Asia. That means Pakistan is exposed to pressure

I found people here are very friendly and warmhearted. My first priority is to reconnect Korea and Pakistan more strongly. The relations between Korea and Pakistan have a long history. So I would like to make the two countries come closer by culture, economy and people to people exchanges.

from neighboring countries and easily fall into an unstable and stressful situation. So, before I arrived here, I thought people in Pakistan have no time to look around for foreigners and even have a cold attitude. But actually I found people here are very friendly and warmhearted. My first priority is to reconnect Korea and Pakistan more strongly. The relations between Korea and Pakistan have a long history. Korean Buddhism began in the 4th century when Maranata, a Buddhist monk here, brought Buddhism to Korea. So I would like to make the two countries



Korean Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Suh Sangpyo called on the Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa



come closer by culture, economy and people to people exchanges.

DF: *The new government is keen to attract foreign investments by improving its 'ease doing business' index. What is the level of interest of the Korean business community in investing in Pakistan and what is more needed to facilitate Korean investment in Pakistan?*

Pakistan receives attentions from many foreign investors including Korean investors, given that Pakistan has a huge domestic market with population more than 200 million. On top of that, Pakistani workers are skilled and also have high proficiency of English. Currently, Korean companies invested here in hydropower, chemical and confectionary industries. Korean businessmen here told me that their companies have intention to invest more here. When the Pakistani government's efforts to improve the index of "ease of doing business" produce concrete results, we will see Korea's investments go up dramatically.

The new visa on arrival policy of the Pakistan will surely encourage more trade and tourism between Korea and Pakistan.

DF: *Your Excellency! What kinds of incentives are offered by South Korea for the Pakistani students? What are the numbers of students studying on the basis of scholarship programme in South Korea?*



Ambassador Suh made courtesy call to H.E. Mr. Atadjan Movlamov, Ambassador of Turkmenistan (Dean of Diplomatic Corps).



H.E. Suh Sangpyo Ambassador of South Korea paid courtesy call to H.E. Mr. Dato Mahmud Saidin Ambassador of Brunei to Pakistan



H.E. Suh Sangpyo Ambassador of South Korea paid courtesy call to H.E. Mr. İhsan Mustafa Yurdakul Ambassador of Turkey to Pakistan

The Korean government support foreign students through the Global Korea Scholarship (GKS) programme. Every year around 15 Pakistani students benefit from the GKS programme. Other than the GKS, Korean universities offer scholarship to foreign students based on their own scholarship policies.

DF: South Korea is one of the countries that has been accorded “Visa on Arrival” status under Pakistan’s new visa policy. How is that likely to accelerate Islamabad-Seoul ties especially in the fields of tourism and trade?

The new visa policy of the Pakistan will surely encourage more trade and tourism between the two countries. In particular, tourism sector will benefit from the policy by increasing the numbers of tourists. Currently, due to COVID-19, the Pakistan’s new visa policy has not reaped the fruits of the policy yet. Once the pandemic is controlled, the new visa policy will give good results to tourism and trade.

DF: In the Pakistan-Korea bilateral policy consultations, both countries agreed to expand the range of their ties through interactions at the highest levels. What are the chances of our Prime Minister Imran Khan or other dignitaries visiting South Korea, especially in a bid to rally around the Pakistani community there and exploring avenues to enhance Korean investments in Pakistan?

During the recent years, not so many dignitaries from Seoul have visited Pakistan and vice versa. So it’s time to revitalize high-level exchanges between the two countries. The year of 2023 marks the 40th anniversary of establishing the diplomatic ties of the two countries. Taking that opportunity, both countries are expected to hold various celebrating events and intensify exchanges of dignitaries as well.

DF: In what areas can both countries trade more? Also, what and where the potential for Pakistan to enhance its exports to South Korea?

The annual trade volume between the both countries is around 1.4 billion US dollars. Pakistan’s main export goods to Korea are textile, leather and petroleum products. There are more Pakistani goods competitive enough to export to Korea in the agricultural sector. Pakistan can also find exportable products in the industrial sector from a point of long-term view. Recently, joint ventures between Korea and Pakistan have been launched in automobiles and home appliances. Those joint ventures currently sell the products only in the Pakistani domestic market. In the future those companies can sell the products back to Korea and even to the third country.

DF: Fairly free from geopolitical constrictions, could South Korea-Pakistan relations go on to



H.E. Suh Sangpyo Ambassador of South Korea met with Mr. Amin-ul Haque Federal Minister MOITT (Ministry of information technology and telecommunication)



H.E. Suh Sangpyo Ambassador of South Korea met with Sayed Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari Minister of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Special Assistant to PM for overseas Pakistanis & HRD



become a success story of Pakistan's economic diplomacy in the next decade or so?

Definitely, South-Pakistan relations will be a success story of Pakistan's economic diplomacy. Both countries' economies complement each other. Pakistan has skilled workers, natural resources and huge domestic market, while Korea has companies with high technology and willingness to invest. Therefore, matching the Pakistani local companies with Korean investors will be one of the important tasks in the success of Pakistan's economic diplomacy. In this regard, one of my priorities as ambassador here is to make both countries' businessmen get together. Establishing Korea-Pakistan Business Council can be an initiative to achieve this goal.

DF: Pakistan and Korea have been collaborating in the energy sector, especially with respect to renewable energy. The Country Partnership Strategy notes the energy sector as one of the core areas of cooperation. What has been done so far and can we expect in the future?

Korean construction and electric power companies have invested in Pakistani hydroelectric power sector and currently several projects such as Patrind(400million), Gulpur(300million) and Lower Spat Goh(1 billion) are ongoing. All these projects have been successful and help to address the electric power shortage in Pakistan. If the projects continue to go smoothly without any unnecessary regulations, I expect more investment will come from the Korean companies.

DF: Unlike governmental and business interactions, there seems to be a deficiency in civil society's involvement in diplomatic relations between the two countries. What are some ways to increase the involvements of the 'third sector' of the two countries' societies?

The role of civil society is to cement diplomatic ties more firmly. So civil society's involvement in diplomatic relations is crucial. There are some ways to increase the involvements of the 'third sectors' such as sports and music. In sport, Taekwondo, a Korean martial art, has contributed to increase Pakistani people's understanding about Korea. In music, BTS, a Korean music band, is also well known to Pakistani young people. Pakistan has excellent dance teams and in each province there are splendid traditional music culture. In music and sports, civil society's involvement can contribute to enhancing the ties of the two countries.

DF: Your Excellency recently America has decided to withdraw NATO forces from Afghanistan in Sept 2021? How do you see the situation is it peaceful for Afghanistan and the neighboring countries of Afghanistan?



The Afghanistan peace process is important for the neighboring countries. So, as far as I know, the Pakistani government has been closely engaged with US and other related countries/parties in the process, and facilitated the signing of the US-Taliban agreement and later the commencement of the intra-Afghan talks so, I think that the foreign troops withdraw from Afghanistan if right compromise agreement will come out among the relevant parties and it would be peaceful not only for the neighboring countries but for the whole region.

DF: Your Excellency? People to people contact are very necessary to further deep rooting the bilateral relations between the two countries? My question is how many people of South Korea visited Pakistan for tourism in the last year 2019 and how many Pakistani people went to South Korea in 2019 for tourism?

In 2019, around 3,000 Korean tourists visited to Pakistan. The number of tourists from Korea is not so big, considering the rich historical heritage of this country. In particular, Pakistan

is home to Gandhara Buddhist art and the Indus Valley Civilization. Currently a small number of Pakistani tourists visit to Korea. I expect that once COVID-19 pandemic ends, we will see many Korean tourists visit here. And that will foster a favorable environment to open direct flights between the two countries. In that case, we will also see much more Korean and Pakistani tourists visit to Pakistan and to Korea.

DF: Your Excellency? Would you like to give any message for the people of Pakistan and the readers of Diplomatic focus magazine?

I am very honored to be here as ambassador of the Republic of Korea. During my tenure, I will do my best to get closer Korea and Pakistan in all areas. In the course of this, I would like to listen to advises and ideas from Pakistani people. Please do not hesitate to contact or visit the Korean embassy. The embassy always be open to you.

Thank you.



