

Monthly Magazine on National & International Political Affairs, Diplomatic Issues

May - June 2022

Volume 13

Issue 05-06

Promoting Bilateral Relations | Current Affairs | Trade & Economic Affairs | Education | Technology | Culture & Tourism

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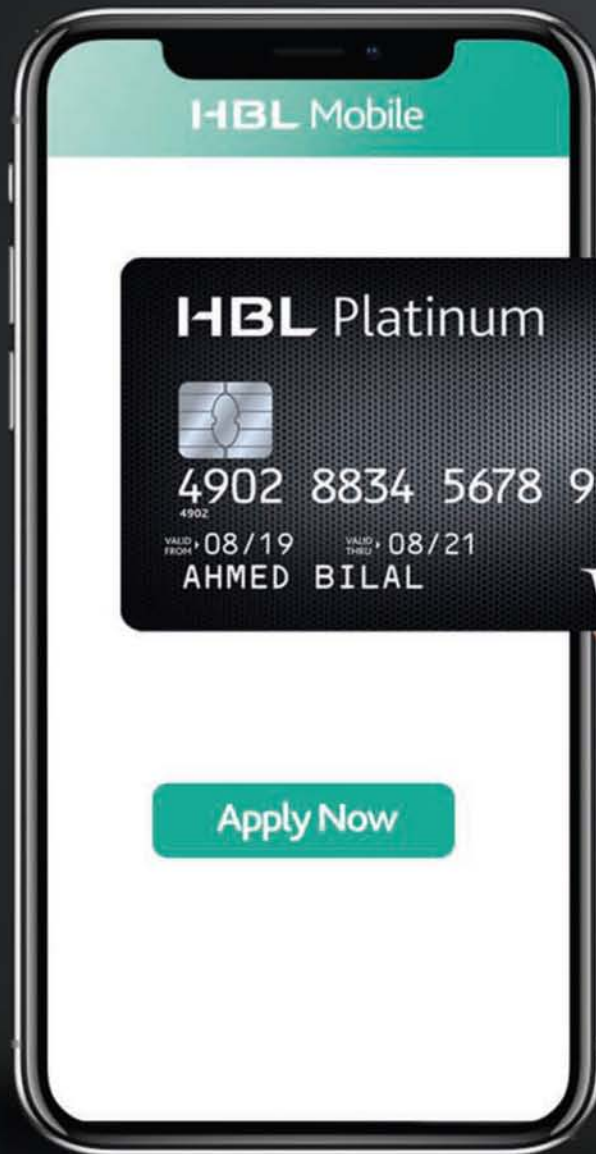


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
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


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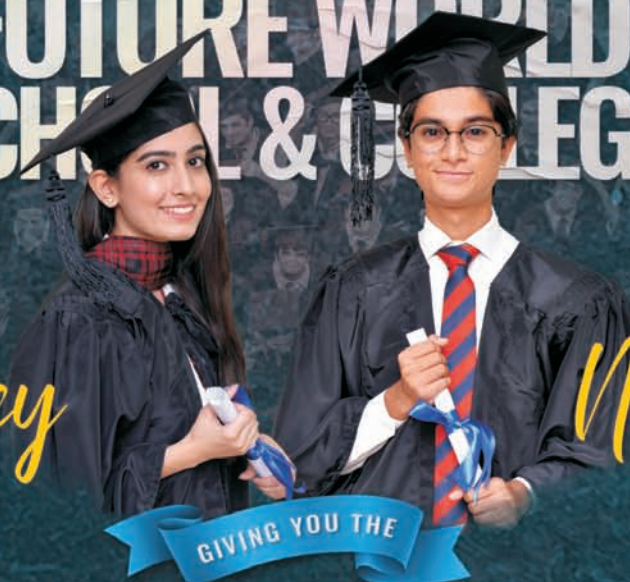
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Pakistan, Turkey reaffirm to upgrade bilateral ties to new heights

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan renewed their pledge to upgrade the excellent bilateral ties between the two brotherly countries to new heights by infusing new vigour of bilateral cooperation in diverse fields.

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Pakistan, Turkey's strategic cooperation touching new heights of friendship: PM

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the multi-dimensional cooperation between Pakistan and Turkey in the areas of defence, foreign policy and public welfare was touching new heights of friendship for the benefit of the two peoples.

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PM, MBS agree to further strengthen bilateral economic, trade ties

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Crown Prince H H Muhammad bin Salman discussed to further strengthen the bilateral economic, investment and trade ties.

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2ND JUNE MESSAGE BY THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR

I am pleased to address the readers of Diplomatic Focus on the occasion of Italian National Day. I would start by thanking all Pakistani friends who sent messages of warmth and solidarity on this auspicious occasion.

