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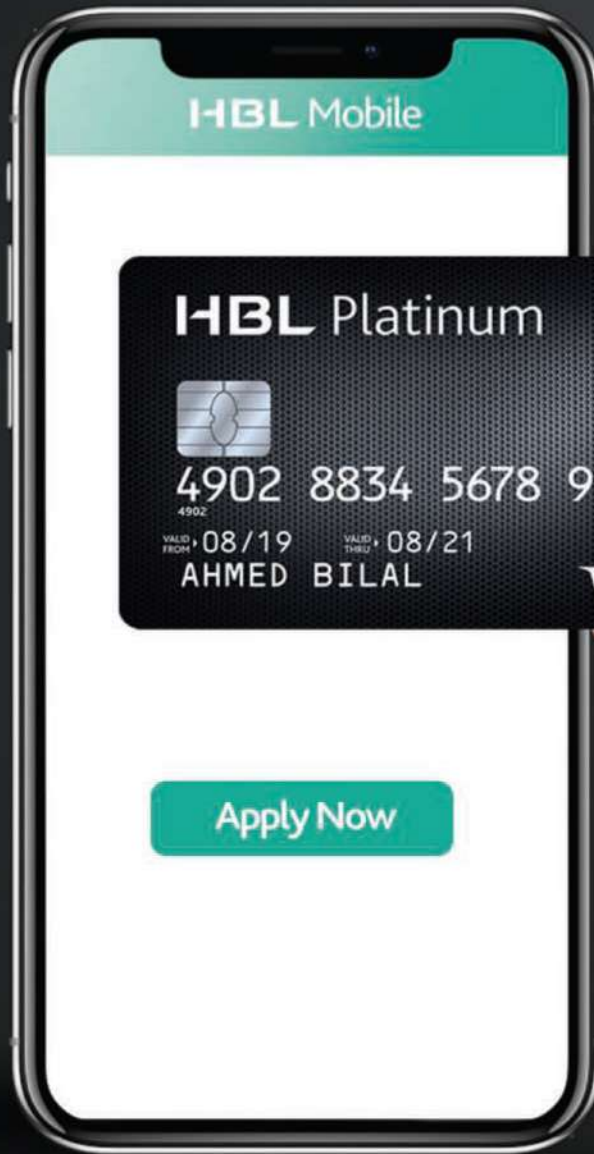
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
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



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PM Imran attends opening ceremony of Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics One World, One Family The XXIV Olympic Winter Games kicked off in spectacular fashion with a stunning Opening Ceremony at the Beijing National Stadium.

The opening ceremony of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics kicked off on Friday night, the culmination of preparations beset by the Covid-19 pandemic. Held on the first day of Spring by the Chinese calendar. Prime Minister Imran Khan during his four-day official visit to China attended the ceremony along with his delegation on the invitation from the Chinese leadership.

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Pakistan and GCC finalise strategic dialogue to boost trade ties

Pakistan and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) finalised an action plan for strategic dialogue to deepen cooperation in various fields. The Joint Action Plan for Strategic Dialogue (2022-2026) provides an institutional approach to deepen cooperation in various fields, including security, political, trade and investment, agricultural and food security, transportation, energy, environment, health, culture and education.

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Pakistan attaches great importance to relations with Romania and the European Union: FM Qureshi

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi undertook an official visit to Romania, at the invitation of the Foreign Minister of Romania, Bogdan Aurescu. During the bilateral talks, the two foreign ministers reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations. Discussions were held focusing on exploring possibilities to further deepen engagement in different sectors, including commerce and trade, investment, defence, education, labour, science and technology, and culture.

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Indonesia & Pakistan close fraternal ties characterized by feelings of mutual trust, shared values, respect and goodwill

H.E. Adam Mulawarman Tugio is the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in Islamabad since November, 2020. Excellency Adam is a career diplomat and has held a number of important diplomatic positions in different countries. H.E. Adam Tugio did his Master's degree in Law from American University, Washington in 1996. He obtained his bachelor's degree in 1990 from the Faculty of Law, University of Indonesia.

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Xi extends Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese, stressing unity, hard work for shared future

Chinese President Xi Jinping, on behalf of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the State Council, extended Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese Sunday at a reception in Beijing.

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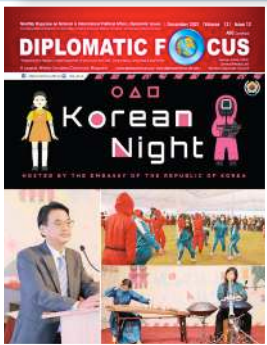
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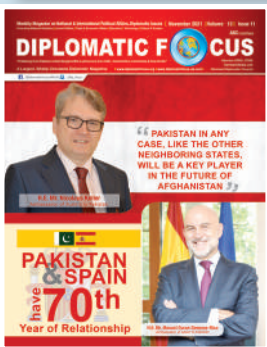
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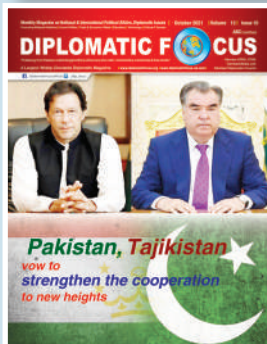
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Our previous Issues




Mian Fazal Elahi

PM Imran's visit to China is likely to help enhance investment in the power sector, revive Pakistan Steel Mills and accelerate the relocation of industries to the Special Economic Zones under CPEC. This is the prime minister's fourth visit to China as he paid his last visit in October 2019. Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin stated that Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to China is economically and politically "very important" for the country. Tarin said the government would ask China for help and propose that Beijing brings industry to Pakistan. "We ask you to relocate your industry to Pakistan as our Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are now ready. If you bring your industry here, it will be a win-win situation for both countries." Pakistan is one of the earliest supporters and participants of President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). As BRI's flagship project, the CPEC complements the Pakistani government's vision of economic sovereignty. Cabinet members expressed the confidence that the visit would further expand the bilateral ties and more Chinese businessmen would come to Pakistan. The cooperation between the two countries against the Covid-19 pandemic has remained exemplary. President Dr Arif Alvi visited China in March 2020 to express solidarity with the Chinese people. Pakistan and China supported each other in their fight against the Covid-19 pandemic and pushed forward high-quality development of CPEC, while Beijing had invested over \$25 billion in Pakistan on CPEC projects generating 80,000 jobs, producing 5,500KW of electricity and building over 500 kilometres of roads. This very friendship is blossoming into the hearts of the peoples of two countries and the CPEC has turned this relationship into a strategic economic partnership. Indeed this is a win-win project for the two countries which carry immense benefits for the region in terms of trade and economic integration. Both the countries have always stood by each other in difficult times and we are confident that the Chinese leadership and investors will be more forthcoming to help Pakistan tread the path of industrial and technological revolution which is the only way through which we can achieve self-reliance and get rid of dependence on foreign loans.


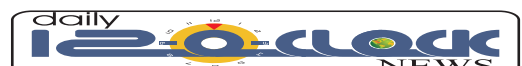
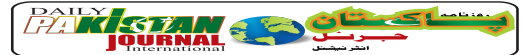
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Pakistan categorically rejects Indian Army Chief's baseless allegations and claims

By Agency

Pakistan categorically rejects the Indian Army Chief's fallacious comments made at a press conference, insinuating the presence of so-called "launch pads" and "training" camps across the Line of Control (LoC).

There is nothing new about the Indian General's unfounded allegations, as these are a part of the malicious anti-Pakistan propaganda being pedaled by the BJP-RSS combine at the helm in India. The Indian government is driven by its belligerent and expansionist agenda embedded in the delusional notion of "Akhand Bharat", which poses a grave threat to regional peace.

The Indian Army Chief has made a desperate attempt at diverting global attention from India's state-terrorism and egregious human rights violations, which continue unabated in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Pakistan calls on India to forthwith halt its tyranny in the IIOJK, renounce its campaign of persecution of Kashmiris, and let them exercise their right to self-determination as promised to them under the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Pakistan is committed to pursue meaningful dialogue with India for peaceful resolution of all outstanding disputes, including Jammu and Kashmir. The onus is, however, on India to create an enabling environment conducive for dialogue.

On other side India's atrocities in Kashmir exposed once again. The eye-opening report of EU DisinfoLab has exposed India's global propaganda. Despite India's failed efforts to cover the atrocities, the world is well aware of crimes committed by the BJP-led government in the occupied valley as voices are being raised in the parliaments of the world in favour of the Kashmiri people.

Recently, members of the British Parliament openly spoke against Indian state terrorism and strongly condemned the ongoing massacre and sexual violence against women in IIOJK.

The honourable members said that Kashmiris had been living in hell for more than seventy years and today their very existence was in danger apart from the right to self-determination.



The world has also repeatedly rejected India's baseless claim that Kashmir is India's internal affair. The eye-opening report by EU DisinfoLab had exposed India's global propaganda.

After many decades, IIOJK had become under discussion in the UN Security Council twice.

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres emphasized that no military solution to the Kashmir issue was possible and that any confrontation between Pakistan and India would have dire consequences for the region and the world.

Since August 2019, the international media had been condemning India's inhumane and undemocratic actions in the besieged valley.

In addition, the reports of Genocide Watch

and Human Rights Watch on the ongoing genocide and human rights violations in IIOJK were also undeniable documents.

Furthermore, 16 members of the European Parliament wrote a letter to the European High Representative on the situation in IIOJK.

As an international champion of global human rights, fundamental freedoms and governance, the European Union must speak out against human rights abuses in occupied Kashmir.

The EU needs to create a conducive environment for the implementation of the commitments made by the international community to the Kashmiris and the UN resolutions.





PM Imran attends opening ceremony of Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics

One World, One Family

The XXIV Olympic Winter Games kicked off in spectacular fashion with a stunning Opening Ceremony at the Beijing National Stadium.

By Monitoring , Agency

The opening ceremony of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics kicked off on Friday night, the culmination of preparations beset by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Held on the first day of Spring by the Chinese calendar. Prime Minister Imran Khan during his four-day official visit to China attended the ceremony along with his delegation on the invitation from the Chinese leadership.

On a three-dimensional cube resembling a block of ice, lasers carved imagery from each of the previous 23 Winter Games.

The block was then “broken” by ice hockey players, enabling the Olympic rings to emerge, all in white.

That was followed by the traditional “parade of nations”, with each of the 91 delegations preceded by the women carrying a placard in the shape of a snowflake resembling a Chinese knot.

In keeping with Olympic tradition, the parade



was led into the stadium by Greece with the rest ordered by stroke number in the first character of their Chinese name, which meant Turkey was second, followed by Malta, with host China set to go last.

The “One World, One Family” theme of the Opening Ceremony was represented by the image of a single snowflake and was central to the showpiece from beginning to the end of the Ceremony.

The theme was based on an ancient Chinese saying which meant that “a truly wise person sees the whole world as a family”.

Ceremony began shortly after President Xi Jinping and International Olympic Committee Chairman Thomas Bach entered the iconic Bird’s Nest stadium.

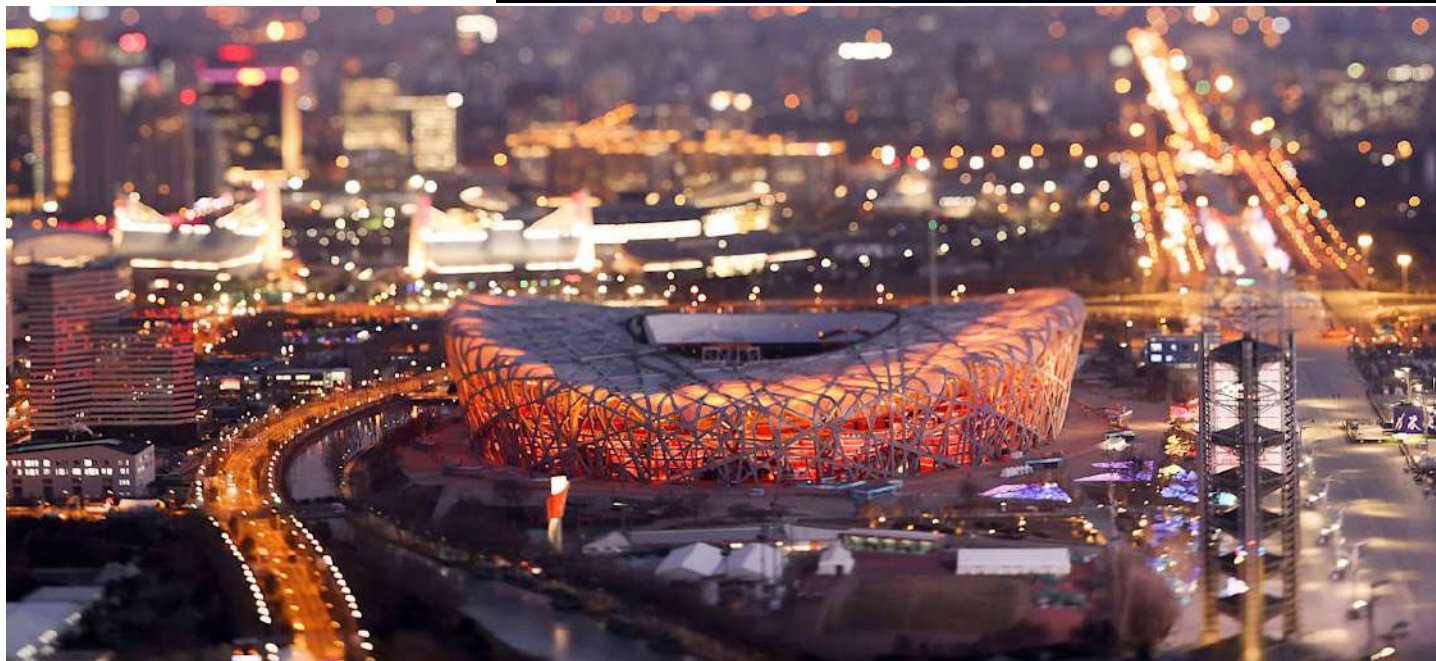
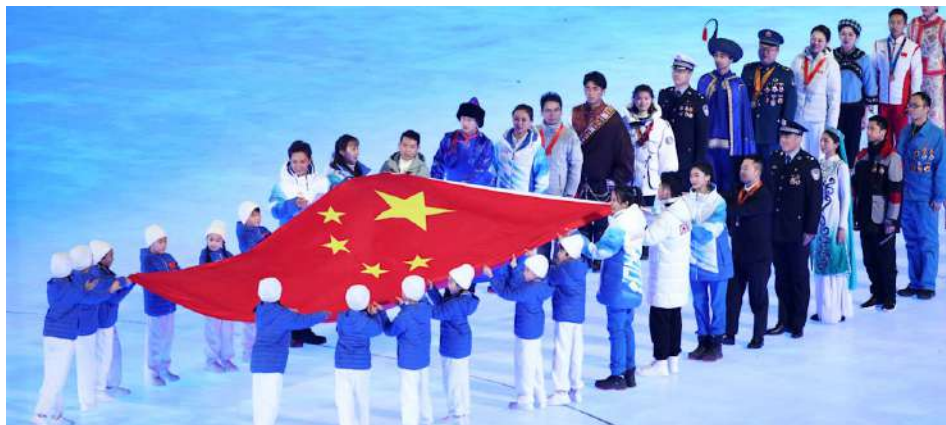
Soon after the start, the Chinese flag was passed among 56 people representing China’s different ethnic groups before it was raised and the national anthem performed.

World-renowned Chinese filmmaker Zhang Yimou played master of ceremonies for a second time, becoming the first person to direct two Opening Ceremonies in the same city.

Zhang was also the mastermind behind the spectacular Beijing 2008 Opening Ceremony.

The celebrated film director brought the showpiece to life through music, song, dance, innovative technology and fireworks, with Chinese citizens from Beijing and Hebei province – instead of stars, professional singers, dancers or actors – taking part.

The event was to feature 3,000 performers on a stage comprised of 11,600 square metres of high-definition LED screen resembling an ice surface.



IK's visit to China proves 'uniqueness' of Pak-China ties



By Prof Lin Minwang

On January 13, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry spokesperson announced that Prime Minister Imran Khan would visit China to attend the opening ceremony of the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022. At a time when many western political forces are trying to politicise this sporting event, Pakistan's prompt and clear stance of supporting Beijing Winter Olympics shows a critical attitude toward the politicisation of sports, and highlights the uniqueness of China-Pakistan relationship.