Address by

President Cyril Ramaphosa on the occasion of Freedom Day

Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, Mr Nathi Mthethwa, Ministers and Deputy Ministers, Premier of Free State, Ms Sisi Ntombela, Acting Executive Mayor of Mangaung, Cllr Lebohlang Masoetsa, MECs and members of the Provincial Legislature, Traditional leaders in our midst, Representatives of various political formations, Civil society representatives, Members of the media, Fellow South Africans Dumelang. Sanibonani. Molweni. Lotjhani. Ndi masiari. Goeie dag. Good afternoon. I want to especially greet the people of the Free State who have welcomed us so warmly to their province. It was right here in the Free State that many struggles were waged against colonial

rule and later the apartheid regime. It was here in the Free State that the South African National Native Convention was convened in 1909 by leaders like John Langalibalele Dube, John Tengo Jabavu and others to mobilise against the Union of South Africa. The Free State is the birthplace of the South African Native National Congress, which later became the African National Congress. It was in the Free State that the historic African Claims document was adopted in 1943, setting out the demands of the South African people for the realisation of their rights. And it was the people of the Free State who bore the brunt of the racist pass laws, and who actively resisted them. We particularly salute the resistance of the

women of the Free State, who embarked on a campaign of defiance against the pass laws in 1913. This campaign, led by Charlotte Maxeke, Katie Louw, Catharina Symmons, Cecilia Makiwane and others, set in motion a movement that would soon spread to the rest of the country. After Sol Plaatje visited some of the protestors in jail in Kroonstad in 1913 he wrote in the newspaper Tsala ya Batho: "They are determined to fight the pass laws no matter where they might be. They are fighting for the freedom of women in the Free State.. they don't care even if they die in jail." Such was their determination and their courage. They were prepared to resist no matter the cost. They stood for what was right, not for

themselves, but for their fellow man and woman. Mbokodo, we salute you!

We salute all the men and women of this great land whose sacrifices have made it possible for us to be free today. We salute today's generation of men and women who have taken up the cause of freedom, equality, non-racialism, non-sexism and human rights for all. They are the worthy inheritors of the baton of struggle passed to them by those who came before. This year marks 27 years since we attained our freedom from apartheid rule.

On this day we recall the historic events of the 27th of April 1994 when we voted for the first time. There are celebrations taking place across the land, and we will be waving the national flag and singing our national anthem. We will share stories with the younger generation of where we were on that day, and the experience of standing in the voting queues.

Today we have a country where all enjoy human rights and freedoms. We have a Constitution that is a shield and a protection for all.

We have made great progress towards realising the rights of our people to a better life and in advancing human dignity. And yet, even as we have lived in a democratic country for the past 27 years, we know that across many parts of South Africa, the promise of 1994 has not yet been fulfilled. Millions of South Africans still live in conditions of poverty and deprivation.

For those who continue to suffer from lack of basic services like running water; for those living in fear every day from violence and crime; and for those who have no jobs to support themselves and their families, true freedom remains elusive. The legacy of apartheid remains a defining feature of our land. Even after nearly three decades, it continues in many ways to determine where people will live, what assets they own, what schooling they receive, what jobs they can do, and how safe they feel.

As we celebrate this Freedom Day, we can point to the great progress we have made in confronting the apartheid legacy – from the provision of water and electricity to millions, to opening the doors of learning to the children of the poor, to the provision of health care, to lifting millions of people out of poverty. But we cannot celebrate Freedom Day without acknowledging how much further we still need to go. It cannot be that 27 years into our democracy that our people are being deprived of even the most basic services like water and sanitation because of poor planning, incompetence, mismanagement or corruption. It cannot be that access to housing, education and decent health care is being undermined because those tasked with service delivery do not care enough. In exactly, six months from today we will be holding our sixth local government elections since the advent of democracy.

We will be going to the polls at an immensely difficult time in the life of our country. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a devas-

tating impact not only on public health, but on our economy. Many people have lost their jobs. Businesses have been forced to close. Families are struggling to make ends meet. The task of rebuilding our society and our country is a great one. Every South African will need to be part of the great effort to restore our economy to health, to create more jobs, and to grow more businesses through the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan.

Every South African will need to remain part of the fight to overcome COVID-19. We are still in the midst of the pandemic, and the likelihood of a third wave of infections remains ever present. This means that we cannot let down our guard for a moment. We need to continue to practice social distancing, avoiding crowds and closed spaces. We must continue to wear masks whenever we are in public spaces, and we need to continue to wash our hands regularly or sanitise. If we remain vigilant, if we exercise caution, if we act responsibly, we should be able to delay a resurgence of infections and save lives. In the coming weeks, we will be launching the second phase of our national vaccination programme, which will focus on the most vulnerable in our population.

This is a massive undertaking that will need the support and participation of all South Africans. In its size and complexity, in its reach and its impact, the national vaccination programme will be similar in many ways to the first democratic election that we held 27 years ago on this day. The success of our vaccination programme is vital not only to overcoming the coronavirus pandemic, but also to enabling us to continue with our struggle for the realisation of the rights of all South Africans. Fellow South Africans, Democracy rests on the beliefs of free will and free choice. Our vote is the most potent weapon through which we can improve our lives and transform our communities. Whether you are in a village, a town, a city, a metro or a farm, I call on you to exercise your right in the upcoming local government elections. I call on you to decide who among the many candidates has the ability and the determination to work tirelessly on your behalf.

I call on you to determine the future of your family and your community by putting your confidence in those parties that have the best policies and the will and the means to implement them. I call on you to demonstrate, with your vote, your intolerance for corruption, theft and mismanagement of the funds that are meant for the benefit of you, the citizen.

These elections are an opportunity to make your voice heard and to be part of the change you want to see. Of the many great facets of democracy is that we are able to exercise our right to protest. But when we resort to violent demonstrations, burning, looting and the destruction of property, we are undermining the very cause we seek to advance. Exercising our right to vote is by far the most powerful form

of protest. If those who claim to serve you are not doing so, vote them out. Over the passage of time our democracy has grown and matured. So too should our approach to exercising this important right.

Let us be guided by one loyalty alone, and that is to this country. The struggles waged by our forebears were not for themselves alone; they were for the generations yet to come. We must take a firm stand against the social ills that prevent the men, women and children of South Africa from living lives of freedom. We must take a firm stand against violence against women and children.

We must speak out and report any instances of gender-based violence, even if the perpetrators are close to us. As a country we must say no to homophobia and all forms of intolerance against members of the LGBTQI+ community.

Over the past few months there have been a series of terrible crimes committed against members of this community, including murder. This is something of which we as a nation are deeply ashamed. I want to send a strong message that hate crime will not be tolerated in our society, and that those behind these crimes will be found and brought to book.