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Senate defence panel deplores attack on Chinese teachers

Senator Mushahid Hussain led a delegation of Senate Defence Committee to the Chinese Embassy for expression of sorrow, solidarity and support following the terror strike against Chinese teachers in Karachi.

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Printer

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

Publisher

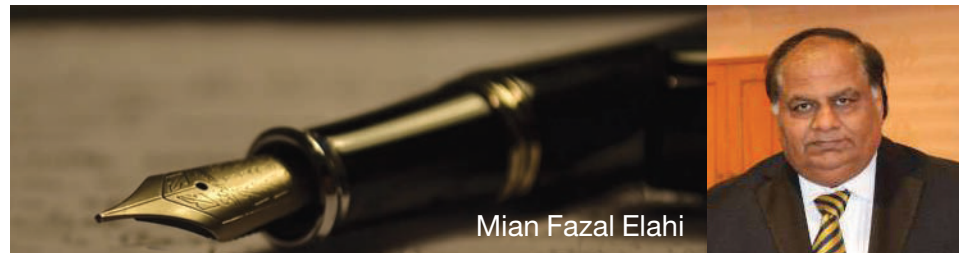
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Price

Pakistan	Rs.1200	Middle East	50 Saudi Riyal
UK	£ 8	Schengen State	€10
Chinese Yuan:	75	Canada:	\$15
USA:	\$12		

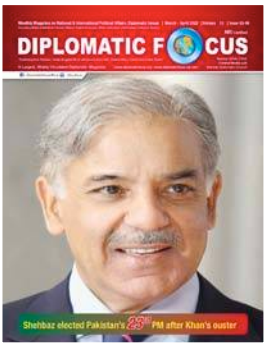
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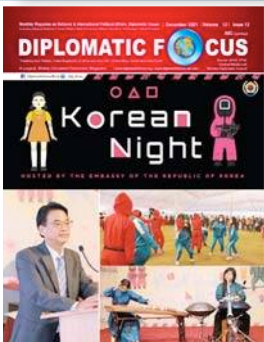
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On May 27, in his maiden address to the nation a day after his government caved in and fulfilled IMF's condition, the Prime Minister announced a new relief package of Rs28 billion per month to protect the poor from the impact of inflation. In the address there appeared to be a call for coming together, with the PM's idea of the "charter of the economy". A charter of economy, an idea that has been floated for years but never followed through due to lack of political will, would require all parties to get together on some semblance of an agreement for difficult economic decisions to make for the country's survival. It is hoped that the Prime Minister truly heeds his words and tries to end the unacceptable political divides to open avenues for negotiation and dialogue. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, along with a high-level delegation paid a three-day official visit to Turkey where he made extensive interaction with Turkish leadership and potential investors from diverse sectors. On the other side, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari paid a visit to New York to participate in a ministerial meeting and debate at the United Nation's Security Council on food security, besides holding a meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. This visit was viewed as an opportunity to reset ties with the US so that cooperation can be pursued in multiple realms of mutual interest. FM Bhutto also participated in UN Security Council meeting and met with the UN secretary-general and the president of the UNSC. It is imperative that we use these platforms of engagement in a positive and constructive way to raise key issues of concern for Islamabad. We need to engage extensively bilaterally and multilaterally with everyone, even with those with whom we might differ on certain issues. At the same time, it is also important to share our perspective on key regional and global situations such as the unabated human rights abuses in IIOJK, and the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan. Both Pakistan and the US have a lot of potential to work together on shared areas of interests, especially when it comes to food security and climate change. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken also indicated that the US will support Pakistan stabilise its economy and will look to find ways to expand bilateral investment and trade opportunities. This was an encouraging statement but none of this can materialise without the support of the IMF. Therefore, it is imperative that we undertake the requisite reforms that will create a conducive environment for international lenders and creditors to work with us again. Following his visit to the US, the Foreign Minister paid his maiden trip to China. The agenda was to cover the entire gamut of bilateral relations, with a particular focus on deepening trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. It is important for us to also discuss the fast-tracking of CPEC projects. This was part of a renewed push by the coalition government to enhance cooperation with Beijing, which is crucial especially in light of the ongoing economic crisis.