The China-Pakistan relationship is unique. Over the 70 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, the strategic friendship has been rock-solid despite the changing international situation. When facing various difficulties, both sides help each other at first hand. Since Imran Khan became Prime Minister in 2018, he has continued this good momentum and enriched the all-weather friendship between China and Pakistan, which is "higher than the mountains, deeper than the seas, and sweeter than honey", firmly supported each other on issues regarding their respective core interests. After the Covid-19 outbreak, Pakistan's President Arif Alvi visited China in March 2020, showing the world that China was a safe place and doing a good job in addressing the pandemic situation.

Moreover, when holding international events, both sides congratulate each other like relatives. In November 2018, soon after he became PM, Imran Khan attended the First China International Import Expo as the guest of honour to show his support.

In April 2019, PM Imran attended the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF), and paid a visit to China in October the same year while attending the closing ceremony of the International Horticultural Exhibition 2019 in Beijing. It is fair to say that the leaders of both countries visit each other really like relatives.

The Covid outbreak has hampered the physical visits between China and Pakistan, but not the strategic friendship between the two countries. China has not only supported Pakistan to fight against the pandemic, but also overcome difficulties to timely complete a series of major projects under CPEC with joint efforts, providing a strong long-lasting impetus for Pakistan's economic recovery and development after the



pandemic.

The pandemic has intensified the strategic rivalry between the US and China. The Trump administration inaugurated a foreign policy of containment of China, and the subsequent Biden administration continued and intensified this rivalry with Beijing. In the process, Pakistan has repeatedly voiced its opposition to approaches

Afghanistan. Moreover, he clearly pointed out, "I think that the Americans have decided that India is their strategic partner now, and I think that's why there's a different way of treating Pakistan now."

The all-weather friendship between China and Pakistan went through thick and thin. It withstood the attacks done by some terrorist forces against Chinese personnel and projects. It also faced challenges posed by some Western media which always try to "sow discord" by quoting some "deviants" in Pakistan to amplify the negative comments about the bilateral friendship, and make many people beguiled due to lack of information.

The New York Times recently published an article, pretending to be serious about cautioning Pakistan not to "put all its eggs in one basket", and that CPEC entrapped the country. While the truth is that for the past 70 years or so, it has been the West, especially the US and the UK, that have entrapped Pakistan. They never think seriously on how to help Pakistan develop its economy.

Prime Minister Imran's visit shows that despite different voices, his government's choice is to further deepen China-Pakistan relations, which will remain rock-solid.

The writer is associated with the Center for South Asian Studies, Fudan University, Shanghai, China. Courtesy to The Express Tribune

Pakistan's stance of supporting Beijing Winter Olympics highlights the uniqueness of China-Pakistan relationship

that could lead the world back to group confrontation, by rejecting US pressure to set up military bases in Pakistan after its withdrawal from Afghanistan, and refusing to participate in the so-called Summit for Democracy cobbled together by the US. Pakistan made clear its desire to serve as a bridge that brings countries together. PM Imran understands pretty well the US foreign policy towards Pakistan, and believes that Pakistan will only be "considered useful" if it can help the US deal with the "mess" in



Pakistan strongly condemns attempted missile attack on UAE

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Agency

Pakistan strongly condemned the launching of a missile from Al-Jawf, Yemen, by the Houthis towards the United Arab Emirates (UAE). "It is commendable that the missile was successfully intercepted by the air defence system of the UAE, preventing loss of innocent lives," the Foreign Office spokesperson said in a statement.

He said Pakistan considered these attacks as a grave violation of international law and a serious threat to regional peace and security and called for their immediate cessation.

"Pakistan reaffirms its solidarity with the brotherly people and government of the United Arab Emirates," he added.

In mid of January, 2022, Houthi group attacked the United Arab Emirates using drones on Monday, setting off explosions in three fuel trucks and causing a fire near the airport of Abu Dhabi, capital of the region's commercial and tourism hub. Three people were killed and six wounded when three fuel tanker trucks exploded in the industrial Musaffah area near storage facilities of oil firm ADNOC, state news

agency WAM said. It said those killed were two Indians and a Pakistani.

On January 19, Prime Minister Imran Khan has a telephone call with Mohamed Bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces and strongly condemned the heinous terrorist attack by Houthi militia on civil facilities in Abu Dhabi.

The prime minister expressed solidarity with the leadership, government and people of the United Arab Emirates, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He underlined that such attacks could not be justified and stressed on the immediate cessation of these attacks, which continued to pose grave threat to regional peace and security. The prime minister offered deepest condolences to the families of all the victims and prayed for speedy recovery of the injured.

The Crown Prince thanked the prime minister for the strong expression of support, and also offered condolence on the sad demise of a Pakistani national who died in the tragic incident. Earlier, Foreign Minister of the UAE

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan Tuesday phoned his Pakistani counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi to condole the death of a Pakistani national in a terror attack by Houthis.

He also shared details of the tragic incident with Foreign Minister Qureshi who reiterated Pakistan's strong condemnation of the heinous terrorist attack on civilian areas by Houthi militia.

He offered condolences to the families of the victims and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

The foreign minister thanked the UAE Government for extending all-out support in the early repatriation of the mortal remains of the deceased Pakistani national and treatment for the injured.

Foreign Minister Qureshi underlined that such acts violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the UAE.

Pakistan and UAE have excellent fraternal ties. The two foreign ministers reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening and deepening bilateral relations further.



President Alvi asks Omani Businessmen to invest in Pakistan, benefit from liberal, investment-friendly policy

For the first time after twenty years an Omani delegation visited to Pakistan to explore business and investment opportunities

By Mian Fazal Elahi

President Dr Arif Alvi has asked Omani businessmen to invest in Pakistan and benefit from its liberal and investment-friendly policy. He stated that the confidence of foreign investors had considerably increased over the policies of Pakistan that provided a conducive business environment to foreign investors. He made these remarks while talking to the visiting Omani business delegation, led by the Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Eng. Redha Juma Mohamed Ali Al-Saleh, which called on the President, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. Welcoming the delegation, the President said that Pakistan and Oman enjoyed excellent relations which were deep-rooted in common culture, shared history and heritage. He underlined the need for increasing trade and cultural relations for the mutual benefit of the two countries. The President highlighted that Pakistan offered immense opportunities for investment and, in this regard, had established Special Economic and Technology Zones to attract foreign direct investment. He assured the delegation that the Government would facilitate and support Omani businessmen to make investments in various sectors of Pakistan's economy. It was agreed to increase the volume of trade and enhance contacts between the chambers of commerce of the two countries to boost economic relations. The President also highlighted Pakistan's concerns over human rights violations in the Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir by the Indian security forces. He thanked the Government of Oman for its support on various issues at regional

and international fora and expressed the hope that the visit of the Omani business delegation would further strengthen linkages between the business communities of the two brotherly countries. The Omani delegation reiterated its desire to further improve bilateral cooperation in various fields. The delegation emphasized the need for promoting bilateral cooperation in the areas of trade and tourism. It said that it would encourage Omani businessmen to invest in Pakistan. Both sides agreed to increase the volume of trade and promote people-to-people contacts to bring the two brotherly countries further closer.

The delegation of Omani Businessmen also called on Prime Minister Imran Khan. The 22 member delegation from Oman informed the Prime Minister that for the first time after twenty years an Omani delegation is on a visit to Pakistan to explore business and investment opportunities. The business friendly policies of the current government are providing wide opportunities to investors in tourism development, Fisheries Sector, Warehousing

and Storage facility development in port cities and the development projects in Gwadar. The delegation also showed keen interest in investment opportunities in ferry service connecting Oman, coastal cities of Pakistan, CPEC projects, especially industrialization of Gwadar, Agriculture sector and a proposed corridor comprising land and sea routes between Oman and Pakistan connecting the Middle East, Central Asia, Africa and South East Asia with Pakistan at its pivot. The meeting was also informed about the contribution of Pakistani diaspora during the COVID pandemic and the assistance by the Kingdom of Oman in release of Pakistani prisoners in Oman. Both sides agreed on increased cooperation in the areas of common interest and steps to increase mutual trade. Prime Minister Imran Khan not only welcomed the delegation and its support during the COVID-19, but also directed the concerned Government entities to take the requisite steps for an increased cooperation in the areas of trade and investment between Oman and Pakistan. The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers Shaukat Fiaz Tarin,





Makhdoom Khusto Bakhtiyar, Advisor to PM Abdul Razzaq Dawood, SAPM CPEC Khalid Mansoor, Chairman BOI Azfar Ahsan, concerned officials, leading businessmen from Oman, Pakistani Origin Buisnessmen from Oman and Pakistani Businessmen working in Oman.

During visit to Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI), Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry (OCCI) Redha Jumma Mohamed Ali Al-Saleh has said that now was the right time when Omani and Pakistani business communities have to work together, see what needs to be done and how they can improve trade and investment relations.

“Oman and Pakistan have been enjoying very good relations and both countries have many things in common but the trade volume was not sufficient which needs to be focused, as before COVID-19 pandemic trade volume stood at US\$655 million but it came down to US\$250 million,” said Chairman OCCI.

Chairman OCCI further stated that the visit of the Omani delegation, which has arrived here after a long time, would certainly help in improving the existing trade and business ties between the two countries. “Under the Vision 2040, Oman is working on five sectors including mining, logistics, tourism, food security and industrial growth. As Pakistan is also focused on all these sectors; hence, we can work together,” he added.

He informed that Oman was open for foreign investment as under the new rules, investors can now invest 100 percent capital with no need for having a local partner but it was better to have a local partner who could help in easily setting up businesses in Oman. “As compared to other countries, taxes in Oman were much lower with tax holidays for up to five years. Oman has also opened a road to Saudi Arabia which has substantially reduced the distance, cost and time; hence, Oman can become a hub

for export to Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria and GCC countries.”

Chairman OCCI informed that Oman has free zones where no tax was applicable on production for exports while incentives were also being offered to new investors who can start businesses in a stable economic, social and political environment with availability of advanced infrastructure facilities and other benefits including tax exemptions on equipment for establishing industrial projects.

He admitted that obtaining Omani visa was not an easy task but the Omani Embassy in Pakistan along with OCCI was working seriously towards making it easier. “We are ready to assist any Pakistani businessman in obtaining visa with a view to make your visit easier.”

He was of the opinion that Karachi Chamber was the right platform for Omani investors to seek advice before undertaking joint ventures with Pakistani companies and same was the

case for Pakistani investors who can approach Oman Chamber before partnering with any Omani company.

During the visit, The Chairman of Oman Chambers of Commerce and Industries, Engr. Redha Al Saleh, along with a twenty-five member delegation, called on Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Extending a warm welcome to the delegation, the Foreign Minister underscored the abiding nature of Pakistan-Oman relations, based firmly on shared faith and historical links. Emphasizing Pakistan’s focus on geo-economics, economic security and regional connectivity, the Foreign Minister reaffirmed Pakistan’s commitment to forge deeper economic, trade and investment cooperation with Oman, commensurate with excellent bilateral ties. He lauded the contribution of Pakistan’s human resource and encouraged Oman to benefit from skilled manpower potential across diverse sectors. The





Foreign Minister invited Omani businesses and the Pakistani diaspora to enter into investment projects and joint ventures in various fields. The Foreign Minister also encouraged the Oman side to work with Pakistan to harness the full potential of the regional 'economic corridor' that would connect Oman to landlocked Central Asia and Afghanistan. Underlining strong people-to-people ties between the two countries, the Foreign Minister stressed the importance of enhanced tourism cooperation for closer people-to-people linkages. Engr.

Redhda Al Saleh thanked the Foreign Minister for comprehensive review of bilateral economic ties and identifying areas of mutual interest. He briefed the Foreign Minister about Oman's 'Vision 2040', which presented vast opportunities for investments in Oman. The members of the business delegation invited Pakistani businesses to enter into B-2-B linkages. They also highlighted their plans to invest in the tourism, industry, mining, health, and communications and transportation sectors. The Foreign Minister assured that

the relevant authorities in Pakistan, including the Foreign Ministry, will extend all possible facilitation in these endeavours. The visit of the Oman business delegation --representing textile and garments, fruits & vegetables/food stuff, pharmaceuticals, real estate, surgical instruments, furniture & furnishing, marble, mining and tourism -- would provide further impetus to the existing economic relationship between Pakistan and Oman.



Pakistan, Turkey review entire spectrum of bilateral relations

By Mian Fazal Elahi

The Bilateral Political Consultations between Pakistan and Turkey was held at the Foreign Office in Islamabad.

The Pakistan side was led by the Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood while the Turkish delegation was led by the Deputy Foreign Minister Sedat Önal.

Extending a warm welcome to the Deputy Foreign Minister Önal, the foreign secretary noted that the long-standing fraternal relations between Pakistan and Turkey were exemplary, marked by mutual trust, commonality of views, and close cooperation on the whole range of bilateral, regional, and international issues.

During the consultations, both sides reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations as well as opportunities to further strengthen cooperation in diverse areas including trade, investments, and economic cooperation.

In the context of Pakistan's focus on geo-economics, the foreign secretary emphasized the central pillars of peace, development partnerships, and connectivity.

The two sides exchanged views on the ongoing preparations for the 7th Session of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) and the implementation of the Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) that was signed between the two countries in February 2020.

It was noted with satisfaction that the Joint Working Groups (JWGs) under the HLSCC held their meetings in preparation for the HLSCC.

Views were exchanged on regional issues, with a particular focus on the situation in Afghanistan.

The Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood emphasized the urgent need for scaled-up humanitarian assistance and measures for stabilization of Afghanistan's economy, adding that the release of its frozen assets would provide impetus to long-term sustainable development for the Afghan people.

The foreign secretary reaffirmed that Pakistan would continue to provide humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, underlining that sustained practical engagement with Afghanistan was key to advance the shared objectives of a peaceful and stable Afghanistan.

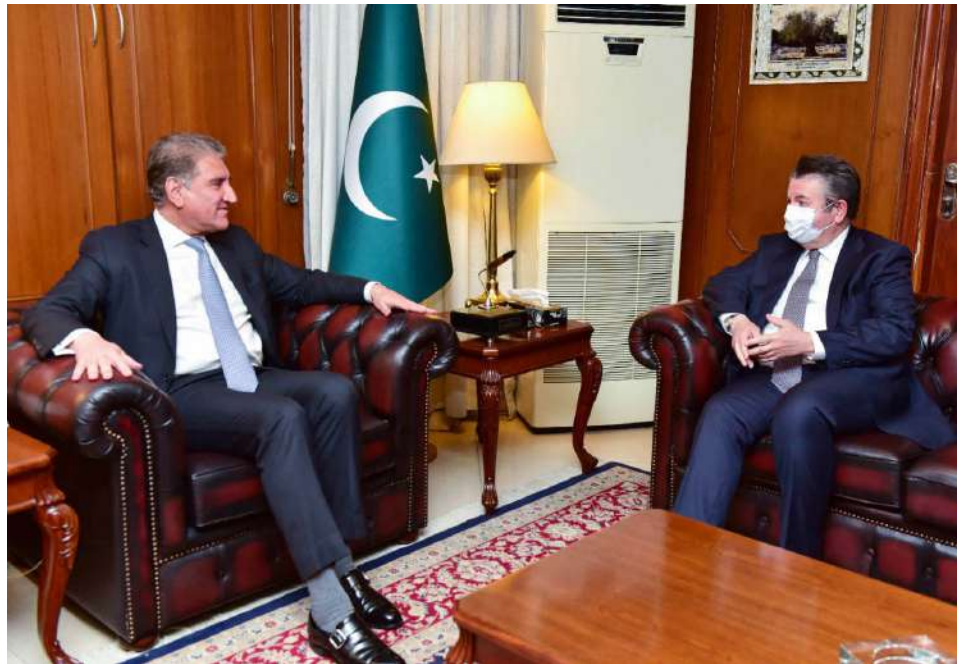
Sohail Mahmood also briefed the Turkish side on the continuing grave human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and thanked Turkey for its consistent and principled support on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

The two sides expressed satisfaction on close cooperation at the multilateral fora including the United Nations, Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and D-8, and reaffirmed their resolve to continue collaboration on global and regional issues of mutual interest.