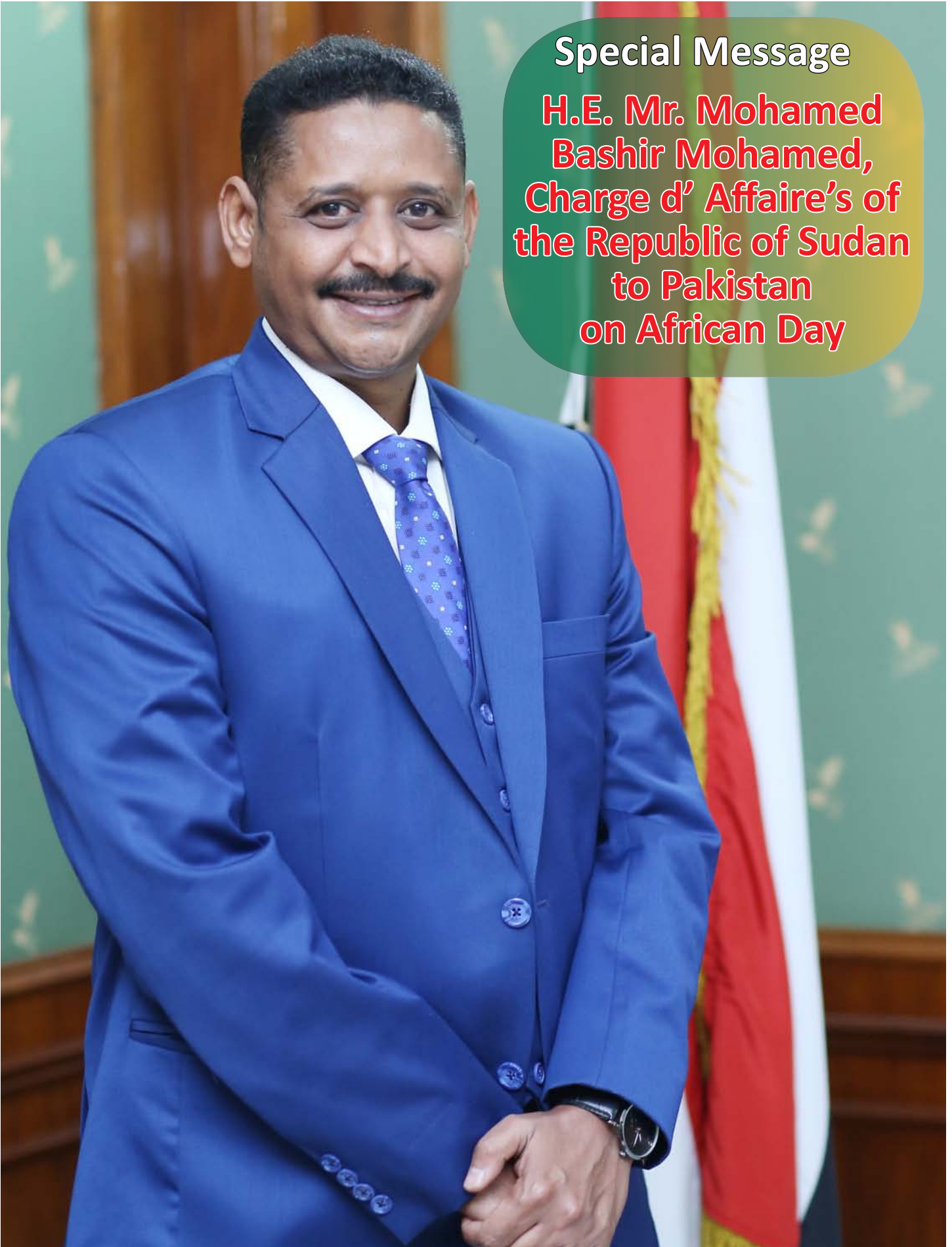
Fellow South Africans,

Many have paid the ultimate price so that we are able to breathe the clean air of freedom today. Over the years we have encountered and overcome many challenges. But there are still many challenges that we are yet to overcome. These are problems common to us all and they impact us all. But like those who came before, we understand that no challenge is too great that it cannot be overcome. The democratic breakthrough of 1994 liberated black South Africans from the tyranny of apartheid, but it also liberated white South Africans from the shackles of untruth and the false belief in racial superiority. This is because chose the path of non-racialism, of reconciliation and of peace. After 27 years we are still striving to be a South Africa that belongs to all who live in it – be they black or white, man or woman, rural dweller or urban dweller, able-bodied or living with disability, regardless of their beliefs, their language or their sexual orientation. Let us acknowledge, appreciate and celebrate the diversity of this country, for it is what makes us who we are. We may come from different backgrounds but we call ourselves South Africans with pride.

What is needed of us now is that we hold fast to the rope of unity as we confront our many challenges. It is the responsibility and duty of every South African who believes in this country and wants it to succeed. Let us not abandon hope that we can become the country our forebears fought for. Let us not give in to doubt and pessimism. Let us keep striving. Step by step, brick by brick, let us build this nation together. Wherever you are today, I wish you a happy Freedom Day. May God Bless South Africa and protect her people. I thank you.

Special Message

**H.E. Mr. Mohamed
Bashir Mohamed,
Charge d'Affaires of
the Republic of Sudan
to Pakistan
on African Day**



It gives me an immense pleasure and feel honored to share some of my ideas and thoughts here in this space in the renowned magazine DIPLOMATIC FOCUS on the occasion of the commemoration of the AFRICAN DAY which is very special and conspicuous one, not only for African peoples and countries, but also for all the globe. And also, I would like to seize this opportunity to felicitate all African missions and representatives accredited here to Pakistan on the exceptional and distinguished occasion especially the African continent very attached to it.

It is worth mentioning the deep rooted ties between African countries and The Islamic Republic of Pakistan in all cooperation landscapes, and the relations between two sides unilaterally and bilaterally have witnessed a very tangible leap in all fields of cooperation particularly within the framework of the Pakistani government initiative ENGAGE AFRICA which brings more impetus and momentum to strengthening the levels of cooperation and collaboration between African Countries and Pakistan. Furthermore both sides share mutual respect and understanding of establishing a relation based on realizing the aspirations of African people and people of Pakistan and also the African countries and government of Pakistan as well, side by side to upgrade these relations even further more. In addition to that, it is very substantial for the both parties to engage in a genuine and concrete interaction to further more strengthen the cordial bonds and enhance people to people contacts through establishing and activating the Pak- African peoples friendships Associations.

When it comes to Sudan- Africa Relations, I have the honor to mention that The Republic of Sudan maintains very dynamic bonds and motivated relations with all African countries and the AFRICAN UNION as well as its affiliated bodies and institutions and this comes compatible with Sudan's Foreign Policy to pursue and adopt a policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, their autonomy in global politics, the right of nations and people to relations

based on common interest and mutual benefit. It also supports an international order that promotes justice, equality, human inter-dependence, sustainable development and one that strengthens and encourages neighborly relations. Sudan is well known as founding member in many regional organizations and entities and historically played very leading and supportive role in the movement of the African struggle and strive for gaining independence and liberation when it co-founded the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY in the year of 1963 which turned later to AFRICAN UNION . Sudan along with other countries established in 1986 the INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY FOR DEVELOPMENT (IGAD). And contributed in founding the COMESA IN 1993 and the SAHEL AND SAHARA STATES GROUP in 1998 chairing its third summit which convened in Khartoum in February 2001. Thereafter, Sudan has become the host country for the AFRICAN-CARIBBEAN –PACIFIC summit including 79 states from different continents, where Sudan was elected to chair this group for two years.

Bilaterally, Sudan maintains very distinguished diplomatic ties with all African countries based on mutual respect and endeavors exerted to furthermore uplift all fields of cooperation between them.

Regarding the relation between Sudan and Pakistan, the relations have been characterized as close, warm, brotherly, cordial and dynamic, based on strong mutual commonalities and highly coordinated economic and political connectivity. Pakistan used to be one of the first countries in the world to felicitate and recognize the independence of the Republic of Sudan in 1956. They immediately established diplomatic bonds and maintained warm and dynamic brotherly relation throughout the last 6 decades and showing case longstanding support to Sudan ever since. The two countries supported each other particularly in the times of hardships. The matters of mutual interests between them comprising political, economic, commercial, cultural, educational, and coordination on regional and international levels. The aspirant people

and brethren from two countries are looking forward to a level of relationships not only confined to what have been mentioned in the fields of cooperation, but to give the distinguished relations more momentum to reach the level of absolute engagement and take it to a new horizons.

There are many positive developments in the Sudan domestic political and economic sphere.

Given its dual Africa-Arab heritage, and in view of its strategic geographical position as the point of confluence for the two identities, Sudan is compelled to play an active role in the global and regional communities beyond the immediate framework of safeguarding its interests, principles and commitment to conventions it has ratified.

As it had been brought to your knowledge that Sudan is taking steadfast steps towards retrieving stable and sustainable democratic-style governing system after the glorious December revolution succeeded in dismantling the dictatorship regime in 2018, the ousted regime which had ruled the country with iron fist for 30 years. A Transitional government is formed in sudden which could reach to many achievements in many fields particularly retrieving the normal relations with the world and engaging in a real dialogue with many countries including USA, the step led the United States of America to officially announce the cancellation of the Sudan classification as a state sponsoring terrorism (S.S.T) the decision which went effective from** stDecember 2020, that ended 27 years of all forms of boycott by the U.S government and international companies and institutions. Also, the White House took a decision on 29th December 2020 removing all sorts of sanctions and restrictive measures against dealing in business and trade beside banking transactions between Sudan and the USA. In accordance with these significant developments, the government of the Sudan as a kind of economic reform took a decision to unifying the exchange rate as a major stride for repairing the long standing defect in banking policies and economic structure in the Sudan national economy.