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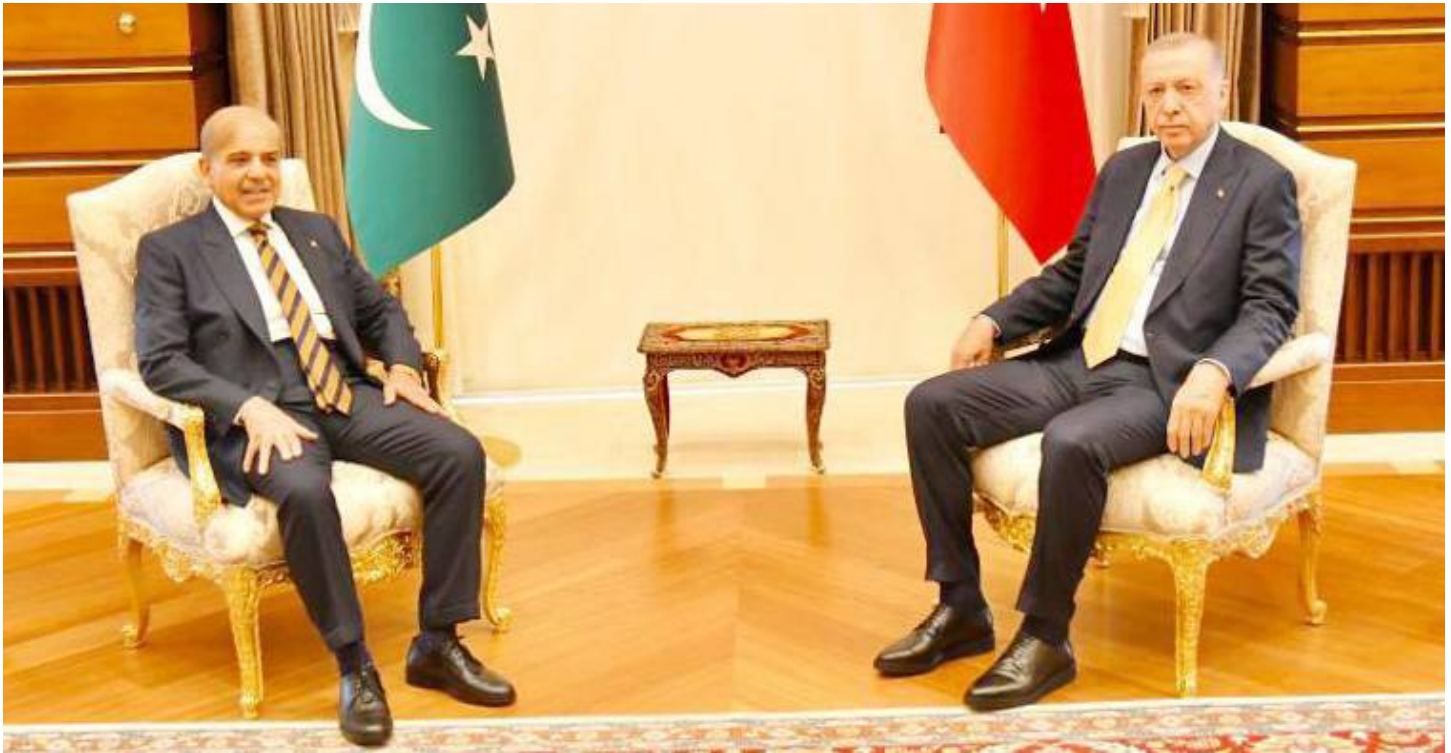


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Pakistan, Turkey reaffirm to upgrade bilateral ties to new heights

PM lays wreath at mausoleum of Turkey's founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk



By Mian Fazal Elahi

President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan renewed their pledge to upgrade the excellent bilateral ties between the two brotherly countries to new heights by infusing new vigour of bilateral cooperation in diverse fields.

President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan warmly received Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif upon his arrival at the Presidential Complex.

On the occasion, national anthems of the both countries were played and the Prime Minister inspected the guard of honour along with President Erdogan.

Later, both the leaders were introduced to the delegations of the two countries.

Addressing a joint press stakeout after holding a meeting, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said the relationship between the two countries was embedded deep into history and shaped by shared goals. The ties transcended times and continued from generations to generations, he added.

Both leaders also agreed to holding of 7th High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC), a primary platform at the leadership-level,



in Islamabad this year during the month of September. He said this year, the two countries were celebrating 75th year anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic ties.

The Prime Minister while terming his meeting with President Erdogan very productive, expressed the hope that under the dynamic leadership of president, the bilateral ties would scale to new heights. He said they had heart to heart and very productive discussions.

The Prime Minister said the visit of a strong Turkish business delegation to Pakistan would further provide impetus to the trade and investment cooperation. and resolved to make the visit very solid and result-oriented.

He said Turkey had made exponential progress in the field of hydropower generation and renewable energy, and Pakistan was keen for its support and cooperation in terms of profitable investment by the Turkish companies, which would provide low cost energy to it, thus



proving to be a win-win situation.