Pakistan and Turkey will be marking the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations this year.

In view of close fraternal ties between the two Countries, it was agreed to celebrate this important milestone in a befitting manner.

The next round of Pakistan-Turkey Bilateral Political Consultations will be held in Turkey on dates to be determined through the diplomatic channels.





Turkish, Pakistani officials discuss regional security, defense collaboration

By Agency, Monitoring

General Selcuk BAYRAKTAROGLU, Deputy Chief of Turkish General Staff along with his delegation visited Pakistan to attend the 16th Pak - Turkey High Level Military Dialogue Group (HLMDDG) Meeting.

Turkiye's deputy chief of general staff discussed regional security situation as well as defense collaboration with the Pakistani army chief.

According to a statement by Pakistan military's media wing, Gen. Selcuk Bayraktaroglu met Gen. Qamar Bajwa at the army headquarters in Rawalpindi.

Underscoring the importance of peace and reconciliation initiatives in Afghanistan, Bajwa stressed upon the need for "global convergence" and "sincere" efforts to avert a looming humanitarian catastrophe in the war-torn country.

Acknowledging the "professionalism" of Pakistan's armed forces, Bayraktaroglu vowed to enhance cooperation with Pakistan in various fields.

The two sides agreed to further optimize military-to-military ties, particularly in training and counter-terrorism domains.

"We highly value our brotherly relations with Turkiye, which are deeply rooted in history and entrenched in our cultural and religious affinities," Bajwa was quoted as saying.

Separately, Bayraktaroglu met chief of Pakistan Air Force, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, at the air force headquarters in the capital Islamabad.

He commended the "professionalism of PAF



and acknowledged its rising indigenous capacity in aviation industry."

Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu said Pakistan and Turkiye enjoy longstanding religious, cultural and historical bonds, which are manifested through strong ties between both the air forces.

He reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral cooperation between the two brotherly countries.

During the visit Separately, Bayraktaroglu met with Minister Defence Pervez Khattak, Secretary Defence Lt Gen (Retd) Mian Muhammad Hilal Hussain and Gen Nadeem Raza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee at the Joint Staff.





President Batet thanked Shah for Pakistan's assistance in the evacuation of people of their concern from Afghanistan

By Mian Asadullah, Monitoring

FM Qureshi called on the President of Congress of Deputies of Spain Meritxell Batet and discussed ways to strengthen Pakistan-Spain bilateral relations in diverse fields.

Emphasising the significance of parliamentary exchanges, the foreign minister extended invitation to the Spanish Parliamentarians to visit Pakistan, which would help in cementing the ongoing areas of cooperation.

Batet agreed with Shah that the menace of COVID-19 needed to be dealt through global cooperation by judicious distribution of vaccine and provision of fiscal space to the developing countries for investment in the health sectors and to kick start their economies.

President Batet thanked Shah for Pakistan's assistance in the evacuation of people of their concern from Afghanistan. The two sides voiced converging views on the need for retaining the trained human resource within Afghanistan to manage the operation of various State and social institutions.

Highlighting the recent 17th Extraordinary Session of OIC Council of the Foreign Ministers (OIC-CFM) hosted by Pakistan on December 19, 2021, to address the urgent humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, the foreign minister reiterated the need for engaging interim government in Afghanistan by the international community.

He appreciated the interest by the EU and donation of 20 million Euros by Spain in humanitarian support of the Afghan people. The commitment of Spanish government to play a supporting role in guaranteeing the education of children, particularly Afghan women and girls, was highly commendable.

Batet accepted Shah's invitation to lead a parliamentary delegation to Pakistan in near future. This visit was undertaken with a view to enhancing Pakistan's engagement with European Union Members, particularly enhancing the economic interface and sharing Pakistan's viewpoint on important regional issues.





Pakistan and GCC finalise strategic dialogue to boost trade ties

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Pakistan and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) finalised an action plan for strategic dialogue to deepen cooperation in various fields.

The Joint Action Plan for Strategic Dialogue (2022-2026) provides an institutional approach to deepen cooperation in various fields, including security, political, trade and investment, agricultural and food security, transportation, energy, environment, health, culture and education.

The progress was made during the visit of GCC Secretary-General Dr Nayef Falah M. Al Hajraf to Pakistan on an invitation extended by the Pakistani foreign minister during his last visit to Islamabad to attend the 17th Extraordinary Session of the Organisation of Islamic Corporation (OIC) in December 2021.

During the current visit, Dr Nayef met the foreign, finance and trade ministers of Pakistan to enhance trade and business ties.

Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi received His Excellency Dr. Nayef Falah M. Al-Hajraf, Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and his delegation at the Foreign Office. Fondly recalling the meeting in December 2021, Foreign Minister Qureshi extended a warm welcome to Dr. Al-Hajraf. He reaffirmed Pakistan's abiding fraternal and historical ties with the GCC member states, rooted firmly in shared faith, values and culture. During delegation-level talks, the two sides reviewed Pakistan-GCC cooperation in



diverse fields, and explored new avenues for an enhanced mutually-beneficial partnership. They also exchanged views on the regional developments, in particular the prevailing humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and the deteriorating human rights situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. In line with the MoU on Strategic Dialogue between Pakistan and the GCC, the two sides

finalized the Joint Action Plan for Strategic Dialogue (2022-2026), which provides an institutional approach to deepen cooperation in various fields, including Political; Security; Trade and Investment; Agricultural and food security, Transportation; Energy; Environment; Health; Culture; and Education. Welcoming the finalization of the Joint Action Plan for Strategic Dialogue, Foreign Minister Qureshi and

Secretary General Al-Hajraf underscored that the Action Plan would impart a strong impetus towards optimally realizing the tremendous potential for increased cooperation between Pakistan and the GCC states. Noting the progress on the ongoing efforts to conclude the Free Trade Agreement between Pakistan and the GCC, Foreign Minister Qureshi and Secretary General Al-Hajraf expressed determination to conclude the negotiations on priority. Foreign Minister Qureshi expressed gratitude to the GCC and its member states for strong expression of support for the people of Afghanistan in the 17th Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, held in Islamabad on 19 December 2021. The Foreign Minister urged the world community to upscale its efforts to reach out to the Afghan people on an urgent basis to help address the humanitarian crisis and stabilize the economic situation. This is the second visit of the GCC Secretary General to Pakistan in the last three weeks. He earlier visited Islamabad in December 2021 to attend the 17th Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (OIC-CFM) on the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. The visit of the Secretary General has helped further strengthen the positive momentum in Pakistan-GCC relations, which would be instrumental in deepening mutual cooperation across myriad fields.

Dr Nayef and his delegation also met Pakistani PM's Advisor for Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood. He stressed "more coordination to seize opportunities in the field of trade and investment." They agreed to expand economic ties, building on previous agreements signed in 2004 and 2011 which the officials hoped would initiate a "new phase" of Pakistan-GCC relations, consolidating bilateral cooperation with expanded trade. Pakistan's Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin also held a meeting with Dr Nayef to discuss different aspects of financial and economic cooperation between the two sides.

He informed the delegation of the opportunities to expand cooperation in agriculture, IT, tourism, housing, industrial and other sectors.

GCC Secretary-General Dr Nayef and his team also met the ambassadors of the GCC states in Islamabad and discussed the organisation's future ambitions. During the meeting, Dr Nayef stressed the importance of supporting and strengthening cooperation relations between the GCC and Pakistan in various fields. The meeting was attended by UAE Ambassador Hamad Obaid Al Zaabi, Saudi Ambassador Nawaf Said Al Maliki, Oman's Ambassador Sheikh Mohammed Omar Al Marhoon, Bahrain's Ambassador Mohammed Ebraheem Abdul Qader, Kuwait's Ambassador Nassar Abdul Rahman Al Mutairi, and Qatar's Chargé d'Affairs Saad Abdullah Al Qahtani.





Kuwait asked to enhance workforce export from Pakistan

By Mian Fazal Elahi

H.E Mr.Nassar Abdulrahman J. Almutairi, Kuwait Ambassador to Pakistan called on Mr. Muhammad Ayub Afridi, Advisor to Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development (OP& HRD) in his office and discussed bilateral relations and matters of mutual interests. While appreciating the Kuwaiti Government for opening work visas for Pakistanis, the Advisor reiterated the Ambassador to enhance work force export from Pakistan since Pakistan has potential manpower to meet Kuwaiti Market requirements. The

Advisor to the Prime Minister also urged close coordination between relevant officials of both the countries regarding data sharing of migrant workers in order to ensure protection of their rights. The Ambassador of Kuwait assured that he will take up with his government to take more work force from Pakistan in required sectors. The Advisor to PM on OP & HRD thanked the Ambassador of Kuwait his gesture and assured him of continued coordination and enhanced cooperation for export of Pakistani workers to Kuwait according to their requirements.

Ambassador of Kuwait assured that he will take up with his government to take more work force from Pakistan in required sectors





Turkmenistan deputy FM discusses TAPI project with Pakistan Army chief

By Agency

Tuesday.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Turkmenistan Vepa Hajiyeve called on Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa in Rawalpindi.

According to ISPR, matters of mutual interest, bilateral cooperation in various fields with special emphasis on regional connectivity projects, especially the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline were discussed during the meeting.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in the Afghan situation, efforts for regional stability and pledged to keep working for better relations between two brotherly countries.

Meanwhile, Wendy Gilmour, Canadian High Commissioner to Pakistan met General Qamar Javed Bajwa on

Both high-ups discussed matters of mutual interest, bilateral cooperation, and regional situation, including in Afghanistan.

The TAPI project was launched in 2016. TAPI pipeline is expected to carry 33 billion cubic meters of natural gas each year along a route stretching 1,800 km from Galkynysh, the world's second-biggest gas field, to the Indian city of Fazilka near the Pakistan border.

Work on the project in Afghanistan began in February 2018 and will include a 1,814-kilometer gas pipeline intended to pass through Afghanistan to Pakistan and India, with at least 816 kilometres of the pipeline passing through Afghanistan.

The TAPI project was launched in 2016. TAPI pipeline is expected to carry 33 billion cubic meters of natural gas each year along a route stretching 1,800 km from Galkynysh, the world's second-biggest gas field, to the Indian city of Fazilka near the Pakistan border



Pakistan attaches great importance to relations with Romania and the European Union: FM Qureshi

By Mian Asadullah, monitoring

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi undertook an official visit to Romania, at the invitation of the Foreign Minister of Romania, Bogdan Aurescu.

During the bilateral talks, the two foreign ministers reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral relations. Discussions were held focusing on exploring possibilities to further deepen engagement in different sectors, including commerce and trade, investment, defence, education, labour, science and technology, and culture.

The two countries agreed to hold the next round of Bilateral Political Consultations in Islamabad and to revive the Joint Economic Commission.





Ambassador of Romania to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Nicolae Goia called on Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The foreign minister said Pakistan greatly valued its relations with Romania adding we are looking forward to diversify these relations. He further said, both countries need to enhance bilateral visits. The Romanian ambassador thanked Minister Qureshi and hoped bilateral relations will further be strengthened.

Qureshi appreciated Romania's support for Pakistan within the European Union (EU), particularly for GSP+ status.

Exchanging views on regional issues, the foreign minister briefed his Romanian counterpart on Pakistan's efforts for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan and the ongoing human rights violations in the Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK).

Pakistan and Romania signed two MoUs during the visit relating to Award of scholarships to Pakistani students by the Politehnica University of Bucharest; and Cooperation between the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) and Romanian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (RCCI).

The Foreign Minister also called on the Romanian Prime Minister Nicolae Ciuca and reiterated Pakistan's desire to build a broad-based and substantive relationship with Romania.

He thanked the Romanian government for announcing the gift of 500,000 doses of the COVID vaccine to Pakistan.

Prime Minister Ciuca appreciated Pakistan's facilitation in the evacuation of Romanian nationals from Afghanistan.

During the meeting with the Romanian minister for economy, the two sides appreciated increasing bilateral trade despite COVID and discussed ways to further enhance economic ties.

Aurescu took to his official Twitter account and wrote: "Glad to welcome FM Shah Mahmood Qureshi today for in-depth political consultations, including a follow-up to valuable recent contacts. We discussed perspectives & concrete ways to advance our political dialogue, economic ties, sectoral coop. and people-to-people relations."

Earlier, Qureshi inaugurated the "Pakistan

Cultural & Trade Exhibition Center" at the Embassy of Pakistan in Bucharest. The Centre will serve as a venue for a permanent exhibition of Pakistani export items and for holding cultural events aimed at promoting tourism and soft image of the country.

Addressing the Pakistani community in Romania, Qureshi underlined steps being taken by the government for ensuring the welfare of the Pakistani diaspora. Pakistan and Romania enjoy close and friendly ties. Both sides have similarities of views on important regional

and global matters and have traditionally cooperated on various international forums.

This visit was undertaken with a view to enhancing Pakistan's engagement with European Union Members, particularly enhancing the economic interface and sharing Pakistan's viewpoint on important regional issues.





MoU to be signed by NFS&R and agricultural ministry of Egypt to enhance agricultural trade

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Pakistan H.E Mr. Tarek Dahroug called on the Federal Minister of National Food Security Syed Fakhar Imam. Senior Joint Secretary Ministry of National Food Security and Research Mr. Javed Humayun also attended the meeting. Egypt and Pakistan to sign a MoU to enhance agricultural trade between the two countries. Fakhar said that the two countries can immensely benefit from exchange in agriculture research and value-added technologies.

He praised the quality of cotton produced in Egypt and said that Egypt and Pakistan have huge trade potential. The two dignitaries agreed to sign a MoU to take the bilateral relation forward. Fakhar welcomed the Egyptian offer to invest in Free Industrial Zones of Egypt. H. E Tarek Dahroug told the federal minister that Pakistani agricultural products have huge potential if they are converted into value added products through processing. Fakhar welcomed the offer by the Egyptian Ambassador to set up value added industry in free industrial zones of Egypt.

Fakhar praised the Egyptian civilization as one of the oldest in the world. Fakhar said that Pakistan has immense export potential with respect to citrus fruits, rice, mangoes, onion,

potatoes, fisheries and livestock etc. Fakhar said that Pakistan has 8 Mn tonnes of rice which can be exported.

Egypt was greatly interested in increasing trade between the two countries: Egyptian envoy

Fakhar acknowledged that value added industry needs to be set up by Pakistan to fully take advantage of its agricultural products. Fakhar said that Pakistan exported appx 144,000

tonnes of mangoes internationally and hence its export to Egypt also has huge potential. H. E Tarek Dahroug showed great interest in importing Rice from Pakistan in addition with livestock. H.E. said that Egypt imports rice from Pakistan and has a substantial market for livestock, meat etc. Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan said that Egypt was greatly interested in increasing trade between the two countries. The two dignitaries agreed to further enhance cooperation and collaboration between MNFS&R and its Egyptian counterpart.

Fakhar said that Pakistan faces a number of challenges but with the right policy interventions under the leadership of Prime Minister Imran Khan, agriculture sector can be transformed. He said that Pakistani agriculture has been tottering along the traditional agricultural techniques and it is time that we start to look ahead to the future in terms of modernization.

Fakhar Imam praised the current governments efforts and said that in the last 70 years the main set back to research was insufficient funds. This is the first time in the history of Pakistan that under Prime Minister Initiative Program billions of Rupees have been invested in agricultural research which has led to record production of wheat, maize and rice last year.

British High Commissioner, Federal Minister and Advisor to PM discussed bilateral relations



By Mian Fazal Elahi

British High Commissioner to Pakistan H.E. Dr. Christian Turner CMG called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue

Mr. Shaukat Tarin at Finance Division and Mr. Abdul Razak Dawood, Adviser for Commerce and Investment to Prime Minister separately. British High Commissioner and Federal Minister



Mr. Shaukat Tarin discussed bilateral relations and underlined the need to deepen the engagements between the two countries in the fields of trade, economy and investment.

Pakistan's first woman Supreme Court judge Ayesha Malik sworn in



Christian Turner @CTurnerFCDO · Jan 24

If you can't see it, be it.

Tareekh moment for 🇵🇰 as Ayesha Malik is appointed first woman Supreme Court Judge.