Glimpses *about the*

Agriculture

Agriculture represents the salient feature of the Sudan ECONOMY and in any survey, it is easily realized that the agricultural products in total account for about 95 percent of the country's exports. primarily in the north of the country along the banks of the Nile and other rivers.

Cash crops (as of 1999) grown under irrigation in these areas include cotton and cottonseed, which is of primary importance to the economy with 172,000 tons and 131,000 tons produced annually respectively, sesame (220,000 tons), sugarcane (5,950,000 tons), peanuts (980,000 tons), dates (176,000 tons), citrus fruits, yams (136,000 tons), tomatoes (240,000 tons), mangoes, coffee, and tobacco. The main subsistence crops produced in Sudan are sorghum (3,045,000 tons), millet (1,499,000 tons), wheat (168,000 tons), cowpeas, beans, pulses, corn (65,000), and barley. Cotton is the principal export crop and an integral part of the country's economy and Sudan is the world's third largest producer of sesame after India and China.

Sesame seeds and peanuts are cultivated for domestic consumption and increasingly for export. Livestock production has vast potential, and many animals, particularly cows, sheep, and camels, are exported to Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries.

Sudan has 84 million hectares of arable land and about 20% is cultivated. Major agricultural projects such as the Gezera Scheme in Gezira state, and others producing sugar and wheat are underway in order to make Sudan food self-sufficient. Sudan is one of the world's potential breadbaskets and Sudan is nicknamed as the Arab world food basket as it accounts for 45% of arable land in the Arab world.

Sudan has a developed infrastructure comparable to most of Sub-Saharan Africa and many

projects are taking place to develop it even further all across the country. One of Sudan's greatest projects was the Merowe Dam for generating electricity and Modern buildings in Khartoum are on the rise due to the economic growth.

Industry

In the field of Industry, Sudan's rapid industrial development comprises agricultural processing, electronics assembly, plastics manufacturing, furniture, tanning, sugar production, meat processing and various light industries located



in any of the 10 Industrial areas in Khartoum. due to the many countries depending on Sudan for medicines and medical services, Sudan is now concentrating on becoming a hub for the medical industry in East Africa, providing facilities and concessions for medical investments and succeeding in covering about 70% of needs and exporting to many neighboring nations. In recent years, the Giad Industrial Complex in Al Jazirah state introduced the assembly of small autos and trucks, and some heavy military equipment such as armored personnel carri-

ers and battle tanks as well as handguns, light and heavy machineguns and howitzers and, recently, drone production. Sudan is reputed to have great mineral resources, and exploration has started extensively for gold, of which is produced nearly 80 tons annually providing a great boost to the foreign exchange reserves of the nation, with the participation of many investment companies from all over the world. Quantities of asbestos, chromium, mica, kaolin and copper are now exploited commercially, especially for export to China.

Electrical Generation

More than 70% of Sudan's hydropower comes from the Roseires Dam on the Blue Nile grid. Various projects are proposed to expand hydropower, thermal generation, and other sources of energy, Merowe dam generates 1250 MW of electricity.

Gold

In September 2012, the country's first gold refinery opened and it is speculated to be one of the largest such constructions in Africa. The refinery will produce more than 328 tonnes of gold annually. Economic analysts say that the refinery is part of Sudan's strategy to make up for lost oil revenue after the South Sudan split of 2011.

The major factors attracting investors are the following:

Sudan's strategic location

Which represents an entrance to Africa from the east and the fact that it is neighbored by African countries a few to which Sudan represents to the only sea outlet. The location on the Red Sea makes Sudan the centre of international markets; Middle East, Far East, Asia, Europe, and the USA as well as the recipient of ships crossing the into the Red Sea through the Suez Canal. Sudan is tied to some of the neigh-



The Sudan ECONOMY



boring countries by airlines, roads, sea, and river transport.

1-Sudan's rich resources:

These include agricultural land and fresh water resources, such as rivers, rain, and underground waters. These are in addition to forests, meadows, animal resources and mineral resources which include petroleum, gold and other precious metals. Sudan is characterized by the availability of human resources represented in vocational labor, highly skilled graduates and very cheap rates for the available labor.

2-Infrastructure and Service Facilities

a. The infrastructure and service facilities are updateable in the light of the government policies.

b. To enhance the investment environment and keep up with the expected growth which is due after the discovery of petroleum and the establishment of peace in Sudan, the establishment of roads, railways, seaports, airports (national and international), telecommunications, electricity generation stations, water purification facilities, sanitation networks and others are very important.

c. A shift towards the enhancing the state of in-



dustrial areas, and building new industrial cities supplied with all the services necessary for investment are essential.

d. The availability of free zones in Suakin and El-Jaili cities grant encouraging exemptions to investors.

e. The availability of a banking sector, insurance sector, auditing, financial, technical and legal consultancy services.

f. The availability of educational and health facilities of high standard which contribute to providing necessary services to citizens and expatriates.

g. The availability of a modern construction sector which contributed to the abundance of houses, and offices rising to fulfill investors' requirements.

3- Economic policies which include: the investor has the right to operate without a Sudanese partner

4-The investment law has provided the following fundamental guarantees:

a. No confiscation of property will occur except through the legal system and after payment of a reasonable compensation

b. The investor has the right to re-transfer the capital in case the project isn't executed or is liquidated

c. Transfer of profits and costs of finance will be executed in the currency of import and on the date due (after payment of the legal duties)

d. The project is automatically included in the registry of importers and exporters.

5-Regional and international agreements to promote the investment climate the Sudanese government has established number of regional agreements aimed at encouraging investment and creating trade opportunities with other nations.



Environment & Tourism and civilization in Sudan

Sudan enjoys various tourist resources due to the availability of enormous natural capabilities. It is regarded as one of the richest African countries in wildlife, birds and Nile natural scenery which encourages tourism investment. The climate in Sudan is characterized by varied climatic conditions which are moderate all the year round in the Red Sea area especially in the highlands such as Erkwiet Summer Resort.

Sudan is one of the largest African nations. It is rich in history dating back to the Ancient Egyptians and the Ancient Nubians. There are many pyramids all over Sudan, attracting many tourists from all countries, including Western nations. Sudan was voted the 8th most popular Arab nation to visit by the Council of Arab Economic Unity. Sudan also has many modern hotels including, inter alia, the five stars Corinthia Hotel Khartoum in Khartoum.

Sudan witnessed many successive civilizations such as those of Meroe and Kush. The antiquities of those civilizations are still seen in many areas of the Northern State, Shendi area, Al-Bejrawia, Al-Naqa', Al-Musawarat, Merawie, Karima, Al-Berkal Mountain and others.

Tourism activity started in Sudan since the dawn of independence with the country's some resources being carefully and honestly directed to reflect Sudan's splendid tourist image to the outside world. The state, represented in the General Administration of Wildlife, embarked on the establishment of many zoos and reserves so that wild animals are well protected, bearing in mind that they are a national wealth to be treasured and passed on to the coming generations.

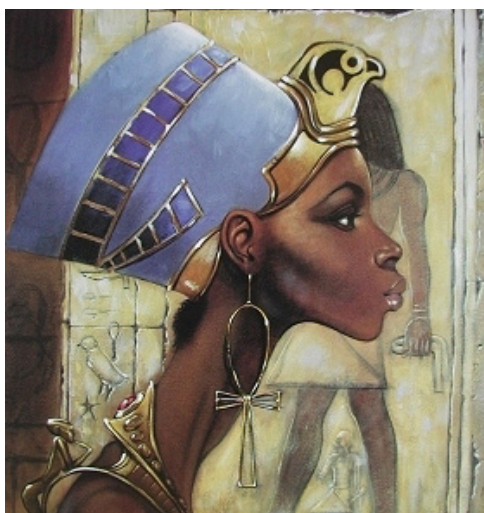
Antiquities Sites and Natural Areas:

Sudan is considered one of the few countries which enjoy a variety of tourism resources. These resources are represented in the Red Sea Coast which extends for more than 700 ki-



lometers and is characterized by many tourist attractions, including diving and under-water photography, besides boat-rowing and water skiing. The Red Sea Coast enjoys many gulfs and coral reefs as the area is free from contamination which plagues many seas and tourist areas in the world.