Citing the launch of MILGEM-class ship PNS Badar in Karachi on May 20, jointly constructed by Pakistan and Turkey, the Prime Minister said it was 'a shining example of the excellent cooperation' between the two countries in the defence sector. He said Pakistan and Turkey

Relationship between the two countries was embedded deep into history and shaped by shared goals; these ties transcended times and continued from generations to generations, says Shehbaz Sharif

would be exploring further joint ventures in the defence sector. He said both brotherly countries were natural partners as the two nations had stood with each other in time of need and over core interests.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the people of Pakistan deeply appreciated the Turkish leadership's steadfast support over the Kashmir issue. Lauding the unflinching support of Turkey, he said the Kashmiris had been struggling for their legitimate right and subjected to

Indian atrocities for over seven decades. He also cited the Indian government's attempts at demographic changes in the IIOJK (Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir).

He reiterated that Pakistan would not abandon its quest for peace, but it was convinced that peace in South Asia was possible if the long standing issue of Kashmir was resolved under the United Nations Security Council resolutions and in line with the wishes of the Kashmiri people. The Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's support to Turkey over Northern Cyprus and resolved that Pakistan stood with Turkey in its fight against terrorism and terrorist groups like the PKK (Kurdistan Workers Party). Enemies of Turkey are the enemies of Pakistan, he added.

The Prime Minister said both the countries had worked for decades for their shared goals of a peaceful and stable Afghanistan. The countries had hosted the largest refugees in the world with their scarce resources. He said the warm bonds between the two countries had been close to their hearts, as they went beyond the

conventional ties and diplomatic niceties. The bond of friendship was rooted deeply in history and intertwined in the very fabric of their respective societies.

Such a relationship sat in their hearts forever as they were tied with the unbreakable, intertwined and interlinked bonds, which also connected them at all layers i.e; governments, institutions, armed forces and the people. The Prime Minister said he was overwhelmed with the love and affection he and his delegation received from the government and from every Turkish citizen. The same reflection of love was also reciprocated by every Pakistani, he maintained.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif also visited the mausoleum of first president and founding father of the Republic of Turkey Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and laid a wreath there.

The Prime Minister, who was on a three-day official visit here, also observed a minute of silence to pay respect to the great Turkish leader.



PM, Turkish FM discuss ways to strengthen bilateral ties

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Cavusoglu called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and discussed ways to promote bilateral relations between Pakistan and Turkey.

The meeting also discussed the promotion of cooperation in different sectors, particularly trade, investment, education, communication and culture.

PM Sharif said the historical and brotherly relations between Pakistan and Turkey were witnessing a new dimension leading to the progress of the two nations. He said Pakistan and Turkey had a similarity of views on international issues and the people of the two countries stood by each other in difficult times. He said there was a strong relationship of mutual trust and respect between Pakistan and Turkey, which had turned into strong economic relations.

Shehbaz said Turkey made rapid progress under the leadership of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, terming it a role model for other nations. The Turkish Foreign Minister said Turkey and Pakistan had deep-rooted relations and expressed his government's desire to strengthen ties in multifarious areas.

While receiving the Turkish Foreign Minister, the Prime Minister noted that the bilateral relations were exceptionally warm as the people of the two countries shared special bonds that dated back centuries. He recalled



the support extended by the two countries to each other in times of need.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif deeply lauded the personal contribution of the Turkish Foreign Minister in advancing bilateral relations and for playing an important role in strengthening existing institutional mechanisms of cooperation between the two countries.

In this context, the importance of the 7th session of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) was highlighted and the substantive preparations for it were reviewed.

The Prime Minister particularly underscored the importance of increasing bilateral trade volume to US\$5 billion over the next three years. He also underlined the resolve to fully facilitate

Turkish companies in Pakistan and invited them to invest in diverse sectors including food processing, agriculture, automotives, information technology, hydel, solar, and wind energy.

Noting the steadfast support of the two countries for each other on issues of core interest, the prime minister thanked the Turkish Foreign Minister for Turkey's principled policy on Jammu and Kashmir. He added that the people of Pakistan and Kashmir deeply appreciated Turkey's support for this just cause.

On Afghanistan, the prime minister stressed the importance of addressing the dire humanitarian situation, the release of Afghan assets to help stabilize the economy, and continued efforts for sustainable peace and stability in the country.

PM, Turkish minister exchange views on Pak-Turk trade potential

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Turkish Commerce Minister Dr. Mehmet Mus called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and exchanged views with him on benefiting from the trade potential existing between the two countries.

The Prime Minister called the need for strengthening the trade mechanisms between the two countries to expand its scope.

The Prime Minister particularly underscored the importance of increasing bilateral trade volume to US\$5 billion over the next three years.

He also underlined the resolve to fully facilitate Turkish companies in Pakistan to enhance trade.