This will inspire girls to believe that there are no barriers to their aspirations.

@UN_Women @unwomen_pak



By M.Saeed Yousafzai, Monitoring

Pakistan has sworn in Ayesha Malik as its first female Supreme Court judge, a landmark occasion in a nation where activists say the law is often wielded against women.

Malik, 55, attended a ceremony in the capital Islamabad where she now sits on the bench alongside 16 male colleagues at Pakistan's highest court.

Malik was educated at Harvard University and served as a high court judge in Pakistan's eastern city of Lahore for the past two decades.



She has been credited with rolling back patriarchal legal mores in her Punjab province jurisdiction.

Malik's elevation to the apex court of Pakistan may clear the way for more women to enter the historically conservative and male-dominated judiciary of the Muslim-majority republic.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



Ambassador of the State of Qatar Sheikh Saoud Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani offering Fateh on Sad Demise of The Brother of Chairman Senate M Sadiq Sanjrani



Federal Minister for Narcotics Control, Brig (R) Ijaz Ahmad Shah in a meeting with Ambassador of Egypt H.E. Mr. Tarek Dahroug in Islamabad



Ambassador of Romania H.E. Mr. Nicolae Goia and Egyptian Ambassador H.E. Mr. Tarek Dahroug separately calling on Federal Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed



Chief of Staff of Land Forces Democratic Republic of Congo Lieutenant General, Asinda Fall called on Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi



British High Commissioner to Pakistan H.E. Dr Christian Turner calling on Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed.



H.E Canadian High Commissioner Wendy Gilmour called on Special Assistant to the PM on Youth Affairs Usman Dar in Islamabad



Special Assistant to PM on Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam gives away a memorial shield of the Chief Executive of Saudi Arabia National Centre



Ambassador of the Kingdom of Netherlands to Pakistan H.E. W. Wouter Plomp called on Minister of State and Chairman Bol Muhammad Azfar Ahsan and Secretary of Bol Ms. Fareena Mazhar

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



UAE Ambassador to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Al-Zaabi called on Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi at the MOFA, Islamabad



Tunisian Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Borhene El Kamel, called on Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi at the Minister of Foreign Affairs Islamabad



H.E. Mr. Mitsuhiro Wada Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan called on Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Syed Fakhar Imam



Ambassador of the State of Qatar to Pakistan H.E. Sheikh Saud Bin Abdul Raham AL Thani called on Advisor to PM on Overseas Mr. Ayub Afridi in Islamabad



H.E. Mr. Wada Mitsuhiro Ambassador of Japan called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Mr. Shaukat Tarin at the Finance Division, Islamabad.



The Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Mitsuhiro Wada called on the Federal Minister for Energy Mr. Hamad Azhar in Islamabad



Special Representative to the PM for Interfaith Harmony Hafiz Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi meeting with Sri Lankan Minister for Commerce in Islamabad



Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H.E. Mr. Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini called on the Federal Minister for Human Rights Dr. Shireen Mazari in Islamabad

COAS, EU envoy discuss Afghanistan situation



By Agency

Ambassador of European Union (EU) Androulla Kaminara called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi, ISPR said in a statement.

According to statement, matters of mutual interest, regional security situation including the current Afghanistan situation and bilateral cooperation with the EU were discussed

during the meeting. The military's media wing said that the visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in the Afghan situation and its efforts for regional stability and pledged to play her role for further improvements in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.

On January 24, Ambassador of Morocco to Pakistan Mohamed Karmoune called on the army chief at GHQ in Rawalpindi. During the meeting, ISPR said, matters of mutual interest, bilateral defence, security cooperation and

regional security situation including Afghanistan were discussed.

The COAS said that Pakistan valued its relations with Morocco. "We earnestly look forward to enhance mutually beneficial multi-domain relations based on common interests," he was quoted by the ISPR as saying.

Earlier this month, the COAS said that the international community's assistance to Afghanistan in averting humanitarian crises is





imperative for regional peace and stability.

He made these remarks in a meeting with British High Commissioner Christian Turner, who called on him at GHQ. The British envoy appreciated Pakistan's efforts for regional peace particularly in the Afghan situation.

According to ISPR, Deputy Chief of Turkish General Staff, General Selcuk Bayraktaroglu, called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at GHQ.

According to statement, matters of regional security situation, mutual and professional interest with special emphasis on defence and security collaboration between the two brotherly countries were discussed during the meeting.

The COAS said: "We highly value our brotherly

relations with Turkey which are deeply rooted in history and entrenched in our cultural and religious affinities. He underscored the importance of peace and reconciliation initiatives in Afghanistan, said ISPR.

The army chief stressed upon the need for global convergence and sincere efforts to avert a looming humanitarian catastrophe.

Both sides agreed to further optimize military to military ties particularly in training and counter-terrorism domains, read the ISPR statement.

The visiting dignitary acknowledged the professionalism of the Pakistan Armed Forces and vowed to enhance cooperation in various fields. He also appreciated Pakistan's role in Afghan situation, special efforts for border management and role in regional stability.

The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's role in the Afghan situation and its efforts for regional stability





Pakistan Navy Operational Commands Seminar Held At Karachi

Pakistan Navy Operational Commands Seminar was held at Bahria Auditorium Karachi. Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

While addressing the seminar, Naval Chief emphasized upon multifarious traditional and non-traditional challenges being faced in maritime realm by Naval forces throughout the globe. The Admiral urged to strengthen inter-agencies cooperation at national level and enhance collaboration at regional as well as global level to suitably counter and quell

Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi urged to strengthen inter-agencies cooperation at national level and enhance collaboration at regional as well as global level to suitably counter and quell transnational threats in maritime domain

transnational threats in maritime domain.

The Chief Guest while appreciating quality of the papers commended panel members for presenting well researched papers and organizers for conducting the seminar in a professional manner.

Pakistan Navy Operational Commands Seminar is prominent event held annually under the auspices of Operational Commands i.e Fleet and Coastal Command during which selected panels of officers from relevant Commands present papers on contemporary naval professional issues.





Pakistan Navy Flotilla Visits Oman during Overseas Deployment



Pakistan Navy Ships RAH NAWARD & MADADGAR along with PN Submarine HAMZA visited Port Sultan Bin Qaboos of Oman as part of overseas deployment.

Upon arrival at port, Pakistan Navy Flotilla was received by Defence Attaché of Pakistan at Oman and officials from Royal Navy of Oman (RNO). During the visit, Commander Pakistan Fleet Vice Admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami and Mission Commander called on Chief of Sultan's Armed Forces and Commander Royal Navy of Oman. During the interactions,

matters of mutual interests were discussed and enhancement of bilateral ties in all spheres was re-affirmed. Commander Pakistan Fleet conveyed good wishes of Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi for the people of Oman in general and the Royal Navy of Oman in particular. Mission Commander along with Commanding Officer also called on Commander Said Bin Sultan Naval Base and DG Ops and Plans of Royal Navy of Oman.

During the port stay, various bilateral activities including exchange visits on board afloat units,

orientation visits of military installations and coordination meetings were undertaken.

Upon completion of port visit, PNS RAH NAWARD participated in sailing exercise with Royal Navy of Oman Sail Training Ship, RNOV SHABAB. The event provided a unique training opportunity for on board trainees of both navies.

The port visit of PN Flotilla to Muscat, Oman is expected to further enhance existing close diplomatic ties and cordial relations between the two countries.



We are a peace loving nation and strive to maintain peaceful & cordial relations with all our neighbours

Chief of the Naval Staff of Pakistan Navy, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi



Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi was commissioned in Operations Branch of Pakistan Navy in 1985. A winner of the coveted Sword of Honour, the Admiral has vast experience of both command and staff appointments. Command appointments of the Admiral include command of two Type 21 ships PNS BADR and PNS TARIQ, Commander 18th Destroyer Squadron, Commandant PNS BAHADUR, Commandant Pakistan Navy War College/ Commander Central Punjab, Commander Pakistan Fleet and Commander Karachi. His distinguished staff appointments include Principal Secretary to Chief of the Naval Staff, head of F-22P Mission in China, Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Training & Evaluation), Director General Naval Intelligence and Chief of Staff (Operations) at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad.

Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi is a graduate of Army Command & Staff College Quetta and National Defence University Islamabad. He also holds a Master Degree in Underwater Acoustics from Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, China. In recognition of his meritorious services, the Admiral has been awarded Hilal-e-Imtiaz (Military) and Sitara-e-Basalat. He was also conferred the French Medal Chevalier (Knight) by the Government of France.

Q. What is HANGOR Day and what is its significance for Pakistan Navy?

HANGOR Day is a manifestation of unmatched courage and unwavering commitment of Pakistan Navy's submarine HANGOR in 1971 war in which she sank the Indian Navy Ship KHUKRI and crippled INS KIRPAN. The moment KHUKRI went down in the deeps of Indian Ocean, it plummeted the Indian Navy's morale and its nefarious designs of conducting attacks on Karachi. This spectacular naval action is a true reflection of bravery, dedication, and steadfastness, which was depicted by the valourous crew of HANGOR in line with the finest traditions of the Navy. The event being the first successful kill by a conventional submarine after WW-II is a well-established fact in naval history. To draw inspiration from this heroic action of HANGOR, Pakistan Navy celebrates 9th Dec as 'HANGOR Day'.



Q. Other than this marvellous and courageous event, Pakistan Navy submarines also performed exceptionally in 1965 war. Would you like to share some thoughts on PN heroic actions in 1965 war?

PN submarine force was raised in 1964 as a lead sub-surface arm of Pakistan Navy and being the first in the region. It has a meritorious history spanning over nearly 57 years. After the acquisition of PNS/M GHAZI (Ex-USS DIABLO) on 1 Jun 1964 from United States, this submarine took active part in the Runn of Kutch crisis and in 1965 Indo-Pak war. Mere presence of this submarine off Indian West coast and the threat she radiated, resulted in bottling up of IN Fleet in the safety of harbour, without posing any challenge to PN Fleet throughout the 1965



One of the dominant threats to the regional and Pakistan's national security emanates from India with its stridently nationalist mind-set and belligerent policies that are manifesting under the umbrella of current government's Hindutva policy.

seven ships of Pakistan Navy bombarded Indian installations at Dwarka in a daring action code named 'Operation SOMNATH'. The swift and accurate action not only destroyed important shore based installations, which included Indian radar station and a radio beacon directing Indian Air Force bombers for attacks on Karachi, but also inflicted irreparable damage to the Indian pride.

Q. Submarine being a very special platform not only in technological domain but also by personnel who operate them; how does PN manage this huge task?

Submarines being a special platform, require

war. Seizing this opportunity, on the night of 7/8 September 1965, a flotilla comprising





dedicated and motivated human resource. In PN, only selected personnel who volunteer to take up this huge challenge are selected for this elite service. Further, we provide best possible training fealties to our personnel to ensure requisite training for operating these technological marvels. In addition, we have a dedicated submarine base, which looks after all the requirements for operating submarines. We also maintain a dedicated maintenance setup for our submarines at Pakistan Navy Dockyard to look after maintenance and upkeep of our submarines.

Q. PN Submarine Force due to its commendable services is awarded with various national awards and honours. Can you highlight some of these?

PN Submarine Force has been conferred with the National Standard by the President of Pakistan as a testament of ultimate sacrifices, meritorious services and role played by the Squadron as the back bone of seaward defence and most potent offensive arm of Pakistan Navy. Other than this Submarine Squadron has also been awarded with 06 Sitara-e-Jurrah, 07 x Tamgha-e-Jurrah and 21 Imtiaz Asnads.

Q. How do you see current developments in the IOR and how is PN dealing with them?

In my assessment, the evolving international environment can be characterized as complex, volatile and ambiguous, having deep impact on the maritime domain and maritime security in the region. One of the dominant threats to the regional and Pakistan's national security

emanates from India with its stridently nationalist mind-set and belligerent policies that are manifesting under the umbrella of current government's Hindutva policy. Moreover, phenomenal Naval build-up in our immediate neighbourhood has the potential to disturb the balance of Naval power in the region. We need to ensure that we remain prepared at all times with respect to our Fleet as well as competence level of the crew manning these war machines.

Q. What are the current plans of PN vis-a-vis future submarine and surface ships acquisition in PN?

Historically, PN Submarines have remained a time tested offensive punch of PN whereby this element of Fleet has proved their worth whenever called upon. These platforms are essential elements to implement the offensive part of our Naval Strategy. Over the years, the strength of our submarines has dwindled due to the ageing factor. Foreseeing the requirements, new submarines are being acquired from China, named as HANGOR Class due to marvellous

history of HANGOR as explained earlier. Further, along with submarines, we are focussing on inducting modern surface platforms with state of the art capabilities. In this regard, first of the latest Type 054 A/P Frigate PNS TUGHRIL has joined PN Fleet. Further, BABUR Class Corvettes are also being acquired from Turkey.

Q. What are the initiatives taken by Pakistan Navy in terms of Naval Diplomacy with neighbouring countries and major naval forces?

We are a peace loving nation and strive to maintain peaceful and cordial relations with all our neighbours. In line with this national policy, PN has been playing its role by actively engaging with the navies of all littoral states in the Indian

PN Submarines have remained a time tested offensive punch of PN

Ocean Region and beyond. PN through naval diplomacy contributes to the nation's foreign policy objectives by showing Pakistani Flag in countries far and wide, through Key Leadership Engagements, Navy to Navy expert level talk, Overseas Deployments and participating in bilateral & multilateral exercise on regular basis. PN also projects Pakistan's maritime perspective at international fora and is a member of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium and an Observer in the Western Pacific Naval Symposium.





Tanzania Navy Commander Visits Naval Headquarters

Tanzania Navy Commander, Rear Admiral Michael Mwanandenja Mumanga visited Naval Headquarters, Islamabad and called on Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi.

Upon arrival at Naval Headquarters, the visiting dignitary was received by Chief of the Naval Staff. A smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Navy presented him Guard of Honour. After wreath laying at shuhada monument, the dignitary was introduced to the Principal Staff Officers at Naval Headquarters.

Later, Rear Admiral Michael Mwanandenje Mumanga called on Chief of the Naval Staff in his office. During the meeting, various matters of maritime security and mutual interest including bilateral collaboration were discussed. Chief of the Naval Staff highlighted Pakistan Navy's contributions for ensuring maritime security and peace in the region. Both the dignitaries agreed on further enhancing mutual interactions in diversified military domains.

It is expected that the visit of Tanzania Navy Commander shall further promote the existing bilateral cooperation between the two countries in general and the navies in particular.





Saudi Ambassador stressed the need to promote tourism and trade between KSA & Pakistan

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Al Maliki called on Federal Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid on Wednesday and discussed Pak-Saudi relations besides matters of mutual interests.

They also discussed arrangements for Saudi Interior Minister's scheduled visit to Pakistan next month, said a statement issued here.

Sheikh Rashid said he welcomed the Saudi Interior Minister in Pakistan. The visit of Saudi Interior Minister would further cement Pak-Saudi bilateral relations, he added.

He said the visit would further expand and strengthen Pak-Saudi cordial relations. He expressed the hope that the Pak-Saudi bilateral agreement would be signed during the visit. Mutual agreement would help early return of Pakistani prisoners from Saudi Arabia, he added.

He said Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were two

brother countries and relations were based on mutual trust and brotherhood.

The Ambassador stressed the need to promote

tourism and trade between the two countries. The Saudi people have very good feelings for Pakistani nation, he added.





Saudi investors interested in Maritime Sector of Pakistan: Envoy

By Mian Fazal Elahi

The Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Hawaf Bin Said-al-Malki met the Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Haider Zaidi at the Ministry of Maritime Affairs in Islamabad to discuss the investment and development opportunities in the Maritime Sector.

In the meeting, the ambassador spoke about the interest of Saudi investors in the Maritime Sector of Pakistan to gain immense mutual benefits.

The Saudi ambassador also emphasized on establishing economic ties with the Maritime Sector of Pakistan.

In his remarks, the federal minister shared

Ali Zaidi underlined that Pakistan's Blue Economy is opening new corridors for progress and development not only in Pakistan but also offers huge investments opportunities to foreign investors

his vision of Blue Economy and apprised the Ambassador about all the recent Port developments and projects.