Sudan also enjoys an ancient heritage in the field of civilizations and antiquities representing a great attraction for tourists both from within and outside the country. Sudan was already playing a role in world history as early as the first millennium BC. References to Kush are well known in Egyptian inscriptions and also in the works of Greek and Roman authors as well as in the bible. This heritage is centered in the Northern areas including Al-Nag'a Al-Musawarat, Karima, Al-Berkal, Merowie, Dongola and others. These areas and others saw ancient civilizations proved by the remains of the pyramids and temples, with a great part of them still lying unearthed. These areas attract many ex-





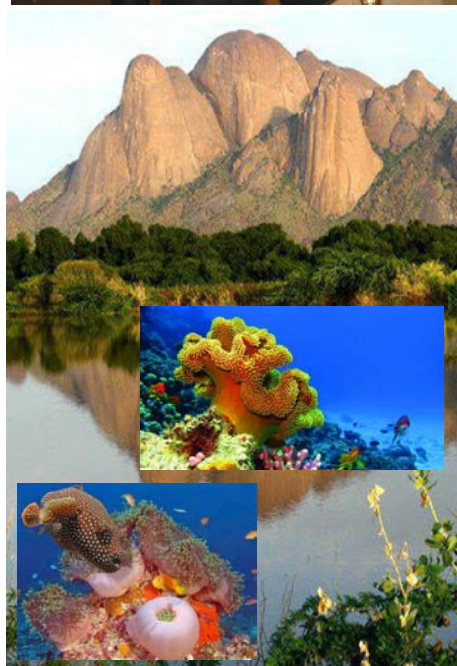
perts and researchers in this field. In addition, they are considered archaeological sites not experiencing any tourist leap before despite the availability of huge resources in them.

Central areas in Sudan including Sennar and Sinja contain antiquities of Al-Funj Kingdom (The Black Sultanate). The antiquities of this area bear testimony to the long and authentic history of the kingdom. There are many antiquities of the Mahdi State in east and west of Sudan and in the National Capital. These antiquities which reflect the glory and history of the Sudanese people, beside the existence of many other antiquities in other areas deserve concern to attract tourists from abroad to get acquainted with the history of the country.

In East Sudan, at Sawakin area, on the Red Sea, there are great antiquities indicating the existence of a historically great period of Sudan's history. Sawakin Island, for example, is considered one of the areas which witnessed urban development and unique styles of architecture. It is now regarded as one of the world's few areas in this field. There are many tourists interested in this aspect of history and who can be attracted to these sites.

The state also set up Al-Dinder National Tourist Park for wildlife in the central state in 1935. This park is considered one of the greatest reserves in Africa. It occupies a unique position north of the equator on an area of 2,470 square miles.

In 1990, the Sanganeb national marine reserve established on an area of about 12 square kilometers as a first Sudanese sea reserve at the Red Sea area. The government also set up Arous Tourist Village at the Red Sea area. Areas of games are represented in the Red Sea Hills and birds hunting at Kindy Lake in Darfur state after it had been protected against poaching. Mountain Marra lies in western Sudan, one of the most distinct places in Darfur region. It stretches for several hundred miles from the small town of Kas in the South up to the outskirts of Al Fasher in the North, covering an area of almost 12800 square kilometers. Mountain Marra is 10,000 ft above sea level, the second highest in the country. It consists of a range of mountains 240 km long and 80 km wide, with waterfalls, volcanic lakes in an outstanding scenic beauty. The climate of the mountain is mild and of Mediterranean nature, where it rains almost the whole year round and that allows for the growth of abundant vegetation of citrus, apples and clusters of dense forest trees. Mountain Marra's heavy rainfall and numerous gorges supply vast arable lands with a continuous flow of water turning it into ideal soil for the cultivation of sorghum, millet, vegetables and a wide variety of orchard trees.





Keynote speech by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference

By Monitoring Desk

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government,
Your Excellencies Heads of International Organizations,
Your Excellencies Members of the Board of Directors of the Boao Forum for Asia,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Friends,
“True friendship brings people close however far apart they may be.” It gives me great pleasure to attend the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2021 and meet you all in this cloud meeting. Let me begin by extending, on behalf of the Chinese government and people and also in my own name, a warm welcome to all the guests participating both in person and online, and cordial greetings and best wishes to all friends old and new.
This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Boao Forum. Over these two decades, Asian countries have advanced regional economic integration and worked in unison to pursue both economic and social development, which has turned Asia into the most vibrant and promising region in the global economy. Asia has also stood with the rest of the world in the face of terrorism, the Indian Ocean tsunami, the international financial crisis, COVID-19 and other traditional and non-traditional security threats,

which has helped maintain stability and security in the region. As an important member of the Asian family, China has kept deepening reform and opening-up while promoting regional cooperation, thus achieving progress and development in tandem with the rest of Asia and the world. It is fair to say that this Forum has borne witness to the extraordinary journey of China, of Asia and of the world, and has exerted a significant influence in boosting development in Asia and beyond.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends,

This year’s annual conference is convened against a very special background. The theme of the conference—“A World in Change: Join Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation”—is most opportune and relevant under the current circumstances.

Now, the combined forces of changes and a pandemic both unseen in a century have brought the world into a phase of fluidity and transformation. Instability and uncertainty are clearly on the rise. Humanity is facing growing governance deficit, trust deficit, development deficit, and peace deficit. Much remains to be done to achieve universal security and common development. That said, there is no fundamental change in the trend toward a multi-polar world; economic globalization is showing renewed resilience; and the call for upholding

multilateralism and enhancing communication and coordination has grown stronger. While we live in an age rife with challenges, it is also an age full of hope.

Where should humanity go from here? What kind of future should we create for future generations? As we try to answer these important questions, it is crucial that we bear in mind the shared interests of mankind and make responsible and wise choices.

China calls on all countries in Asia and beyond to answer the call of our times, defeat the pandemic through solidarity, strengthen global governance, and keep pursuing a community with a shared future for mankind.

— We need consultation on an equal footing to create a future of shared benefits. Global governance should reflect the evolving political and economic landscape in the world, conform to the historical trend of peace, development and win-win cooperation, and meet the practical needs in addressing global challenges. We need to follow the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, uphold true multilateralism, and make the global governance system more fair and equitable. We need to safeguard the UN-centered international system, preserve the international order underpinned by international law, and uphold the multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization at its core. World affairs should be handled through extensive con-

sultation, and the future of the world should be decided by all countries working together. We must not let the rules set by one or a few countries be imposed on others, or allow unilateralism pursued by certain countries to set the pace for the whole world. What we need in today's world is justice, not hegemony. Big countries should behave in a manner befitting their status and with a greater sense of responsibility.

We need openness and innovation to create a future of development and prosperity. Openness is essential for development and progress. It also holds the key to post-COVID economic recovery. We need to promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, deepen regional economic integration, and enhance supply, industrial, data and human resources chains, with a view to building an open world economy. We need to deepen partnerships for connectivity and strengthen infrastructural links to keep the arteries of economic activities unclogged. We must seize the historical opportunities in a new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation, boost the digital economy, and step up exchanges and cooperation in such areas as artificial intelligence, biomedicine and modern energy, so that the fruits of scientific and technological innovation can be turned into greater benefits for people in all countries. In this age of economic globalization, openness and integration is an unstoppable historical trend. Attempts to "erect walls" or "decouple" run counter to the law of economics and market principles. They would hurt others' interests without benefiting oneself.

— We need solidarity and cooperation to create a future of health and security. In the ongoing fight against COVID-19, victory will be ours at the end of the day. We must put people and their lives above anything else, scale up information sharing and collective efforts, enhance public health and medical cooperation, and give full play to the key role of the World Health Organization (WHO). It is important that we bolster international cooperation on the R&D, production and distribution of vaccines and increase their accessibility and affordability in developing countries so that everyone in the world can access and afford the vaccines they need. It is also important that we take comprehensive measures to improve global governance on public health security and work together for a global community of health for all. We need to follow the philosophy of green development, advance international cooperation on climate change, and do more to implement the Paris Agreement on climate change. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities must be upheld, and concerns of developing countries on capital, technology and capacity building must be addressed.

— We need commitment to justice to create a future of mutual respect and mutual learning.