PM Shehbaz Sharif invites Turkish investors to explore Pakistan's energy, agro-industrial sectors

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif invited the Turkish investors to explore Pakistan's diverse sectors, particularly the energy sector offering immense opportunities and scope for development. Addressing at the Pakistan Turkey Business Council under the DEIK Foreign Economic Relations Board, the Prime Minister said Pakistan's energy sector with its vast potential in hydel, thermal, coal, wind, and solar areas could prove ideal for Turkish investors. PM Sharif said a number of leading Turkish investors had already made investments in Pakistan, and assured full cooperation by his government to pursue their projects. He said given the growing energy needs and high global energy prices, Pakistan direly needed improvement in its energy sector and emphasized that the Turkish investment would be a win-win situation.

He said Pakistan could benefit from Turkey's expertise in building and managing dams for water conservation. Giving an overview of the economic and investment opportunities in Pakistan, the prime minister highlighted his focus on energy, housing, textiles, infrastructure development, agro-based industry, and oil and gas sectors. He said Pakistan-Turkey relations are built on unbreakable bonds of love, affection, and respect as the two countries shared a history, century-old tradition, and common aspirations. He mentioned that the two nations always stood with each other at all times, and added that their relations were marked by extreme cordiality and exceptional mutual trust. PM Sharif said Pakistan and Turkey must engage with renewed resolve and commitment to building upon this solid foundation, to take this relationship to new heights, particularly in the vital fields of commercial, economic, and investment cooperation. He also emphasized that Turkish textile companies could explore the sector for joint ventures, especially for



intra-industry trade as well as becoming partners in regional and global value chains. He also invited the Turkish firms relating to the agro-industrial sector and dairy farming and said ample opportunities existed in these sectors. The prime minister stressed that Pakistani and Turkish companies could also work together in the oil and gas sector. They could collaborate not only in exploration and production but in building refineries and pipelines, he said. Shehbaz Sharif highlighted the priorities of his government, saying that addressing the challenges of industrial sustainability, particularly in view of the global fourth industrial revolution was significant. He said Pakistan with its huge youth bulge could undergo remarkable progress and development in various sectors of public importance.

Moreover, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, while assuring his government's all-out support, urged the business community of Pakistan and Turkey to take the bilateral trade to the \$5 billion mark within next three years. The \$1.1 billion trade is nothing 'Let us resolve to take the two-way trade to \$5 billion' Let us do it speedily. The time and tide wait for none, he said addressing a dinner reception hosted by President of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB) Riffat Hisarciklioğlu in his honour.

The Prime Minister, along with a high-level delegation, was on his maiden visit to Turkey, since he assumed office on April 11. A huge number of businessmen from Turkey Pakistan Business Forum, Turkish and Pakistani investors, and officials from the boards of investment of Turkey and Pakistan attended the event. The Prime Minister said the government had done away with all the impediments to the business sector and urged the Turkish investors to invest their capital in multiple sectors like agriculture, IT (information technology), dairy, textile, and many other fields. 'My investors are my masters. Come to Pakistan. We will genuinely roll out the red carpet for them,' he remarked.

The Prime Minister also assured the Turkish investors that they would face no hurdles in their future ventures in Pakistan, as they had been doing over the last four years. He said under the leadership of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey had achieved tremendous progress with its companies executing gigantic projects in multiple fields, including dams and infrastructure building across the globe.

Speaking high of the warm reception given to him and his delegation, the prime minister said the two countries enjoyed fraternal relations, dating back to centuries.



FM Bilawal meets Turkish counterpart; discusses bilateral, regional matters

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was hosted over dinner by Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Foreign Minister of Republic of Turkey, in Ankara.

While thanking his Turkish counterpart for the warm hospitality, the Foreign Minister noted that the bilateral relations between the two countries were grounded in love and affection that the two peoples had for each other.

The two Foreign Ministers held an all-encompassing exchange of views on a range of subjects and took stock of the ongoing cooperation in various fields. The Foreign Minister underlined that the High-Level



Foreign Minister thanked the Turkish Government for its steadfast support and principled position on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

Strategic Cooperation Council (HLSCC) and the Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) continued to serve as useful mechanisms for taking

bilateral relations to a higher plane. Pakistan looked forward to the session of HLSCC later this year in Turkey.

The Foreign Minister thanked the Turkish Government for its steadfast support and principled position on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

The two Foreign Ministers also exchanged views on regional issues. The Foreign Minister appreciated Turkey's contribution towards peace and security in its immediate neighborhood and beyond.

On Afghanistan, the Foreign Minister

underscored the need for continued engagement between the international community and the interim Afghan government to achieve shared objectives of peace, stability and progress in Afghanistan.