The minister highlighted the enormous opportunities in the Maritime Sector of Pakistan. He reiterated that Pakistan is on the path of economic growth and has massive potential for investment.

Ali Zaidi underlined that Pakistan's Blue Economy is opening new corridors for progress and development not only in Pakistan but also offers huge investments opportunities to foreign investors.

The minister showed gratitude to the Saudi ambassador for the visit and assured all the support required from his ministry.

Toolkits handed over to returned migrants by Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) in collaboration with Pakistani – German Facilitation and Reintegration Centre (PGFRC)

The ceremony was organized in Islamabad under OPF's Pak – German Facilitation & Reintegration Centre (PGFRC) where toolkits were handed over to more than 60 returning migrants in the fields of photography, culinary arts, motorcycle mechanic, electrician, plumber, carpenter, and mason. These returnee migrants had also completed a comprehensive business development training from PGFRC in their selected trades. Advisor to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development Mr. Muhammad Ayub Afridi was chief guest at the ceremony, Ms. Marion Pfennigs, Head of Development Cooperation, Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Dr. Amer Sheikh, Managing Director OPF, Mr. Tobias Becker, Country Director, GIZ, members of Senate and National Assembly Standing Committees on Overseas Pakistanis & HRD, Members, OPF Board of Governors, senior government officials, representatives of international organizations and civil society representatives also attended the ceremony.



Pakistan and Kazakhstan has a huge potential for bilateral trade: Kistafin

H. E. Yerzhan Kistafin

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin said that Pakistan could utilize Kazakhstan's natural resources to accelerate its economy.

Delivering a special lecture on Kazakhstan organized by MUSLIM Institute organized, the Ambassador said Pakistan and Kazakhstan has a huge potential for bilateral trade, said a press release. He stressed the need to further strengthen people to people contacts and cordial relations between the two brotherly countries.

Being a country rich in natural resource, Kazakhstan was ready to share its resources with Pakistan, he emphasized. He was of the views that Kazakhstan was the linchpin of China's Belt and Road initiative due to its geographical location and vast natural resources. Similarly, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was a flagship project that has huge potential for regional economic integration, he added.

The Ambassador said Pakistan provided a natural link to connect the Eurasian heartland with the Arabian Sea and South Asia. At

the inter-regional and intra-regional level, Pakistan could offer the critical land routes and connectivity for mutually beneficial trade and energy transaction, he said.

He said therefore, rigorous commercial diplomacy or economic diplomacy was the need of the hour. Though there was a huge potential of cooperation in the field of energy such as oil and gas, civil nuclear cooperation and renewable energy but lack of direct geographical communications between both countries hamper bilateral economic and trade cooperation and coordination, he added.

The Ambassador said "innovative plans" should be focused to enhance connectivity. The reconstruction and renovation of the Karakoram Highway in the 2000s greatly expanded Pakistan's access to western China, he added. He said Karakoram Highway could be expanded which might be utilized to enhance regional connectivity.

Another option could be the potential links between Islamabad and Astana through the connection of railways such as Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran and Pakistan-Iran-Turkey, he said.




He said Pakistan-Iran-Turkey railway route has further enhanced the possibility of the realization of this plan. Strong political commitments and inclusion of private sectors could be beneficial for the desired goals of socio-economic integration and greater regional connectivity, he said.

Moreover, he said both states could work closely to bring peace and stability in Afghanistan. Security and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan has proved one of the major impediments to geographical connectivity and economic integration, he said.

He said stability in Afghanistan after the US withdrawal could be a "game changer" for the rest of the region. Both countries could cooperate and coordinate to avert the looming worst humanitarian crises in Afghanistan, he said. The Ambassador hoped that both the states could work together to enhance strategic cooperation in the field of Anti-insurgency, counter-terrorism, military training, joint military exercises etc. Exchange of modern techniques could foster their military cooperation.



A portrait of H.E. Adam Mulawarman Tugio, a middle-aged man with grey hair, a mustache, and glasses. He is wearing a dark pinstriped suit, a white shirt, and a light yellow tie. The background is a blurred green and yellow, suggesting an outdoor setting with foliage.

H.E. Adam Mulawarman Tugio is the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in Islamabad since November, 2020.

Excellency Adam is a career diplomat and has held a number of important diplomatic positions in different countries.

H.E. Adam Tugio did his Master's degree in Law from American University, Washington in 1996.

He obtained his bachelor's degree in 1990 from the Faculty of Law, University of Indonesia.

Ambassador Adam Mulawarman Tugio has also undertaken various training courses.

In 2007 he got Senior Diplomatic Training, in 2002 Mid-career diplomatic training and in 1991 junior diplomatic training from Center for Education and Training Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Exclusive Interview

by Mian Fazal Elahi

Indonesia views Pakistan as an important partner in the region

Indonesia & Pakistan close fraternal ties characterized by feelings of mutual trust, shared values, respect and goodwill

***H.E. Adam Mulawarman Tugio,
Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Islamic Republic of Pakistan***

DF: Your Excellency! First of all, I, on behalf of 'Diplomatic Focus' appreciate your efforts for enhancing the bilateral relations and praise your role as the Ambassador of Republic of Indonesia to Pakistan. We are very thankful to you for giving us time. I would use this opportunity to learn and know more about your experience as a career diplomat, and it will be worth if you share with our readers about your early life, and family?

Thank you for inviting me. I am afraid I don't have much to say about myself. Suffice to say that I became interested in international politics probably because of my past time hobby of collecting international stamps from many countries. After graduating from Law School of the University of Indonesia, I decided to join the MOFA on 1991. That began my diplomatic carrier which I spent most of in the United States and Europe. As a result, the news of my appointment as Indonesia's Ambassador to Pakistan came as a pleasant surprise. Given our cordial diplomatic ties and strong friendly bonds with Pakistan, it was an honour for me to have the opportunity to serve my country here in order to strengthen our two countries' close bilateral relationship.

DF: Your Excellency! Both Pakistan and Indonesia have cordial ties. In 2020, the bilateral trade volume was US \$ 2.6 billion. How do you see the bilateral ties between the two countries over the years, what are the key elements of trade between two countries? What would be your input in increasing the volume trade?

I would argue that our economic and trade connections have been progressively improving over the years, with a significant increase in bilateral trade volume. Global trade has slowed as a result of the epidemic, and our trade have slowed as well. In the future years, we hope to see a positive revival in bilateral commercial relations. In this context, I am delighted to inform that, despite the severe pandemic scenario in 2020, the two nations' trade volume actually increased to 2.6 billion dollars.

Notably, since the IP-PTA was signed in 2013 the volume of commercial transaction between the two nations has steadily increased. We are striving towards a larger trade deal within the PTA framework. Both of us are now negotiating a Trade in Goods Agreement (TIGA) for further expanding the scope of trade cooperation and diversity commercial goods between the two countries. The adoption of TIGA is hoped to serve as stepping stone toward Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

The Indonesian Embassy has been working closely with Pakistan's Chambers of Commerce and Trade Associations to expand and explore areas of cooperation such as on agroindustry, pharmaceuticals, scientific collaboration,



and information technology. We are also encouraging Indonesian investors to visit Pakistan and explore the country's commercial potential as the gateway to Central Asia following the completion of the CPEC and other infrastructure projects. We place a high value on Pakistan's geo-economic importance as a trade hub for Central Asia, South Asia, and the

Given our cordial diplomatic ties and strong friendly bonds with Pakistan, it was an honour for me to have the opportunity to serve my country here in order to strengthen our two countries' close bilateral relationship

Middle East. With a combined population of 1.95 billion people in South Asia and 75 million in Central Asia, the areas have a big potential market. We should also include infrastructure along Pakistan's 1,046-kilometer coast line,

which gives trade access to the Middle East and Africa, therefore supporting Pakistan's 'Engage Africa' economic diplomacy effort.

On the other hand, in my encounters with the Pakistani business community, I have been attempting to persuade them to turn to Southeast Asia for investments and new trade relationships. ASEAN is a large market for Pakistani exports, with a combined population of close to 650 million people and a GDP of about \$2.5 trillion dollars. Indonesia's GDP is worth a trillion dollars, and ASEAN is quickly becoming the global trading centre of the future. With a combined population of over half a billion, Indonesia and Pakistan are the two growing countries with the most youthful and talented individuals. I believe that the scope of collaboration is vast and opportunities are tremendous supported by cordial diplomatic relations on both sides. It's time to move forward and to mobilize our resources to untap this potential.

DF: Your Excellency! Pakistan and Indonesia have brotherly relations, both countries are working on eradicating terrorism so in this term what development you have seen in a Joint Working Group on combating the terrorism?

Terrorism and extremism are global and transnational threats that can only be defeated by concerted efforts of the international community. Terrorism respects no international laws nor national boundaries. As a result, an effective counter-terrorism policy necessitates broad international collaboration, technical assistance, information and experience sharing. In terms of counter-terrorism strategy, Indonesia and Pakistan are confronted with nearly identical concerns and threats. Indonesia commends Pakistan's successful counter-terrorism policy and wishes to learn from its experiences. The Joint Working Group to Combat Terrorism is unquestionably a useful venue for developing collaboration for effectively combatting and eliminating terrorism and it is something that the two countries are looking into. Countries can nonetheless cooperate together by utilising existing international procedures if bilateral mechanism are not present yet.

DF: Your Excellency! The Defence Minister of Pakistan invited the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs of Indonesia to Pakistan for "Security Dialogue" in 2020, but unfortunately it was cancelled due to COVID-19, are you working on its reschedule, if so when it is expected?

Indonesia views Pakistan as an important partner in the region. As fellow Muslim-populated countries, the two countries also have something in common to advance the interests of Muslims, both within the framework of OIC cooperation and in other fora. Bilateral mechanisms have been established to support political, military and economic cooperation, although for the time being only at the technical level. There is still a gap in the dialogue mechanism at the ministerial level for deepening bilateral relations. The plan to establish a Security



Dialogue under the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs has yet to be implemented due to the COVID-19. The pandemic also caused plans for a number of bilateral dialogues to be rescheduled.

DF: Your Excellency! Pakistan and Indonesia are working together in Education field, every year both countries offer scholarships to the students, what is your efforts in creating more opportunities for the students of both countries?

The educated and skilled youth is an asset and future of every developing nation. Therefore, promotion of educational linkages and connectivity between the universities of two sides is an important area of our interest. In this regard, the Indonesian Embassy has been taking various initiatives such as enhancing engagement with the think-tanks, scholars and youth and establishing "Indonesian Corner" at the Pakistani universities. In particular, Indonesian government's KNB Scholarship

through degree and non-degree, programs have received very positive response from the Pakistani students in Pakistan. This year, 63 scholarships were awarded to students from Pakistan, in all categories, which is the highest as compared to 30 scholarships awarded in 2019. We engage the new students with active Alumni to interact and develop an

My book [Cultural Beauty & Nature's Wonders] was launched in September 2021. I'm delighted that the book has piqued readers' interest

understanding of student life in Indonesia. The Indonesian Embassy works as a bridge between Pakistani students and Universities of Indonesia to provide students a recommendation letter for admission.

DF: Your Excellency! Pakistan and Indonesia have historical relations and working in different fields together, what are other areas, where Pakistan and Indonesia can explore and cooperate as a joint venture?

I must say that our historical relations based on commonality of our interests, the commitment by our leaders and the extraordinary positive sentiment that exists at the level of the people provide an excellent platform to move forward in other unexplored areas of interests. Joint ventures in the pharmaceutical industry, travel and tourism, scientific research, information technology, banking, energy exploration, mining, and infrastructure development might benefit both parties. Another major area of



collaboration is vaccine manufacturing and the health sector, which has become increasingly crucial in the present pandemic situation. The key to this is identifying the areas where our two nations' businesses complement each other or have a comparative advantage in producing goods more efficiently.

DF: Your Excellency! The government of Pakistan has shown special interest in promoting Tourism and in result Pakistan's tourism industry is improving and catching up very efficiently, how you see the plan and action of government of Pakistan for tourism.

Pakistan is blessed with beautiful tourists'

We place a high value on Pakistan's geo-economic importance as a trade hub for Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East

spots as well as historical, religious sites and its natural beauty where tourists from all over the world visit in large numbers. The north of Pakistan is famous for its peaks, glaciers, lakes, and forests where not only tourism can flourish but millions of tourists from all over can also be attracted. Likewise, the historical sites of Taxila, Mohenjo Daro and Kartarpur Corridor which is a holy place for Sikh people and there I witnessed inter-faith harmony in action whereby Muslims and Catholics working together with their Sikh brothers and sisters to prepare foods for visitors. Pakistan has so much potential for boosting the country's revenue and employment opportunities through strong tourism industry. To uplift the tourism industry it is essential to ensure security, infrastructure and improving amenities and accommodation for local and foreign tourists.

DF: Your Excellency! What are those elements that bring prosperity and unity among Pakistan and Indonesia?

It is a true blessing that Indonesia-Pakistan close fraternal ties characterized by feelings of mutual trust, shared values, respect and goodwill that bring prosperity and unity. Both the countries highly value their exemplary historic ties and aspire to maintain and transform it to bolster cooperation in various potential domains of mutual interest. The notable elements in this context are commitment and vision of our leaders, mutual support to each other for peace, stability and territorial integrity. Indonesia attaches great importance to Pakistan as a reliable partner in South Asia and both countries highly value their ties and encourage all-around cooperation. Indonesia and Pakistan



are active members of OIC and work together in promoting the interest of Ummah in global world and on global issues of shared concern.

DF: Your Excellency! What are those challenges for Pakistan and Indonesia that need to be tackled on an urgent basis, which is caused during the COVID-19?

The Covid-19 pandemic is certainly a grave global challenge, posing serious threats to economy and health sector around the world. The main challenge for both Indonesia and Pakistan, I believe, is to tackle its economic impact with sound strategy and to ensure the survival of economic. The Indonesian

government has taken several pragmatic steps to tackle this pandemic by developing a National Economic Recovery Program amounted to Rp. 744 trillion (approximately USD 48 billion) this year. It focuses on three important areas: (a) providing social safety net; (b) strengthening national healthcare system; and (c) providing stimulus for SME industries. Indonesia's Covid-19 situation seems to be improving since the peak in July caused by the Delta variant. By December 2021 the positive ratio has dropped to less than 1 percent, and around 40% of population have been vaccinated. The efforts of Pakistan are also commendable to meet the challenges like EHSAS program to support the poor segments of society and the effective works of NHS in providing healthcare system and vaccination.

DF: Your Excellency! Your book "Cultural Beauty & Nature's Wonders" is exploring the Culture, Food, and Tourism of Pakistan and Indonesia, please tell us how this idea comes in your mind?

Well, the idea of producing this book struck my mind after visiting the historical Buddhist sites and museum in Taxila. During the visit, I noticed that Indonesia and Pakistan share a

I am delighted to inform that, despite the severe pandemic scenario in 2020, the two nations' trade volume actually increased to 2.6 billion dollars

lot in common, whether it is religious tourism sites or variety of cuisine; trendy lifestyle and culture; creative art and crafts; the similarities are numerous and unique. With this background, I developed a plan to identify as many similarities as possible and publish them in coffee table book. By highlighting these cultural similarities I hope it would easily attract public attention and eventually bring the people of two countries closer to each other. The book was launched in September 2021 at a diplomatic reception held the Embassy. I'm delighted that the book has piqued readers' interest, and the response from our Pakistani friends and diplomatic community has been encouraging. They said the book is a valuable resource for learning about the history of Indonesia-Pakistan friendship and the two countries' shared goal of becoming modern, progressive states.

DF: Your Excellency! You have explored the mutual cultural events of Pakistan and Indonesia in your book. Is there any reception you are organizing in future, which is based on the mutual culture of Pakistan and Indonesia.

We aim to host a number of activities to highlight the cultural similarities between the two countries as described in the book. Seeing is believing. We will invite Pakistani journalists and web bloggers to visit new tourist destinations being developed in Indonesia so they may see, feel and experience this cultural connection. We will invite also Pakistani students and the general public who have interest on arts and creativity to design batik with Pakistani motifs and design. Separately, the Embassy has been working with national museums here to organize cultural event, such as "A Night at Museum". To further improving people-to-people contacts, the Embassy is also aiming to establish "Indonesian Corners" at several of Pakistan's top universities. The "Indonesian Corners" would feature collection of publications and visuals to the benefit of the students, researchers and book lovers to learn about the Indonesian literature, culture

and other topics of interest. It will also offer language course also for students who are interested to learn Indonesian language and studies about many aspects of Indonesia.