Diversity is what defines our world and makes human civilization fascinating. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it all the more clear to people around the world that we must reject the cold-war and zero-sum mentality and oppose a new "Cold War" and ideological confrontation in whatever forms. In state-to-state relations, the principles of equality, mutual respect and mutual trust must be put front and center. Bossing others around or meddling in others' internal affairs would not get one any support. We must advocate peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are common values of humanity, and encourage exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations to promote the progress of human civilization.

In this context, I would like to announce that once the pandemic gets under control, China will host the second Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations as part of our active efforts to promote inter-civilization dialogue in Asia and beyond.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Friends,

I have noted on various occasions that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a public road open to all, not a private path owned by one single party. All interested countries are welcome aboard to take part in the cooperation and share in its benefits. Belt and Road cooperation pursues development, aims at mutual benefits, and conveys a message of hope.

Going forward, we will continue to work with other parties in high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. We will follow the principles of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, and champion the philosophy of open, green and clean cooperation, in a bid to make Belt and Road cooperation high-standard, people-centered and sustainable.

We will build a closer partnership for health cooperation. Chinese businesses have already started joint vaccine production in BRI participating countries such as Indonesia, Brazil, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Pakistan and Turkey. We will expand cooperation with various parties in infectious disease control, public health, traditional medicine and other areas to jointly protect the lives and health of people in all countries.

— We will build a closer partnership for connectivity. China will work with all sides to promote "hard connectivity" of infrastructure and "soft connectivity" of rules and standards, ensure unimpeded channels for trade and investment cooperation, and actively develop Silk Road e-commerce, all in a bid to open up a bright prospect for integrated development.

— We will build a closer partnership for green development. We could strengthen cooperation on green infrastructure, green energy and green finance, and improve the BRI International Green Development Coalition, the Green Investment Principles for the Belt and Road De-

velopment, and other multilateral cooperation platforms to make green a defining feature of Belt and Road cooperation.

— We will build a closer partnership for openness and inclusiveness. A World Bank report suggests that by 2030, Belt and Road projects could help lift 7.6 million people from extreme poverty and 32 million people from moderate poverty across the world. We will act in the spirit of openness and inclusiveness as we work with all willing participants to build the BRI into a pathway to poverty alleviation and growth, which will contribute positively to the common prosperity of humankind.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

The year 2021 marks the centenary of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Over the last century, the CPC has striven forward against all odds in a relentless pursuit of happiness for the Chinese people, rejuvenation for the Chinese nation, and the common good for the world. As a result, the Chinese nation has achieved a great transformation from standing up to growing rich, and to becoming stronger, and has thus made a notable contribution to human civilization and progress. China will continue to play its part in building world peace, promoting global development, and defending international order.

China will stay committed to peace, development, cooperation and mutual benefit, develop friendship and cooperation with other countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and promote a new type of international relations. China will continue to carry out anti-COVID cooperation with the WHO and other countries, honor its commitment of making vaccines a global public good, and do more to help developing countries defeat the virus. However strong it may grow, China will never seek hegemony, expansion, or a sphere of influence. Nor will China ever engage in an arms race. China will take an active part in multilateral cooperation on trade and investment, fully implement the Foreign Investment Law and its supporting rules and regulations, cut further the negative list on foreign investment, continue to develop the Hainan Free Trade Port, and develop new systems for a higher-standard open economy. All are welcome to share in the vast opportunities of the Chinese market.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends,

"By setting sail together, we could ride the wind, break the waves, and brave the journey of ten thousand miles." We may at times encounter stormy waves and dangerous rapids, but as long as we pool our efforts and keep to the right direction, the giant vessel of human development will stay on an even keel and sail toward a brighter future.

Thank you.

Activities of Chinese Ambassador

Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong had an in-depth discussion with Mr. Muhammad Naeem, Chairman of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission. Both sides agreed to further enhance cooperation on new technology application in agriculture, health care, education and other realm.



A productive and extensive discussion of Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong met with H.E. Murad Ali Shah Chief Minister of Sindh. Chinese Ambassador highly appreciate the commitment of Sindh Government to all-dimensional cooperation including CPEC.



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong met H.E. Jam Kamal Khan Chief Minister of Balochistan, in Quetta. Chinese Ambassador had fruitful discussion on promoting pragmatic cooperation for the benefit of local people. Both sides are looking forward to closer cooperation with Balochistan in celebrating the 70th anniversary of China-Pak relations.



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong Honored to pay tribute to Quaid-e-Azam M. Ali Jinnah in my first visit to Karachi. Pakistan is a great nation. Wish Pakistan progress and prosperity under the guidance of his vision.



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong had a cordial meeting with Mr. Imran Ismail, Governor of Sindh. Chinese Ambassador appreciated his warm remarks on China Pakistan friendship. We pledged to enhance cooperation at the threshold of 70th anniversary of bilateral relation.



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong met the Hon. Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mr. Shah Farman during my first visit to Peshawar. KP is of great potential to develop agricultural and mineral cooperation. Expect to witness more tangible cooperation to celebrate the 70th anniversary of China Pak relations.



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong Planting a Deodar in Chinese embassy, jointly with H.E. Foreign Secretary of Pakistan Mr. Sohail Mahmood and celebrated 70th anniversary of China-Pakistan diplomatic ties, and everlasting friendship between our two countries.



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong met with business community of Pakistan. Mr. Nong Rong said it is good to speak in a business language with business community at FPCCI. Our relations with a shared future cannot be realized without a strong and dynamic B2B cooperation.



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong Congratulated on the launching of Ambassador Lu Shulin's new book "Garlands of Love", collection of poems during his post in Pakistan. This is one of the events to celebrate the 70th anniversary of China Pakistan diplomatic ties. China-Pak Dosti Zindabad!



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong is impressed by performance of Hutchison Ports Pakistan. 100% vessel operations are handled through remote-controlled automatic system by Pakistani talents, with an average handling productivity of 100+ moves per hour per vessel. Great potential of Karachi port!



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong met with H.E. Amanullah Khan Yasinzai Governor of Balochistan. Chinese Ambassador said Balochistan is a place of great potential. Pleasant to distribute Ramadan food packs to local people and plant a tree for the 70th anniversary of China-Pak relations.



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong visited Port Qasim Coal-fired Power Plant and said it is an excellent example of China-Pakistan-Qatar cooperation under CPEC framework. It is producing clean energy with low tariff. Ambassador said China is motivated for further more fruitful and high quality development projects of CPEC with all friends!



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Nong Rong had the honor to call on H.E. Former President Asif Ali Zardari & Chairman PPP.



Impressive visit of Rashakai SEZ and effective communication with all stakeholders in regard to the SEZ to secure its development and growth

Fruits of CPEC would soon reach the common people of Pakistan. Ambassador Nong Rong



By: Amjad Aziz Malik

Recently, His Excellency Nong Rong, Ambassador of China to Pakistan visited Peshawar. This was his first visit to Peshawar since his appointment as Chinese Ambassador. During the visit, he met Chief Minister Mehmood Khan, officials of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and the Economic Zones Management Committee regarding the Rashkai Economic Zone, briefed, inaugurated a project to rebuild schools in Bara, met Governor Shah Farman, attended the Pak-China Friendship Association function, visited China Window, met with media representatives and visited the Historical Museum in Peshawar. This one-day visit can be termed as very important because in the coming days the importance of Peshawar and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which used to be less important due to the distance from the sea, has now increased due to the Rashakai Special Economic Zone and trade to Afghanistan and Central Asian. The establishment of industrial estates in many other districts of the province will undoubtedly contribute to the economic development of the region and the well-being of the people. In this context, Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong briefed by the Javed Iqbal Khattak, Chief Executive Officer, KP Economic Zones Management Committee, that all resources were being utilized to provide facilities to investors. - On the occasion, Provincial Additional Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir also briefed the Chinese Ambassador about the facilities provided by the provincial



government to the industrialists. Nong Rong expressed satisfaction over the steps taken by the provincial government but suggested that free facility should be provided to the industrialists to bring the raw material from the port to the factory. He was assured by the provincial government that the matter would be looked into. After the encouraging meeting, Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong along with Asim Saleem Bajwa called on Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mehmood Khan. After the one-on-one meeting, the Secretary, Provincial Planning Department briefed them on a plan for the reconstruction of schools in Bara which had been targeted by terrorists.