The Foreign Minister also appreciated the constructive role of Turkey in the Ukraine crisis and personal efforts of the Turkish Foreign Minister in promoting dialogue and diplomacy.

The Foreign Minister is accompanying the Prime Minister on an official visit to Turkey. It was the second meeting of the two Foreign Ministers in less than a month.

Pakistan, Nigeria emphasize enhanced bilateral cooperation



By DF Report

Pakistan and Nigeria emphasized the need for increasing cooperation in various fields for the mutual benefit of the two countries.

The bilateral ties were discussed during a meeting between the visiting Nigerian Defence delegation, led by General Lucky Eluonye Onyenueha Irabor, Chief of Defence Staff Nigerian Armed Forces, and President Dr Arif Alvi here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr. Both sides reiterated the desire to deepen cooperation in

the areas of defence and counter-terrorism.

Welcoming the delegation, the President said Pakistan greatly valued its relations with Nigeria and was keen to have meaningful defence ties with it. He appreciated the participation of the Nigerian Armed Forces representatives in the International Defence Exhibition and Seminar. The president also highlighted the human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and said the belligerent neighbour was involved in the genocide of Muslims.

He said Pakistan had tremendous experience

in combating terrorism and successfully defeated the terrorist elements in the country. He underlined the need for enhancing trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. General Lucky Eluonye Onyenueha Irabor underscored the need for strengthening the bond of friendship between the two countries. He conveyed to the president warm wishes from the President of Nigeria.

He also thanked the Government of Pakistan for extending a warm welcome and hospitality to him and members of his delegation.

Outgoing Ambassador calls on President Dr Alvi; stresses enhanced Pak-Somalia ties

By DF Report

President Dr Arif Alvi called for strengthening bilateral relations between Pakistan and Somalia in all areas of mutual interest, particularly trade and economy.

The President said Pakistan had initiated the 'Engage Africa Policy', which would further boost bilateral relations with all African countries. The President expressed these views while talking to the outgoing Ambassador of Somalia H E Khadija M. Almakhoum, who paid a farewell call on him, here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

The President expressed gratitude to the government of Somalia for participating in the two sessions of the Council of Foreign Ministers of OIC Countries held in Islamabad this March. He underscored the need for increasing the exchange of parliamentary delegations between the two countries and invited the Somali parliamentarians to benefit from the Parliamentary Services Program offered by



the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Service (PIPS), Islamabad.

He highlighted that Pakistan eagerly welcomed African students and a large number of Somali students were already enrolled in Pakistani academic institutions. He said Pakistan was host to a sizable number of Somali refugees

and was desirous of their safe and early return to their homes.

The President appreciated the services of the outgoing envoy in promoting bilateral ties between the two countries and conveyed his best wishes for her future responsibilities.

PM, Premier Li Keqiang view Pak-China partnership vital for peace, stability amidst evolving situation



By Mian Fazal Elahi

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China Li Keqiang shared the view that Pakistan-China all-weather strategic cooperative partnership must continue to serve the vital interests of the peoples of the two countries, as well as the broader interests of peace and stability amidst the evolving regional and global milieu.

To this end, the two leaders agreed to enhance the momentum of exchanges to take bilateral cooperation to even higher levels. The Prime Minister and premier Li Keqiang held a comprehensive telephonic conversation which was marked by traditional warmth and cordiality, which is the hallmark of Pakistan-China relationship.

The two premiers also discussed in detail bilateral matters, while agreeing that Pakistan and China would not allow anyone to harm the time-tested all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif thanked China for its firm support to Pakistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and national development

and reaffirmed his government's unwavering support to China on all issues of its core interest. He also affirmed his government's firm resolve to fast-track both the ongoing as well as the new projects under the transformational China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which had immensely contributed to the socio-economic development of Pakistan and also realize its high-quality development.

The Prime Minister underscored the need for both sides to work together and enhance cooperation between the concerned agencies of the two countries to fully operationalize the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) at an early date. While recalling Pakistan-China sister-city partnerships, he expressed his desire to learn from the experience of those Chinese officials who had remained instrumental in setting up SEZs in their provinces.

The Prime Minister also expressed his commitment to working with renewed zeal and enthusiasm, in concert with China, especially on projects of strategic significance for both the countries, such as ML-1 project.

The prime minister offered his condolences to the government and people of China and

expressed sympathies with the families of victims of the heinous terrorist attack that took place at the Karachi University on 26 April 2022, in which three Chinese scholars lost their lives. While strongly condemning the terrorist attack, he reaffirmed Pakistan's firm resolve to hold thorough investigation, to apprehend the perpetrators of this criminal act and to bring them to justice in accordance with our laws.