DF: Your Excellency! You are a career diplomat and have held a number of important diplomatic positions in different countries. What were your thoughts before coming to Pakistan and how do you find it?

When I first arrived in Islamabad, I was taken aback by how green the city is. The more I explore the country, the more I am awestruck by the beautiful landscape of the country.

I admire the hospitality and warmth of the Pakistani people especially for Indonesia and the beauty of its rich culture.

Fatima Jinnah Park, for example, is comparable in size to Central Park of New York or Hyde Park of London. And in many municipalities, the government also build small recreational parks for family, letting people to get away from their daily routines and enjoy Margalla Hill's hilly terrain. In the course of my official duties, I have met people from all walks of life in Pakistan. I admire the hospitality and warmth of the Pakistani people especially for Indonesia and the beauty of its rich culture.

DF: Your Excellency! What areas have you been to here and what place do you like the most here in Pakistan?

I must say that shades of Pakistani culture as diverse and attractive like Indonesia. The different provinces of Pakistan have their own unique ways of cultural expression in terms of art, music, dance, dresses and food

specialties. To be honest, it is difficult to choose the most popular places in Pakistan because each province has its own specialty in terms of amazing food, historic sites, mountains, music, people's hospitality, and vibrant culture. In the near future, I hope to visit more historical sites in Pakistan to learn more about the country's culture and people.

DF: Your Excellency! Being a career diplomat what would be your advice to the students who are interested in becoming a diplomat?

My advice to students who want to become diplomats in the future is to be well-versed in foreign policy, to hone their communication and writing skills, and to work hard to gain relevant experience. Like many other professions, to be a good diplomat, you must have strong leadership qualities as well as cultural adaptability. Diplomats must prioritise their home country's political, economic, cultural, and social interests, and they must be able to collaborate with people from other cultures who have different values and political and religious beliefs.

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

I want to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the people of Pakistan and to the readers of "Diplomatic Focus" magazine for their support, cooperation and friendliness to Indonesia. The People of Pakistan are very hospitable and holds a special place for Indonesian people in their heart as their Muslim brothers. I wish every Pakistani to experience our diverse culture and hospitality by visiting Indonesia and enjoy the friendliness that knits the two brotherly nations together. I would like to say that Pakistan is the land of brilliant, talented and hospitable people. The aspiring youth of Pakistan is well-educated and fully aware of the present day's challenges. I believe that a bright and prosperous future is awaiting the people of Pakistan.





Ukraine Crisis Demands Diplomacy and De-escalation

Not More Weaponry



By Kevin Martin

Global crises abound – escalating war in Yemen, potential famine in Afghanistan, rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula, and uncertain prospects for a US return to the Iran anti-nuclear deal. All of these challenges require skillful diplomacy, and that urgently applies to the situation in Ukraine.

As President Joe Biden has ordered 8,500 US troops in the region to be on high alert, Congress may rush through, as soon as next week, a massive defense package including a staggering \$500 million grant for new weapons for Ukraine, which would make it the third-largest recipient of military aid. Congress is planning on rushing this bill through without committee ‘markup’ and it could be voted on soon.

Throwing a half-billion dollars in military aid at Ukraine will not resolve the conflict – on the contrary, it could escalate it. As one congressional aide put it, “This is how the space for nonmilitary options gets slowly closed off in Washington.” The bill also piles sanctions on Russia without fully examining how those sanctions might impact innocent Russian civilians. At the same time, the bill represents yet another half-billion dollars gift to weapons

manufacturers that could instead be spent on threats here at home like the pandemic and climate change.

Diplomacy and de-escalation are the urgent priorities; we can’t risk putting out the fire with gasoline. While seemingly no one wants war, mis-calculations could lead to catastrophe between nuclear-armed behemoths.

Nobody should oversimplify the current situation. Russia-Ukraine relations and history, as well as post-Cold War triumphalism by the US and NATO toward Russia, have contributed to the crisis. But diplomacy, via the Minsk II process or other means, needs to be the only solution on the table, not militaristic threats or increased weapons transfers. The Minsk II agreement would, if implemented, demilitarize the eastern Donbass region of Ukraine and guarantee meaningful political autonomy to the region while retaining Ukrainian sovereignty over the area and its borders.

It is time to escalate diplomacy, not military aid. Congress and the administration should heed the call issued last summer by over 100 former US officials and leading area experts who called for diplomacy-first approach

instead of a ‘foreign policy arsenal reduced mainly to reactions, sanctions, public shaming and congressional resolutions.’ This approach would ‘address the deeper sources of mistrust and hostility’ as the means to deter the current aggressive Russian military stance.

I had the honor to represent Peace Action on a citizen peacemaker delegation to Russia in 1997, and while I don’t claim to be a Russia expert, it certainly gave me a sense of Russia’s history and culture. I loved the people, art, architecture, music, ballet, language and food, and I also met some wonderful Ukrainians while I was there. As the musician Sting wrote poignantly at the height of the Cold War in the early ‘80s, anyone could see the Russians “love their children, too,” as do Ukrainians, Americans, and all peoples.

Excerpted: ‘Ukraine Crisis Demands Diplomacy and De-escalation, Not More Weaponry’

Courtesy: Commondreams.org

The writer is President of Peace Action and Peace Action Education Fund, the country’s largest peace and disarmament organization with approximately 200,000 supporters nationwide.

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the

2nd anniversary of the assassination of Martyr Soleimani

On the eve of the second anniversary of the martyrdom of the valiant General of Islam, Lieutenant General Qasem Soleimani, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran commemorates this immortal martyr who spent his blessed life in sincere service to Iran, Islam and peace and security.

Martyr General Soleimani invariably played a role in line with the principled policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran to help establish peace and stability at the regional and international levels, and adopted various measures and devoted a great deal of efforts to combat international terrorism and growing terrorist outfits across the region.

For this reason, he has rightly and proudly been titled the Hero of the Fight against Terrorism and the General of Peace. Despite this role and position, the US government, through applying double standards and false claims like that of countering terrorism, in a criminal act that violates the rules and principles of international law, planned and carried out a terrorist attack against Martyr General Soleimani as one of the highest-ranking officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the territory of Iraq as the host country. The move by then US officials to publicly assassinate the International Counter Terrorism Hero is in itself a message of support for terrorist groups that explicitly expose the lies of counter-terrorism claimants.

The martyrdom of General Soleimani, Abu Mahdi al-Mohandes and their great companions, not only did not diminish the capacity of the Axis of Resistance, but on the one hand imbued the domestic environment of Iran with national cohesion and unity, and on the other hand further highlighted the strategy

and discourse of the Resistance.

In response to this assassination, the prompt and effective action of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran in slapping the American troops stationed at the Ain al-Assad base in Iraq in the face, along with the spiritual effects of the blood of Iranian and Iraqi martyrs, upset the equations and brought about the failure of US regional strategy. The US fleeing from Afghanistan, the beginning of the process of withdrawal from Iraq and the change in the strategy of the US military presence in the geostrategic region of Persian Gulf showcase a small part of such impacts and consequences.

Undoubtedly, the criminal act of the United States in martyring general Soleimani is a clear manifestation of a “terrorist attack” that was orchestrated and carried out in an organized manner by the then US government for which the White House is now responsible.

According to international and legal standards, the US government bears “definitive international responsibility” for this crime. In this context, all the agents, instigators, contributors and perpetrators of this terrorist crime are responsible. Therefore, in cooperation with other agencies and the Judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has adopted a number of measures from the very beginning based on the legal principle of “combating the impunity of criminals” to hold such individuals and entities accountable before the courts and will continue on this path until the final result is achieved.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has taken numerous measures with the aim of following up the issue at all domestic, bilateral, regional and international levels, the reports of which have been presented to the great Nation of Iran

at various points to the extent possible. This pursuit of this path will continue vigorously and comprehensively.

These measures have been taken in the political, legal, international and public diplomacy dimensions. In this regard, in the foreign and international arena, special efforts were made to prevent the distortion of truth by the United States and its manipulation of the situation. The moral, political, and legal condemnation expressed towards the US government on an international level for committing this crime has been one of outcomes of such efforts.

In following up this issue, it is necessary to point to the continuation of endeavors by the Joint Judicial Committee between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Iraq.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has always taken effective and active measures to establish peace and stability in the region. Now, according to the approaches of the 13th government, which reaches out to the neighbors of the Islamic Republic of Iran for extensive and stable engagement and cooperation, the groundwork for the development and strengthening of relations among the countries of the region is laid more firmly than before.

The government and people of Iran consider themselves to be on the side of the governments and nations of the region and have not and will not spare any assistance to maintain territorial integrity and establish lasting stability and security, and development and prosperity among the countries of the region and the Islamic world. In the end, together with all Iranians in the motherland and all over the world, we pay tribute to the lofty spirit of the General of Peace and Security, Haj Qasem Soleimani.

230 Arab students from 12 countries scored highest marks in 2021 Gifted Arabs initiative



By Monitoring

"Promising Talent".

ALECSO.

In the context of spreading the culture of talent and supporting and nurturing the gifted in the Arab world, the results of the first edition of the "Arab Talented" initiative, organized in partnership between King Abdul Aziz and his Companions Foundation for Giftedness and Creativity (Mawhiba) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), were announced.

The announcement came during a press conference held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in the presence of Mawhiba Secretary-General Dr. Saud bin Saeed Al-Mathami, ALECSO Director-General Dr. Mohamed Ould Amar, and Chairman of the Executive Council of ALECSO Hani bin Moqbel Al-Moqbel.

Dr. Al-Mathami thanked the ALECSO Executive Council and member states, as well as the ministers of education in the participating countries for their support of the initiative and keenness on its success, raising the level of its impact, contributing to achieving its goals and aspirations, and serving the peoples of the Arab world.

The Mawhiba Secretary-General revealed the names of 230 Arab talents who obtained the highest scores in the "Arab Talented 2021" initiative, representing 12 Arab countries, namely: Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Yemen, Tunisia, Mauritania, and Libya, divided into three categories for gifted students: "Exceptional Talent", "Talented" and

Mawhiba Secretary-General Al-Mathami said that among the identified talented students, there were 60 exceptional talented, 87 gifted students, and 83 promising talented. He explained that the Mawhiba Foundation will provide a package of programs to develop the capabilities of the qualified Arab talents in the initiative and refine their talents.

The Foundation will provide the exceptional talents with several in-person and remote care programs, including the "Excellence Program for Enrollment in Prestigious Universities", which includes providing guidance, consultancy and leadership training, in addition to the Mawhiba Global Enrichment Program and the Mawhiba Academic Enrichment Program.

For his part, ALECSO Director-General Mohamed Ould Amar thanked the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its interest, support and sponsorship of this initiative, and for all participating Arab countries.

"The identification of talented Arabs and the development of their capabilities reflects the interest in the scientific, social and cultural challenges posed by the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), and as a stimulus to ensure a better future for the emerging Arab generations in light of global trends to achieve sustainable development, within the investment in human capital, talent and creativity," Ould Amar said.

It is noteworthy that the "Arab Talented" initiative was launched in April 2021 in partnership between Mawhiba Foundation and

The activities of the second session of the "Arab Talented 2022" initiative will be launched next February with the participation of all Arab member states, to achieve a number of goals, most notably empowering talent and creativity as they are the main source of prosperity for the Arab world; creating an environment that stimulates talent and creativity in the Arab world; and promoting a passion for science to build promising young Arab leaders to lead the Arab world towards a prosperous future; as well as emphasizing that investing in the care of talented people is one of the most important components of sustainable development in societies; in addition to leading a scientific movement to discover, nurture and embrace talented and creative people in the Arab world.

King Abdulaziz and his Companions Foundation for Giftedness and Creativity "Mawhiba" aims to identify and nurture the talented and gifted students, contribute to building a system for talent and creativity locally, regionally, and globally, deriving that from its vision of empowering talent and creativity as the foundation for human prosperity, and its clear message, towards creating a stimulating environment and promoting a passion for science and knowledge to build future leaders.

During its functioning that has lasted for more than 20 years, Mawhiba's giving has crossed borders, after embracing the world's most comprehensive approach to identifying, nurturing, and empowering talented people.

Pakistan & Iraq sign MoU to uplift Tourism

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Pakistan and the Republic of Iraq have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the Field of Tourism in Baghdad.

The MoU was signed by Iraq's Minister for Culture, Tourism and Antiquities and the Ambassador of Pakistan to the Republic of Iraq.

The MoU will promote and facilitate cooperation and collaboration in the field of tourism between the two brotherly countries. It will also help reinforce people-to-people linkages between Pakistan and Iraq. Pakistan is also engaging actively with the Iraqi side for facilitation of Pakistani Zaireen to Iraq.

The signing of the MoU is another manifestation of the efforts of both countries to strengthen



and diversify bilateral collaboration across diverse fields. It may be recalled that bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Iraq received significant boost with a number of Ministerial level visits exchanged last year, in particular the visit of Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah

Mahmood Qureshi, which was reciprocated by Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein.

Pakistan remains committed to deepening and broadening its fraternal ties with the Republic of Iraq.

The Embassy of the Republic of Iraq in Islamabad celebrates the occasion of the 101st anniversary of the establishment of Iraqi Army

By Mian Fazal Elahi

The Embassy of the Republic of Iraq in Islamabad held a ceremony to mark the 101st anniversary of the establishment of the valiant Iraqi Army. On this occasion, The Embassy invited a number of Iraqi officers and students getting trainings in the Pakistan, in the presence of the Iraqi Military Attaché, Brigadier



General Masood Salih Mohammad and staff of this Mission.

In this ceremony, the acting Charge de Affairs delivered a speech in which he praised the sacrifices and stances of the army to defeat all attempts by the enemies to undermine the sovereignty, security and dignity of our dear country.

The Military Attaché also delivered a speech in which he recalled the sacrifices, heroisms and martyrs of the Iraqi army in order to keep the Iraqi flag raised.

In conclusion, the celebrations culminated in a supplication for the martyrs of Iraq with mercy and forgiveness, and for Iraq and its people who sacrificed the blessing of security and safety.

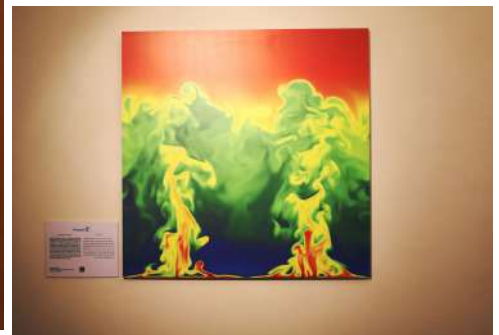
High powered Omani Business Delegation visits ICCI

A business delegation of Oman led by Engr. Redha Al Saleh, Chairman, Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry and held B2B meetings to explore business collaborations with Pakistani counterparts. The delegation was representing various sectors including trading, import/export, oil & gas, real estate, textiles & garments, tourism, IT & telecom, agriculture, fabrication and fashion designing. H.E. Al-Sheikh Mohammed Al-Marhoon Ambassador of Oman to Pakistan and H.E. K.K.Ahsan Wagan Ambassador of Pakistan to Oman also accompanied the delegation.



Photo exhibition “Images of Science” concludes

A photo exhibition “Images of Science” of scientists from more than 80 research institutes of the German Max Planck Society showcasing their work varying research fields, concluded at the National Art Gallery, PNCA. The German Embassy in collaboration with PNCA organized the exhibition. The exhibition was providing an opportunity of a fascinating glimpse into the world of science. The techniques used range from conventional photography to coloured microscopic images (with light, electron, or tunnelling microscopy) to computer simulation.



Condolence reference in memory of departed soul of better half of Mian Akhtar Hussain a seasonal journalist and Chief Editor of Monthly Overseas organised at National Press Club, Islamabad and prayed for the departed soul. Mian Akhtar Hussain is the elder brother of Mian Fazal Elahi Editor, Publisher and CEO of Diplomatic Focus. Mr. Shakeel Anjum President of NPC, Mr. Anwar Raza General Secretary NPC and other prominent journalists from twin cities attend the prayer and condolence reference.