In the first phase of the project, 50 schools destroyed due to terrorism in Bara Tehsil of Khyber District will be rebuilt, including 24 Boys 'Schools and 26 Girls' Schools. The total estimated cost of the project is Rs. 2323 million out of which Rs. 868 million will be provided by the Government of Pakistan while 10.29 million will be provided by the Chinese Government. The project will be completed by January 2023. Welcoming the Chinese Ambassador to Peshawar, Chief Minister Mehmood Khan said that the friendship between Pakistan and China is time tested and the CPEC project is a living example. He added that he was grateful to the Chinese government for its assistance in rebuilding the damaged schools in the tribal districts and appreciated the Chinese government's cooperation. Chinese Ambassador to Nong Rong said that the friendship between Pakistan and China is deeper than the sea and higher than the Himalayas and the Chinese government is keen to further strengthen the friendly relations with Pakistan. He added that Pakistan-China bilateral relations and areas of mutual interest. Cooperation is ideal. The Chinese Ambassador further said that the Chinese government is also keen to work in the areas of poverty alleviation and economic development in Pakistan.

After the meeting, Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mehmood Khan and Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong formally inaugurated the project to rebuild the destroyed schools in the merged districts. An agreement was also signed between the Department of Education and the relevant Chinese authorities on the implementation of the school reconstruction project. In a meeting between Governor Shah Farman and Chinese Ambassador, Shah Farman welcomed the guest on his arrival in Peshawar and assured him of all possible cooperation in further strengthening Pak-China friendship. Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa briefed the Chinese Ambassador about the potential of five sectors in the province, namely olive, honey, fresh and dried fruits, saffron and precious stones. There are great opportunities for economic development through the development of these sectors. Create vast



employment opportunities

The Chinese Ambassador expressed interest in working in these areas and said that work would be started in the above five areas on the basis of an excellent relationship system and a comprehensive strategy would be formulated at the governmental and business level for these areas. The Chinese Ambassador said that the Chinese Embassy would extend all possible policy support to the Chinese companies for working in these fields and would draw the attention of the Chinese companies to take advantage of the vital potential of Pakistani olives and precious stones. He said that the people of the two countries have fraternal and friendly relations and the people of the two countries are committed to work together for economic and social development. The meeting was very pleasant and everyone was very happy with the warm welcome extended to the Chinese diplomats. Given

The Chinese Ambassador also visited China Window, a Chinese cultural and information center in Peshawar. Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong visited various sectors of China Window and appreciated the efforts of the management. He was also shown a special documentary film of China Window in which he took keen interest, he cut the cake in celebration of the completion of seventy years of Pak-China diplomatic relations. On this occasion the Chinese Ambassador formally inaugurated China Window's website. He also signed on the Pak-China Friendship Wall and recorded his impressions in the guest book. He was informed on the occasion that more than 26,000 people have visited the center since its inception. The Chinese Ambassador appreciated the services of the organizers and announced to continue all possible cooperation for China Window.

A meeting was also arranged with the Chinese Ambassador and representatives of print and electronic media and a large number of media persons attended the briefing. Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong said that he had



received a great deal of encouragement during his visit to Peshawar. I am very happy that the Chinese Cultural and Information Center China Window in Peshawar is playing an important role in introducing Chinese culture in the Province. We acknowledge its services and hope that Chinese embassy will continue to support China Window. Ambassador hoped that the window will continue to play a role in bringing the people of the two countries and people of different schools of thought closer together. He said that we are grateful to China Window for hosting a special function at China Window

on the occasion of the completion of 70 years of Pak-China diplomatic relations. Expressing his sentiments regarding the visit to China Window, he said that China Window Center It is a great pleasure to visit. China Window is an excellent example of mutual cooperation at the level of cultural, economic and CPEC. Replying to a question on C-Pack, Chinese Ambassador Nang Rong said that the pace of work on CPEC was not slowing down but the fruits of this great project would soon reach the common people of Pakistan. Are done He said that the history of Pak-China friendship. Over a period



of seven decades, the top leadership of both the countries believe in mutual development. Pakistan and China are brothers, living together in every difficult time. He said that China has also ensured mutual cooperation with Pakistan in the case of corona virus, especially in the field of vaccine and will defeat covid 19 with collective efforts. He said China is cooperating in Orange Line, Gawadar Port and other development projects. He said that CPEC projects are progressing. New projects are also under consideration. There are many projects related to CPEC. There will be a lot of good news for the people. He further said that attention would be paid to alleviate the plight of Pakistani students studying in China. Nong Rong said that corona vaccination was going on in a better way in China which would improve the travel situation of students and business community. He said that the process of arrival in China has started. He said that as conditions improve, students from both the countries will be able to come more easily. The Chinese Ambassador said that he had several meetings with Prime Minister Imran Khan and the Army Chief which would yield encouraging results. He said that this was his first visit to Peshawar where he met the Governor and Chief Minister. The meetings have been very fruitful and he is confident that CPEC will also benefit Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and he is happy that the provincial government has assured him of all possible cooperation. Media plays an important role in Pak-China friendship. CPEC is getting full attention. In this regard, he expressed confidence in expecting positive reporting from media as well.

Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong also attended the function organized by Pak-China Friendship Association. Provincial Local Government Minister Akbar Ayub welcomed the ambassador. He said that there is no example of everlasting friendship like Pak-China which is always found in the world. Addressing the function, Akbar Ayub Khan welcomed Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong on his first visit to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and expressed the hope that Nong Rong during his diplomatic stay in Pakistan would enhance the friendly and bilateral relations between the two countries. We will further deepen and expand, especially the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. Nong Rong likened Pak-China friendship to an evergreen and fruitful tree, saying that "climate change" does not affect the friendly relations between China and Pakistan., Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani introduced the Friendship Association and said that the journey of friendship which started with the establishment of Pak-China Students Friendship Association in 1970 continues today which has crossed many milestones of success.

In the last leg of his one-day visit, Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong and other officials of the Chinese Embassy visited the History Museum in Peshawar. Director Archeology



Abdul Samad received the distinguished guest. The Chinese Ambassador was informed that the history of the museum is very old and as the center of Gandhara, this museum is famous all over the world. The Chinese Ambassador

expressed confidence that this historic museum of Peshawar is the future. will also be the center of attention for Chinese tourists.



Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong, called on Prime Minister Imran Khan

During the meeting, views were exchanged on China's experience of poverty alleviation, the COVID-19 situation, and bilateral relations. The Prime Minister congratulated Chinese leadership on successfully achieving the momentous goal of eradicating extreme poverty from China and underlined that Pakistan was keen to learn from China's experience of poverty alleviation as well as development.

The Prime Minister highlighted that Pakistan was currently facing the third wave of COVID-19 and the Government was taking necessary measures to combat it and has devised an elaborate plan of vaccination across the country. The Prime Minister underscored the transformational significance of CPEC and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to expeditiously complete CPEC projects. The Prime Minister added that the people of Pakistan looked forward to welcoming President Xi Jinping to Pakistan at the earliest convenience. Ambassador Nong Rong conveyed cordial greetings of President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang and reaffirmed the resolve to further strengthen Pakistan-China



ties. The Ambassador added that China will do its utmost to help Pakistan deal with the surge of COVID-19, including the expeditious provision of vaccines. Ambassador Nong Rong also reiterated the invitation to the Prime Minister to visit China.