The prime minister reiterated that Pakistan attached the highest importance to the safety, security and protection of all Chinese nationals working in Pakistan on economic projects and institutions.

He assured premier Li that his government was determined to take all necessary measures for their enhanced security and safety in Pakistan. While emphasizing people-to-people contacts, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also conveyed sentiments of the families of the Pakistani students who were desirous of retuning to China for resumption of their studies.

Premier Li assured the prime minister of China's readiness to enhance economic cooperation, expand trade and encourage greater investments from China to Pakistan.



Chinese envoy meets PM; calls him China's committed, respected friend

DF Report

The Charge d' Affaires of China Pang Chunxue on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and emphasized that the latter was viewed as a strong and committed friend of China and enjoyed great respect and admiration there.

During the courtesy call, the charge d' affaires conveyed warm felicitations and good wishes of the Chinese government and leadership on the assumption of office by the prime minister. The charge d' affaires also lauded the Prime Minister's contribution to promoting China-Pakistan Economic Cooperation during the years that he was Chief Minister of the Punjab province.

Conveying his warm greetings and gratitude to the Chinese leadership, the prime minister recalled his many visits to China, when he also met with President Xi Jinping who had taken a personal interest in promoting relations with Pakistan.

The Prime Minister appreciated CPEC's continued progress as the flagship project of President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative and its importance for economic development and prosperity of Pakistan.

He affirmed his government's resolve to speed up high quality development of CPEC



projects and make it a symbol of China-Pakistan friendship and close partnership. He underlined the importance of enhanced investment from China in industrialization, agriculture, and digital technologies.

Recalling his close cooperation with China as Chief Minister of Punjab, the prime minister reaffirmed the All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between Pakistan and China as a cornerstone of Pakistan's policy and

factor for regional peace and stability.

He underscored that friendship with China resided in the hearts of the people of Pakistan and China was Pakistan's strongest friend and closest partner.

The Prime Minister affirmed his government's commitment to further deepening the win-win economic cooperative partnership between the two countries.

Nigerian Chief of Defence calls on CJCS



DF Report

Chief of Defence Staff Nigerian Armed Forces, General Lucky Eluonye Onyenuchea Leo Irabor, who is on official visit to Pakistan, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJSC) General Nadeem Raza at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi.

During the meeting, matters of bilateral defence cooperation including security, military exchanges, training and prevailing regional

environment were discussed, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release.

Chief of Defence Staff Nigeria said that these mutually beneficial interactions have deepened the bilateral defence relationship, strengthened the cooperation and enhanced mutual understanding between the two armies. The CJSC reaffirmed the strong and long-standing bilateral defence relationship between Nigeria and Pakistan. The visiting dignitary expressed his complete satisfaction on the performance

of JF-17 fighter aircraft, inducted from Pakistan. He also said that the JF-17 aircraft, with its unique fighting capabilities, would prove to be a potent platform in addressing the security requirements of Nigeria.

Earlier upon arrival at Joint Staff Headquarters, General Lucky Eluonye Onyenuchea Leo Irabor was presented Guard of Honour by a smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Armed Forces.

Nigerian Chief of Defence calls on Air Chief



DF Report

Chief of Defence Staff Nigerian Armed Forces General Lucky Eluonye Onyenuchea Irabor called on Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu.

The visiting dignitary appreciated sound professionalism of PAF personnel and also

acknowledged the achievements made by PAF in recent years through indigenization, said a PAF media release. The Air Chief said that Pakistan and Nigeria had longstanding religious, cultural and historical bonds which were manifested through strong ties between the Air Forces of the two countries.

The visiting dignitary expressed his complete satisfaction on the performance of JF-17

fighter aircraft, inducted from Pakistan. He also said that the JF-17 aircraft, with its multirole fighting capabilities, would prove to be a great asset in addressing the security requirements of Nigeria. Both the dignitaries agreed to further revitalize defence ties including training and indigenous production. Various matters of professional interest and regional security also came under discussion during the meeting.

Pakistan committed to ensuring Afghanistan's peace: Khar



DF Report

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar said Pakistan was committed to continuing its efforts toward ensuring peace in Afghanistan and the region.

She expressed these views in a meeting

with Pakistan's Special Envoy to Afghanistan, Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq who called on her at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Khar said Pakistan respected the sovereignty of Afghanistan and considered peace in the neighbouring country of utmost importance. She expressed concern over the incidents of

targeting Pakistani security forces from Afghan soil.

Ambassador Sadiq gave a detailed briefing to the State Minister on the security situation of the region. Additional Secretary Afghanistan Amir Aftab Qureshi and Director General Afghanistan Asif Memon were present.