President RCCI Ch Nadeem A. Rauf along with Group Leader RCCI Mr. Sohail Altaf and Mr. S.M Naseem welcoming The Prime Minister of Pakistan H.E Imran Khan on the occasion of the 14th International Chamber Summit (ICS). H.E Imran Khan graced the event as a chief guest of the event



Ambassador Androulla Kaminara met inspiring women entrepreneurs at the Pakistan Business Women's Convention. Women entrepreneurs are crucial for sustained economic growth. Recognizing businesswomen and women leaders, inclusive policies, and an enabling environment is vital. Greater participation of women means more prosperous businesses, communities & Pakistan.



RC CI organized a training session with the collaboration of SMEDA on "Financial Management on SME's" at the chamber house. A large number of participants attended the session. The training program provides information about understanding the concept

of financial management, why it is important to a small business, financial management practices, rules and tools that are commonly available to small business, how these financial management practices, rules, and tools work, financial management basics for a small

business, understanding working capital, good practices for providing and recovering customer credit and basics of financing for a growing business.

KSA is committed to play a much stronger role in socioeconomic development of Pakistan: Envoy



By Mian Fazal Elahi

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Pakistan Nawaf bin Saeed Al-Malki called on the Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Omar Ayub Khan, both the sides discussed ongoing development projects and new initiatives. The Minister for Economic Affairs appreciated the Saudi support in the priority development areas, said a press release issued here.

During the meeting, it was agreed to operationalize the Saudi Oil Facility at the earliest. The Financing Agreement worth US\$ 1.2 billion for import for petroleum products was signed on November 29, 2021 between the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) and Economic Affairs Division (EAD), Pakistan.

As per Financing Agreement, the SFD will extend financing facility up to US\$ 100 million per month for one-year for purchase of petroleum products on deferred payment basis.

The Saudi Ambassador assured of continued support at all level to further strengthen the bilateral economic cooperation between the two brotherly countries

They also discussed the remaining work of development projects in the earthquake affected areas of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) is providing financial assistance for various development projects in the areas of Energy, Health, Education and Infrastructure. Most recently, the SFD has committed to provide financing for Mohmand Dam Project, Shounter Hydropower Project, Jagran-IV Hydropower Project, Gravity Flow Water Scheme Mansehra, and Abbottabad- Muzaffarabad Road Project.

The Saudi Ambassador assured of continued support at all level to further strengthen the bilateral economic cooperation between the two brotherly countries.

The Saudi Ambassador expressed that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is committed to play a much stronger role in the socioeconomic development of Pakistan.

Distribution of Profits among Local Communities



By Mian Fazal Elahi

Aga Khan Cultural Service Pakistan (AKCS-P) and Tourism Promotion Services (Pakistan) Limited Owner and Operator of Serena Hotels held an event at Islamabad Serena Hotel to distribute the profits earned from the operations of Serena Shigar Fort and Serena Khaplu Palace with the communities of Shigar and Khaplu, and the Support Fund to Women Enterprise CIQAM from the revenue of Serena Altit Fort Residence for their partnership at Serena Altit Fort Residence.

The Ambassador of the Royal Norwegian Embassy H.E. Per Albert ILsaas was the Chief Guest. Chairman Aga Khan Cultural Service Pakistan, Mr Akbar Ali Pesnani and Chief Executive Officer, Serena Hotels Mr Aziz Boolani also attended the event.

The Community representatives of Town Management Societies of Shigar, Khaplu and Head of CIQAM Green Solutions Ms Aqeela Bano and officials from the Royal Norwegian Embassy and Serena Hotels also participated in the event.

In his opening remarks Tausif Ahmad CEO Aga Khan Cultural Service welcomed the guests and said that it's the moment to cherish the

long relationship with the communities that restoration and reutilization of model got disrupted due to the pandemic, is being revived today. He said that the unique Khaplu Palace & Shigar Fort has brought cash returns for the community for its public welfare projects.

Mr Aziz Boolani said that Serena's management of these projects are indeed an extension of its Corporate Social Responsibility which not only provides the jobs to the local community but has created a value chain for its operations, benefiting the locals in all possible ways.

Mr Akbar Ali Pesnani thanked the Royal Norwegian Embassy for their consistent support to AKCS-P for its interventions in Gilgit Baltistan and Punjab on various Heritage Restoration Projects. He reiterated AKCS-P's commitment to communities in its areas of operations and shared some of the plans in various parts of Pakistan.

Community representatives thanked AKCS-P and Serena Hotels for continues support to the local communities enabling them to improve their quality of life.

Later on, the mementos were distributed to all the stockholders in supporting restoration and reutilization of Khaplu, Shigar and Altit Fort.

GM Serena hotels, Kyrgyz ambassador discuss tourism, hotel business



By Agency

Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Ulanbek Totuiaev met with Michel A. Galopin, General Manager of the Serena Hotels.

During the conversation, the sides discussed issues of cooperation in the field of tourism, hotel business, as well as, in general, the development of Kyrgyz-Pakistani cultural and humanitarian cooperation. According to the results of the meeting, the interlocutors agreed to conduct joint work aimed at popularizing Kyrgyzstan in Pakistan as a tourist destination.



Azerbaijan, Pakistan discuss prospects for economic relations

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Azerbaijani Ambassador to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov has met with Adviser to the Pakistani Prime Minister for Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood.

Khazar Farhadov hailed the role of both countries' leadership in developing Azerbaijan-Pakistan relations. Touching upon the necessity of further strengthening economic ties between the two countries, Farhadov stressed the importance of the Azerbaijan-Pakistan Joint Intergovernmental Cooperation Commission, as well as the establishment of the working groups in the fields of energy, transport, tourism, education, health and information technologies.

The ambassador noted that Azerbaijan is located at the crossroads of East-West, North-South transport and communication corridors, and highlighted a number

of international projects implemented by the country, as well as the potential of the Alat Free Economic Zone.

Abdul Razak Dawood spoke about the sincere relations between the two countries and stressed the significance of strengthening economic ties. He hailed the economic potential of both countries, and expressed his intention to visit Baku with a Pakistani delegation as soon as possible.

Noting the importance of negotiations between the two countries' authorities on a legal framework that will make a special contribution to strengthening the trade relations, Abdul Razak Dawood expressed his confidence that efforts will be stepped up to strengthen Azerbaijan-Pakistan economic ties.

The sides also exchanged views on the importance of the Azerbaijan-Pakistan-Turkey trilateral cooperation format.

Ambassador of Nepal visits Murree Brewery Company



Tapas Adhikari Ambassador of Nepal in Pakistan visited Murree Brewery Company. Isphanyar Bhandara CEO Murree Brewery Company presented a souvenir of Oldest Brewery in the Indo-Pak.



By H.E. Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan

The Pakistan-China partnership is unparalleled among inter-state relations.

The history of our friendship is a unique account of unwavering mutual support, mutual trust and mutual respect. Nurtured by successive generations of our leadership and peoples across seven decades, this iron-brotherhood has blossomed into a strong and vibrant All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

Our relationship is time-tested and timeless; it transcends the normal precepts of inter-state relations and has withstood the vicissitudes of regional and global developments. The grand

China-Pakistan relations a journey of friendship

celebrations to mark the 70th anniversary of our diplomatic ties last year helped in injecting a new vigor and vitality to our friendship.

For us in Pakistan, relations with China are the cornerstone of our foreign policy enjoying support across the political spectrum. I can say with great confidence that our people fully understand the real value of this friendship and enthusiastically contribute to its splendour and glory. No wonder special metaphors have been coined to illustrate its depth and intensity; the expression Ba Tie only reserved for Pakistanis in China is one such example.

In the next few days, I will be arriving in Beijing to attend the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympic Games. Being a sportsperson myself, I can very well relate to the spirit that sporting

events like Olympics instill in a nation. I strongly feel that sports should be a unifying factor and should transcend politics. I congratulate the leadership and people of China for hosting this mega event and wish all participants safe, healthy and successful games.

Since my last visit to China in October 2019, the world has undergone a profound transformation. COVID-19, the biggest contemporary challenge, continues to negatively impact lives and livelihoods across the globe. Climate change is yet another monster staring down our eyes with the potential to disrupt all that humankind has achieved to date.

The imperatives of geopolitics have engendered new alignments in our region, which to many, are reminiscent of ideological confrontation

of the last century. Instability and turmoil that plagued Afghanistan for the past 20 years have come close with a hope of peace finally returning to the region. The international community's engagement is essential to avoid economic meltdown and avert humanitarian crisis in that country.

The present challenges, colossal as they be, nevertheless stress the need for international cooperation and call for rekindling the spark of multilateralism for peace and prosperity in our region and beyond. As President Xi Jinping pertinently mentioned in his recent address to World Economic Forum,

"Amidst the raging torrents of global crisis, countries are not riding separately in some 190 small boats, but are rather all in a giant ship on which our shared destiny hinges".

History bears witness to the fact that Pakistan and China have jointly traversed such epochal changes in the past and emerged successful. Our two countries have always supported each other on matters of core national interests.

It is our common vision that enduring peace in South Asia is contingent on maintaining a strategic balance in the region and all outstanding issues like border questions and the Kashmir dispute should be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy and as per norms of international law.

Our bilateral cooperation against COVID-19 further validates the strength of our friendship. As iron brothers, Pakistan solidly stood by China after the outbreak of the pandemic. From President Arif Alvi's solidarity visit to Beijing to the dispatch of over 60 plane loads of Chinese anti-epidemic goods to Pakistan, emerged a shining example of mutual support and goodwill. Chinese vaccines have now become the mainstay of Pakistan's ongoing mass vaccination drive.

Pakistan is charting a new path for robust and sustainable development and making efforts to harness its potential as a geo-economics hub. The new National Security Policy of Pakistan centers on my government's vision of people-centric approach for ensuring their prosperity, fundamental rights and social justice.

In pursuance of these objectives, we draw inspiration from China's achievements; be it the miraculous lifting of 800 million people out of absolute poverty or victory in people's war against the pandemic.

As a friend, neighbor and partner, Pakistan has much to offer to the people, enterprises and business persons of China. Pakistan has a rich history, cultural diversity and majestic landscapes. With a population of 220 million people, young and skilled labor force, strategic location, friendly investment regime and warm sentiments for the Chinese people, Pakistan

welcomes you for your next investment and next leisure trip.

China has lately become Pakistan's largest trade and investment partner. Bilateral trade reached historic levels in 2021. Many Chinese enterprises have established strong presence in Pakistan and are contributing to our socio-

On behalf of government and people of Pakistan, I would like to reaffirm that in Pakistan, China would always find a trusted friend which would stand by it, not only amidst the gentle tides of peace and prosperity but also in the rising storms of challenges.

economic growth. China can become a huge market for Pakistan's livestock and agricultural products. Similarly, Pakistan can benefit from Chinese expertise in industrialization, agricultural modernization, e-commerce and digital finance.

Pakistan is one of the earliest participants of President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative. As the flagship project of the BRI, CPEC has immense economic and strategic significance for our two countries. There is complete consensus in Pakistan on CPEC's indispensability for Pakistan's national development. My government is fully committed to making CPEC a High Quality Demonstration Project of BRI.

CPEC has been instrumental in addressing Pakistan's chronic energy crisis and improving connectivity through infrastructure development. We are also making rapid progress on the development of Gwadar Port and Special Economic Zones which would benefit the entire region.

No quantum of development is meaningful unless its fruits trickle down to the underprivileged section of society. My vision therefore is aimed at rooting out poverty and empowering the people of Pakistan to become masters of their own destiny.

Phase-II of CPEC has therefore accordingly been designed for job creation, industrial modernization, livelihood improvement, rural revitalization, socio-economic development and poverty alleviation. Complementing these projects is my government's flagship initiative

called "Ehsaas," a large social security network for poverty alleviation and upward social mobility.

Safety and security of Chinese personnel and projects in Pakistan remains our top priority. Our people and state institutions are determined to safeguard CPEC from the detractors of Pakistan-China friendship and bring to justice those responsible for harming our interests.

It is heartening to note that China is leading the cause of mitigating climate change and restoring Mother Nature to its pristine beauty. We look forward to working with China to address climate change and undertake futuristic developments based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility.

My Clean and Green Initiative resonates with President Xi's vision of a "prosperous, clean and beautiful world." Pakistan is already in the midst of one of the world's most ambitious efforts to expand and restore its forests, having already planted a billion trees as part of 10 Billion Tree Tsunami Project.

In the digital era where innovation and technology serve as the primary vehicle of sustainable and robust development, Pakistan is eager to enhance mutually beneficial cooperation with China in quantum computing, robotics, AI, Cloud, and Big Data.

Pakistan will also be working closely with China to advance the objectives of the Global Development Initiative put forward by President Xi Jinping.

Over the last few years, one of the most promising and reassuring aspects of our bilateral relations is increasing contacts between the peoples of our two countries. The warmth at the top echelons of leadership is mirrored by sentiments of love and fraternity between our masses. With over 40 provinces and cities sister relationships, I am confident that linkages between our peoples would deepen, and finest traditions of our friendship would be passed on to our future generations.

We are happy to see the Chinese people guided by the capable leadership of President Xi Jinping and the Communist Party of China for achieving the Great Rejuvenation of Chinese Nation. On behalf of government and people of Pakistan, I would like to reaffirm that in Pakistan, China would always find a trusted friend which would stand by it, not only amidst the gentle tides of peace and prosperity but also in the rising storms of challenges.

In conveying to the Chinese leadership and the people, my best wishes for the Year of the Tiger and the Spring Festival. I hope that the sacred flame of Pakistan-China friendship would keep glowing with ever-increasing brightness and warmth!

Long Live Pakistan-China Friendship!

Xi calls on world to work together for better post-Covid world



By Monitoring

Chinese President Xi Jinping in the 2022 World Economic Forum (WEF) virtual session in Beijing held recently elaborated upon the right direction in which the international community can work jointly to defeat the pandemic, the ultimate solution to promoting steady recovery of the world economy, practical approach to bridging the development divide and suggestions for countries to get along with each other. The webinar provided China's answers to the question of how to beat the pandemic and how to build the post-COVID world from the perspectives of history and philosophy.

Xi's remarks showed China's firm determination to work together with the rest of the world to survive the trying times and jointly create a better post-COVID world. "As a Chinese saying goes, 'The momentum of the world either flourishes or declines; the state of the world either progresses or regresses.' The world is always developing through the movement of contradictions; without contradiction, nothing would exist.

The history of humanity is a history of achieving growth by meeting various tests and of developing by overcoming various crises. We need to move forward by following the logic of historical progress, and develop by riding the tide of development of our times," said Xi at the virtual session. Xi's insightful remarks embody the scientific methodology of dialectical materialism, providing important guidance for grasping the trend of history and riding the waves of the times in the turbulent inter-national situation.

Klaus Schwab, founder and executive chairman of the WEF, believes that Xi's speech pointed the way to a better future for China and the world.

In the face of profound and extensive changes of the times, countries can only see clearly the right direction for human society through the "telescope" of history.

Although the once-in-a-century pandemic has created many obstacles to the communication between peoples of different countries, facts have shown once again that countries are not riding separately in some 190 small boats, but are rather all in a giant ship on which their shared destiny hinges. Only through cooperation can they usher in a brighter future.

The recovery and development of the world economy are faced with many constraints, but economic globalization has never and will not veer off course. Only by building an open world economy can countries fully unleash the vitality of the world economy.

Although problems like a widening North-South gap, divergent recovery trajectories, development fault-lines and technology divisions become more prominent, mankind's beautiful dream of common development will never fade. Only by adhering to a people centered philosophy of development can countries realize balanced development worldwide and revitalize global development.

Despite the resurgence of Cold War mentality, protectionism and unilateralism, peaceful development and win-win cooperation remain the right way forward for humanity. Different countries and civilizations can open up new space for global peaceful development only by prospering together on the basis of respect for each other, and seeking common ground and win-win outcomes by setting aside differences.

In the face of the profound and sweeping changes of the times, the international community must forge ahead with confidence and fortitude and push the wheel of history toward a brighter future with practical actions.

To take the initiative in the course of history, countries must pluck up the courage to overcome stubborn resistance and strong counter currents along the way for a better future.