China is always Pakistan's ironclad brother

By M. Bilal Zafar

Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Mr. Omar Ayub Khan witnessed the signing ceremony of a Handing over Certificate (HOC) for 'Third Batch of COVID-19 Vaccine Aid' along with H. E Mr. Nong Rong, Ambassador of Republic of China in Pakistan. Under this batch, Government of China provided 500,000 vials of COVID-19 vaccine under grant assistance. Under the first and second batch of COVID-19 vaccine donation, 1 Million doses of Sinopharm vaccine were donated by the Chinese Government. This will help to vaccinate the priority population and control the spread of the disease. Moreover, the Minister discussed the bilateral economic relations between the two countries with the Ambassador in his office. During the meeting Pakistan-China economic relations, implementation of CPEC projects and other matters of mutual interest were also discussed. The Minister for Economic Affairs at the outset re-iterated the firm commitment of the Government of Pakistan to the security of all Chinese persons working on different projects in Pakistan. The Minister lauded the Government of China for supporting infrastructure and energy projects in Pakistan. The Minister emphasized that after development of necessary infrastructure the focus should be towards



industrialization and poverty alleviation. He highlighted that the socioeconomic projects agreed therein are in line with the vision of the incumbent government for socio-economic uplift of the common people and enhanced economic activities in the country. The progress of the ongoing projects was also discussed which is satisfactory despite the pandemic situation. The Minister for Economic Affairs also appreciated the Chinese assistance for combating COVID-19 pandemic and locust attack. Chinese

Ambassador Mr. Nong Rong conveyed his best wishes to the Minister for Economic Affairs for assuming new portfolio. Ambassador Nong Rong also reaffirmed Chinese support to Pakistan on issues of mutual interest. He reiterated that the Government of China will continue supporting the Government of Pakistan to tackle the COVID-19. Both sides reiterated strong commitment towards further expanding bilateral economic cooperation.

Sri Lankan delegation appreciated Pakistan's long-standing friendly relationship, cooperation and solidarity

An 11-member delegation of prominent Buddhist monks from Sri Lanka, who were visiting Pakistan on the Government's invitation, called on the Prime Minister today. The Prime Minister welcomed the delegation and underscored the importance of enhancing people-to-people contacts and strengthening interfaith harmony. Highlighting the glorious Gandhara heritage of Pakistan, the Prime Minister said that Pakistan was a proud custodian of some of the most sacred Buddhist sites in the world and offered a great religious tourism opportunity for tourists from across the world, especially Sri Lanka. He said that Pakistan is a land of unparalleled natural beauty and historical and cultural sites. The Prime Minister informed the delegation that his government was currently working on creating a Holy Buddhist Trail, which will include the most revered Buddhist heritage sites in Pakistan. "Our plan is to build state of the art logistical facilities along the trail to facilitate Buddhist pilgrims from across the world", said the Prime Minister. Appreciating the government's initiative to develop Holy Buddhist Trail as well as the renovation work being done on various archaeological and religious sites, the monks said that Pakistan was ready for large-scale tourism and religious pilgrimage from across the world. The Sri Lankan delegation recalled and appreciated Pakistan's long-standing friendly relationship, cooperation and solidarity with Sri Lanka. They thanked the government of Pakistan for organizing the trip. The Prime Minister wished the delegation a pleasant stay in Pakistan and encouraged them to share their experiences about Pakistan's unique hospitality, natural beauty and its Buddhist heritage, motivating others to undertake tours to Pakistan.



Federal Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Mrs. Shahera Shahid in a group photo with Sri Lankan Buddhist Monks delegation headed by Ven Dr. Walpola Piyananda Thero & Ven Dr. Kirinde Assaji Thero at Islamabad.

South Korean ambassador keen to promote trade, tourism relations with Pakistan

Ambassador of South Korea Suh Sangpyo at a reception he hosted for a select group of media persons at his residence in Diplomatic Enclave shared his vision of stronger, deeper and closer relations with Pakistan particularly in trade, tourism, business and cultural exchanges. It was a pleasant surprise to meet an unassuming, frank and friendly diplomat who despite Covid-19 held quite a large gathering at his residence though following strictly all the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Counsellor (Deputy Chief of Mission) June Seo Park, Defence Attache Lt Col Kyungsoo Kim and Political and Economic Officer, Jeonghun Byeon also assisted the ambassador and welcomed the journalists community at the official residence of the ambassador.

"I have before me three targets," explained the ambassador adding, "to start Seoul-Islamabad direct flight, enhance tourism particularly for the Korean Buddhists who constitutes 30pc of the population and accelerate Pakistan's exports to Korea as Pakistan is a big market of Basmati rice and can contribute significantly to revenue generation by exporting rice and agricultural

products to Korea." Ambassador Sangpyo said he was concerned at the import-export imbalance of Pakistan with South Korea and Japan. For example, he said Pakistan's exports to Japan are seven-time less than imports from the country.

Similarly, Korea's giant in telecom player Samsung is earning US\$330 million a year by selling its products to Pakistan and in return Pakistan's exports or access to South Korea market is just nominal.

In energy sector too, five to six Korean companies have invested in power projects in Pakistan, he said adding bilateral relations between Pakistan and Korea are established on basis of mutual respect and friendship since 1960s.

South Korea he said was keen to establish a cultural and religious institution in Taxila and expressed optimism that a large number of followers of Buddhism would love to come to Pakistan and visit, or even stay for a while at Taxila, the cradle of Buddhism, which has a lot to offer. In the past the Pakistan Government intended to establish a research and meditation center in Taxila to facilitate the followers of Buddhism from

all over the world.

However, that project was shelved for some inexplicable reasons, most probably because of the wave of terrorism that was rife a few years back, creating uncertain law and order situation in the country and badly damaging tourism industry.

The ambassador spoke high of the Pakistanis' contribution in South Korea and said they were quite hardworking and the Korean government valued their contributions to economy, business, medicines and other fields.

Recently, I held a meeting with Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis, Zulfiqar Bukhari and discussed the potential of sending the Pakistani workforce to Korea, Ambassador Sangpyo said.

The ambassador who has arrived in December 2020 has become quite familiar in just five month with the Pakistan food, culture and particularly his keenness to learn Urdu language is quite amazing.



UAE embassy dishes out food packages in Islamabad

The UAE embassy in Pakistan's capital Islamabad gave out food to people in need on Monday. The parcels contained the logo of the 100 Million Meals campaign, the aim of which is to support people in 20 countries in Asia and Africa. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, Vice President and Ruler of Dubai, unveiled the campaign before Ramadan and said the effect of the pandemic continued to be felt. He said 820 million people were undernourished globally, of whom 52 million lived in the Middle East and North Africa region. Sudan, Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan are among the countries that will benefit from the expanded food drive this year. Emirates Red Crescent sent a shipment of Covid-19 vaccine doses and other aid to Syria.

It will assist frontline medical workers, elderly people and those with chronic diseases, as well as displaced people in refugee camps, to provide the shots.

On the same day, the UAE sent an aid plane with 67 tonnes of food to The Gambia as the West African country tackles Covid-19.

Other countries that will receive food aid from the UAE include Angola and Uganda.



The Embassy of the Republic of Iraq in Islamabad organizes a dinner reception in honor of the Arab Ambassadors Residents in Islamabad

In an atmosphere of friendliness, serenity and the necessary precautions for prevention, the Iraqi ambassador, H.E. Mr. Hamid Abbas Lafta, received their Excellencies Arab Ambassadors Residents in Islamabad. The Embassy of the Republic of Iraq held a dinner reception at the embassy building in the diplomatic enclave. The Ambassador delivered a welcoming speech at this important meeting, stressing upon that the Arab countries group in Islamabad could be an important factor in developing relations with the host country, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

His Excellency added that the preventive atmosphere from the Covid-19 epidemic requires everyone to take precautionary measures especially in public gatherings, but our meetings are important and must always be activated by using preventive measures and adhering to the correct instructions.

All the distinguished Ambassadors from the Dean of the Arab Diplomatic Corps, Mr. Muhammad Ibrahim Muhammad Abdul Qadir, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain, as well as the Kuwaiti Ambassador, Mr. Nassar Abdul Rahman Al- Mutairi, the Yemeni Ambassador,

Mr. Muhammad Mutahar Alashaabi, and the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates Mr. Hamad Obaid bin Ibrahim Al-Zaabi and the other Ambassadors also participated in the conversation and praised all this type of initiatives and working on the continuation of the Arab diplomatic group with regular meetings and adopting contributing projects that serve the trends that consolidate diplomatic and service relations with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan through the channels of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.





Diplomatic Focus hosted Dinner Reception

Mr. Mian Fazal Elahi Editor / Publisher/ CEO of Diplomatic Focus hosted a dinner reception on his residence in the

honor of Journalist community. Senior media persons from different media group graced the occasion. Mr. Mian Fazal Elahi also celebrated his

birthday" on the occasion with cake cutting ceremony. At the end Mr. Mian Fazal Elahi thanked all the guests who make this event delightful.



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