"We need to learn from comparing long history cycles, and see the change in things through the subtle and minute. We need to foster new opportunities amidst crises, open up new horizons on a shifting landscape, and pool great strength to go through difficulties and challenges," Xi said at the event.

He encouraged the international community to face the issues of the times and create a better future with actions. Crises and opportunities are interconnected and dialectically united. Only by figuring out the way forward, grasping the general trend, observing the situation through dialectical thinking, gaining a deep understand of opportunities and challenges and actively creating conditions can countries turn crises into opportunities.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, people from various countries have supported and helped each other, showing humankind's courage, resolve and compassion in front of a major crisis and kindling a flame in the dark hour. To build a better post-COVID world, the international community also needs to join hands to surmount all kinds of obstacles on the way forward with courage and strong will. Throughout the history of humanity, human society has managed to progress no matter what kinds of risks, disasters or counter currents were along the way. Humanity shall and will continue to stride forward.

As long as various parties follow the trend of history, embrace cooperation to defeat the virus, re-solve various risks, bridge the development divide, and discard Cold War mentality, the international community will certainly create a better post-COVID world.



Xi extends Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese, stressing unity, hard work for shared future

This year's Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, falls on Feb. 1.

Chinese President Xi Jinping, on behalf of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and the State Council, extended Spring Festival greetings to all Chinese Sunday at a reception in Beijing.

Xi, also general secretary of the CPC Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, delivered a speech at the gathering at the Great Hall of the People, greeting Chinese people of all ethnic groups, compatriots in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, and overseas Chinese.

This year's Spring Festival, or the Chinese Lunar New Year, falls on Feb. 1.

Xi said all the achievements made by the Party and the people in the past 100 years are attributed to unity and hard work, which is the most remarkable spiritual symbol of the CPC and the Chinese people.

"As long as the 1.4 billion Chinese people always stay united and the 95 million CPC members always stay close to the people for a shared future, we will surely be able to continue creating impressive miracles on the new journey ahead," Xi noted. Party and state leaders Li Keqiang, Li Zhanshu, Wang Yang, Wang Huning, Zhao Leji, Han Zheng and Wang Qishan were present at the reception. Li Keqiang presided over the event.

Xi said that the year 2021 witnessed remarkable progress for the Party and the country, listing

major events including the celebration of the CPC centenary, the adoption of the third historical resolution in the Party's 100 years of history, the victory in the fight against poverty, the attainment of the first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and the start of a new journey to fully build a modern socialist China.

Last year, China maintained its leading position in the world in terms of both economic development and COVID-19 control, Xi said. He cited China's progress in its high-quality development, capabilities in strategic science and technology, reform and opening-up, and people's well-being.

Xi said comprehensive plans had been made for China to reach its carbon peaking and carbon neutrality goals.

Xi also noted that order in Hong Kong had been restored, and more efforts were made to combat separatist forces and facilitate reunification. China's major-country diplomacy had also been advanced, Xi added.

The country's overall social stability had been well maintained, and the 14th Five-Year Plan period got off to a good start, Xi said.

"No matter what twists and turns or challenges we may face, we must carry forward the CPC's great founding spirit, and keep in mind that one thrives in adversity and perishes in laxity," Xi said.

"We ought to have a long-term perspective, be prepared for potential dangers even in times of calm, and maintain strong unity and work hard, so as to keep driving forward the great cause of national rejuvenation," he emphasized.

Xi said the CPC will convene its 20th national congress in the second half of 2022 to review the last five years of work and draw the development blueprint for the period to come.

Stressing concrete actions for the congress, Xi urged efforts to advance reform and opening-up across the board, promote high-quality development, and ensure and improve the people's well-being.

The focus should be on maintaining a stable and healthy economy, a safe and peaceful society, and a political ecosystem featuring honesty and integrity, Xi added.

Noting that the New Year is the Year of the Tiger, Xi said traditional Chinese culture sees the tiger as the king of animals and a symbol of strength, bravery and fearlessness, urging people to write a new chapter of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

With the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympics just around the corner, the Chinese people are fully prepared to present a streamlined, safe and splendid gathering for the world, Xi said, offering his best wishes to athletes from home and abroad.

China and Pakistan together for a shared future!



By Nong Rong,
Ambassador of People's Republic of China in Pakistan

On February 4, when 1.4 billion Chinese people celebrate the Chinese Spring Festival, the main torch of Beijing 2022 Winter Olympic Games will be lit in the "Bird's Nest", and Beijing will be the first city ever to host both summer and winter Olympic Games.

President Xi Jinping said in his New Year address that "We will spare no effort to present a great Games to the world." China is ready to deliver a streamlined, safe and splendid Winter Olympic Games to the world, ensure all participants feel spring-like warmth and providing more solidarity, confidence and strength to the world.

The Beijing Winter Olympic Games will also be distinguished for its Green features. For the first time in Olympic history, all venues in the competition zones are powered 100% by green energy.

And as first ever in Winter Olympic history, ice-making will use carbon dioxide as a refrigerant, cutting carbon emissions to nearly zero. Most of the Winter Olympic Games venues are renovated from the existing venues and facilities of the 2008 Summer Olympics Games, coordinating the needs of the games and post-games use. We are confident that the Beijing Winter Olympic Games will be a carbon-neutral event.

China highly appreciates Pakistan's strong support and sincere wishes to China in hosting the Beijing Winter Olympics. We warmly welcome Prime Minister Imran Khan to come to China to attend the opening ceremony. Prime Minister Imran Khan recently told Chinese media that this will be the first Olympics he will witness, and that he is looking forward to experiencing an exciting global event in Beijing.

President Dr. Arif Alvi laughed happily when he received the mascot, and said that the Beijing Winter Olympic Games will be "very successful" and Pakistan will participate in the splendid sports event with passion and joy. We wish the Pakistani sports delegation good luck, to excel himself in the Games, and look forward to seeing the Pakistani flag fly high again in the "Bird's Nest"!



Last year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Pakistan. The two sides held more than 140 activities in celebration and commemoration of this important occasion, which all attached high popularity. Be it the exchange of congratulatory messages between the two countries' leaders, high-profile receptions or activities such as the signing of friendship deals between

We warmly
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provinces and cities, a youth video contest and exchanges covering a wide range of areas including the political, diplomatic, economic, sub-national, education, scientific, cultural and health sectors. The celebrations held virtually or in-person, deepened political mutual trust, strengthened the two peoples' friendship and promoted practical cooperation in various sectors despite COVID-19 restrictions.

During the past 7 decades since the establishment of China-Pakistan diplomatic ties, no matter how the international situation may change, the two sides have always stood side by side in weal and woe.

China and Pakistan have worked together to tackle risks and challenges such as COVID-19, consolidating strategic mutual trust and deepening strategic cooperation. History has fully proved that the two countries are the most reliable iron-clad brothers for each other.

Just as President Xi Jinping said on the phone conversation with Prime Minister Imran Khan, the world is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century, with more sources of turbulence and risks around the world. Under the new circumstances, the two countries should stand together even more firmly and push forward the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, build a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in the new era. Nowadays, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has entered a new stage of high-quality development, and the cooperation between our two sides will have even greater potential.

China supports Pakistan in exploring a development path suited to its own national conditions and is willing to share China's high-quality development opportunities with Pakistan, and contribute to Pakistan's industrialization, urbanization and digitization. China will continue to support Pakistan in its fight against COVID-19, jointly build the CPEC with high quality and strengthen cooperation in such fields as agriculture, digital economy and people's livelihood. We will continue to unleash the positive effects of the CPEC in promoting growth and improving people's well-being. China is ready to work with Pakistan to enhance multilateral coordination, practice true multilateralism and promote international fairness and justice, to safeguard the common interests of the two countries and maintain world peace and stability. We look forward to the meetings between the leaders of the two countries during Beijing Winter Olympics, which will surely further draw a brighter future for China-Pakistan relations.

Let us join hands to welcome the Beijing Winter Olympics under the guidance of the Olympic Motto of "Faster, Higher, Stronger—Together", and strive for greater progress in our all-weather strategic cooperative partnership. China and Pakistan, together for a shared future!

Karot Power Company wins NEPRA CSR Stalwart Award



By Mian Fazal Elahi

Ambassador of China to Pakistan Nong Rong Wednesday expressed gratitude over the NEPRA's CSR Stalwart Award to the Karot Power Company, the entity for Karot hydro power project under the umbrella of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

In a tweet, the Chinese envoy said the company was awarded for its unwavering commitment to community development.

"By joint contribution, extensive consultation and shared benefits, CPEC is win-win cooperation", he added.

Karot hydro power plant is among the early-harvest high-priority projects under the China-

Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative. The run-of-river project has iconic importance being a source of sustainable, low-cost, clean and green energy.

The \$2 billion project has entered the commissioning phase as over 95% civil and electromechanical works of 720 megawatts Karot hydro power plant have been completed.

Earlier, NEPRA held its first 'NEPRA CSR Awards' under its initiative of 'Power with Prosperity' initiative to highlight and appreciate the tremendous achievements of Pakistan's major power producers and their community development initiatives.

The Karot Power Company Limited, a subsidiary of China Three Gorges South Asian Investment

Limited, was awarded the NEPRA CSR STALWART Award due to its unwavering commitment to community development. The award was received by Deputy CEO Mr. Lu Dongsheng of the Karot Power Company (Pvt) Limited. The NEPRA CSR team appreciated the KPCL's contribution and welcomed its participation in the CSR Awards ceremony.

Chairman NEPRA Mr. Farooqi in his opening remarks presented his vision about NEPRA's drive of "Power with Prosperity (PwP)" in addition to its two other drives "Power with Safety" and "Power with Security". He elaborated that NEPRA through its PwP drive is making tremendous headways by encouraging its licensees to help and contribute to the development of the marginalized sections of the society living under abject poverty through framing and implementation of remarkable social policies and development programs.

The Deputy CEO KPCL Mr. Lu Dongsheng appreciated NEPRA for holding the CSR Awards Ceremony and mentioned the company's steadfast commitment to community development, social awareness, and stakeholder participation for the Karot Project.

KPCL ensures its commitment to the community with the basic principles of philanthropy, ethical, legal, and economic responsibilities and focuses on the core areas such as Health, Education, Infrastructure development, and supply of drinking water. KPCL is implementing a Community Investment Plan (CIP) for the social uplift of the local community around the Karot Project. Under the community Investment Plan, the KPCL has completed 11 projects both in Punjab and AJ&K for the shared benefit and welfare of the local community around the Karot Project. Some of the salient projects include the Construction of Govt. Boys High School Kanand, Govt. Girls Middle School Hollar and the Emergency Block at THQ Kahuta.

The project is expected to become fully operational by June this year.



China donates 3000 sets household solar power system to Gwadar

By Mian Fazal Elahi

In a tweet, Ambassador Nong Rong, Chinese Envoy to Pakistan has informed that the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China has donated 3000 sets household solar power systems to Gwadar. He said that this consignment will reach to Gwadar early next month. He welcomed that this step will be beneficial for the people of Baluchistan to overcome the power shortage.



Pakistan, China join hands to build modern hospital in Gwadar under CPEC

By Agency

Pakistan and China are jointly building a modern medical facility worth \$100 million in Gwadar under the game changer China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project.

The Chinese government is financing the Pak-China Friendship Hospital being established over 68 acres of land that will provide quality health facilities to people of the port city.

The project has been proposed for

implementation of Phase-II of 50-beds hospital to be built under the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) Business Plan (Federal PSDP), state-run news agency said.

The project, which was launched in 2020, is expected to be completed by December 2022. One out of six medical blocks has been completed.

Under the proposed project remaining medical blocks, nursing and paramedical institutes, medical college, central laboratory, and other

The Chinese government is financing the Pak-China Friendship Hospital being established over 68 acres of land that will provide quality health facilities to people of the port city



allied facilities would be constructed with a supply of medical equipment and machinery, an official told APP.

The estimated project cost was \$100 million to be executed jointly by the executing company and sponsors including GDA, financing Chinese Government Grant Supervising Agency, Planning and Development Department, Government of Balochistan, and Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives.



CPEC phase-II is much broader in scope: Pakistani envoy to China

Investment under CPEC has generated thousands of jobs, the envoy said

By Monitoring

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) phase-II is much broader in scope and focuses on relocation of industries, agriculture sector modernisation, cooperation in science and technology, job creation and socio-economic wellbeing of people, said Pakistan's Ambassador to China Moinul Haque.

Energy projects that have achieved completion include 1,320-megawatt coal-fired power plants in Sahiwal, Port Qasim, Karachi, and Hub (Balochistan), 660MW Engro Thar coal power project, and 1,000MW Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park in Bahawalpur (400MW project has been completed while 600MW project is under implementation).

In an interview with the Global Times on Monday, the ambassador said that the two sides were making rapid progress on the development of Gwadar Port and Gwadar Free Trade Zone, which would promote regional connectivity and economic integration.

He termed it a matter of great satisfaction that despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic over the past two years, cooperation under CPEC and work on all projects continued without any hindrance.

"The recently held 10th meeting of the Joint Cooperation Committee reviewed wide-ranging cooperation under the CPEC framework and identified more areas of cooperation," he said.

"These include establishment of a joint working group on information technology and industry, which is expected to support high-quality development of CPEC as envisioned by the leadership of the two countries."

Talking about the current status of CPEC, its construction work and energy shortage, the ambassador said that the megaproject marked a new phase in Pakistan-China relations by placing economic cooperation and connectivity at the centre of bilateral agenda.

As a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), CPEC is aimed at enhancing connectivity and trade linkages between Pakistan, China and the rest of the region through a network of roads, rail, fibre optic cables, energy pipelines, industrial clusters and Special Economic Zones.

Ambassador Haque said that in its first phase, CPEC helped Pakistan develop major infrastructure projects and address essential energy needs.

Energy projects that have achieved completion

include 1,320-megawatt coal-fired power plants in Sahiwal, Port Qasim, Karachi and Hub (Balochistan), 660MW Engro Thar coal power project and 1,000MW Quaid-e-Azam Solar Park in Bahawalpur (400MW project has been completed while 600MW project is under implementation).

Moreover, some smaller wind and solar energy projects have begun operations as well.

"The 878km-long Matiari-Lahore 660kV HVDC transmission line has also been completed, which has the capacity to transmit 4,000MW of electricity," he added.

"CPEC has also upgraded Pakistan's national and international highway network to provide more reliable connectivity between Pakistan and China across the Karakoram Range and has strengthened inland communication."

Investment under CPEC has generated thousands of jobs, the envoy said.

Regarding the current level of third-party participation in the construction of CPEC, he said that since the megaproject was aimed at promoting regional integration and win-win cooperation, the two countries had agreed to welcome and encourage high-quality investments.

Silk Road Culture Center Inaugurated in Quetta



By Mian Fazal Elahi

Silk Road Culture Center has been unveiled in Quetta. Syed Zahoor Ahmed Agha, the Governor of Balochistan performed the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The Culture Center is a wonderful gift in the anticipation of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics & the Chinese New Year Celebrations. The Center is a true manifestation of friendship between Ironclad brothers; China and Pakistan.

The Ambassador of China to Pakistan, Ambassador Nong Rong, also delivered a recorded speech for the inauguration ceremony of the Silk Road Culture Center in Quetta. Likewise, he appreciated the support extended by the Governor of Balochistan and Jamal Shah, the former Director-General of Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA), for the venture.

The Silk Road Culture Centre aims to rejuvenate cultural

collaboration along the historical Silk Road. The vision is to take inspiration from the Silk Road to enhance cultural exchanges.

In addition, the objective of the Culture Center is to provide a platform for the promotion of a greater understanding of cultural diversity as well as cross-cultural affinities for peace and advancement.

The Culture Center in Quetta will endeavour to connect cultures so as to facilitate the development and exchange of policies, knowledge, research, and practices that will contribute to the peace and progress in Pakistan as well as the Silk Road region.

The Center is a symbol of friendship between Ironclad brothers.



Nong Rong @AmbNong · Jan 29

Honored to give a recorded speech for the Inauguration Ceremony of Silk Road Culture Center in Quetta. Really appreciate support from H.E. Mr. Syed Zahoor Ahmed, Governor of #Balochistan, & Mr. Jamal Shah, former DG of #PNCA to make Silk Road Culture Center a reality.





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