Pakistan determined to strengthen partnership with China: Khar



DF Report

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar said Pakistan was determined to further strengthen the

all weather strategic cooperative partnership with China. She was talking to Charge d' Affaires of China Pang Chunxue.

The Minister of State appreciated the sincere support of China for the progress and

development of Pakistan. She said Pakistan was desirous of enhancing the speed of work on China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

She welcomed the Chinese investment in the special economic zones under the CPEC.



PM for exploring Pak-Bahrain ties in IT, manpower

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif emphasized the importance of deepening bilateral economic engagement with Bahrain and exploring the potential in trade, investment, IT, manpower, and food security sectors.

The Prime Minister expressed these views in a meeting with Ambassador of Bahrain Mohammed Ebraheem Mohammed. Shehbaz appreciated the efforts of the government of Bahrain in looking after the Pakistani community during the testing times of the COVID-19 pandemic. He also welcomed the project of King Hamad Nursing University and Associated Medical Sciences Hospital in Islamabad, as a testament to the close brotherly relationship between the two countries.

The Ambassador conveyed the message of felicitations from the Bahraini leadership to Shehbaz Sharif on his assumption of the office of the Prime Minister of Pakistan. He recalled the long-standing and fraternal ties between the two countries and underlined Bahrain's desire to further deepen and broaden bilateral relations with Pakistan.

The Prime Minister thanked the ambassador for the messages of felicitations from the Bahraini leadership. He underscored the



importance Pakistan attached to its relationship with Bahrain and reiterated his resolve to work towards further expansion of mutual cooperation in diverse fields. Bahrain is home to a large Pakistani diaspora in the Gulf Region.

Pakistan and Bahrain enjoy close, cordial

ties resting on the firm foundation of shared faith and values. The two countries closely collaborate bilaterally, as well as on regional and global issues of mutual interest.

Pakistan and Bahrain celebrated 50 years of establishment of diplomatic relations in 2021.

PM stresses enhanced Pak-UK trade, investment ties



DF Report

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif emphasized the importance of enhanced trade and investment ties with the United Kingdom and stressed the need for elevating the relationship to a strategic level.

The Prime Minister expressed these views while talking to British High Commissioner Dr. Christian Turner, who called him here this morning.

The High Commissioner congratulated Shehbaz Sharif on assuming the office of the prime minister and conveyed the best wishes of the British government. The prime minister expressed his gratitude to British Prime Minister Boris Johnson for his congratulatory tweet.

The Prime Minister added that Pakistan highly valued its relations with the UK, which were based on historical linkages and convergent interests on a broad range of issues. Highlighting the positive bridge-building role played by

around 1.6 million Pakistani diaspora residing in the UK, the Prime Minister emphasized the need of strengthening cooperation in the field of legal migration to fully realize the potential. The prime minister also appreciated the work undertaken by the UK in promoting education, health and other social sectors in Pakistan.

The British High Commissioner thanked the prime minister and expressed the desire to work closely with Pakistan on deepening and broadening bilateral cooperation.

Pakistan, UK PMs discuss Ukraine situation, mutual interest issues

DF Report

Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson had a telephone conversation in which the two Prime Ministers discussed the situation in Ukraine and issues of mutual interest.

The British Prime Minister congratulated Shahbaz Sharif on assuming the office of Prime Minister. Talking on the occasion, Shahbaz Sharif said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with the United Kingdom and the role of 1.6 million Pakistanis in the relations between the two countries is commendable.

The Prime Minister emphasized the importance of trade and investment partnership between the two countries and reiterated his desire to strengthen relations with the United Kingdom in various fields.

Shahbaz Sharif called for the promotion of



strategic relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom, proposed a 10-year roadmap for advancing relations in various fields, and the Prime Minister appreciated the work done for the promotion of education, health and other sectors in Pakistan.

During the telephone conversation, Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif emphasized the importance of peace and stability in Afghanistan and the need to intensify efforts to avert a humanitarian crisis, saying that the international community needed constructive

diplomatic relations with the Afghan government. He said that diplomatic and political ties with Afghanistan were essential for lasting peace and stability.

The Prime Minister highlighted India's human rights violations in Occupied Kashmir, stressing the need for peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute and maintaining strategic balance in the South Asian region.

Shahbaz Sharif invited the British Prime Minister to visit Pakistan. The two leaders agreed to stay in close touch in the future.

PM meets OIC Secretary General

Reaffirms commitment to promote Ummah's interests



By Mian Fazal Elahi

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif affirmed his government's commitment to promoting the interests of Muslim Ummah as a corner-stone of Pakistan's foreign policy.

The Prime Minister was talking to OIC Secretary General H E Hissein Brahim Taha, who called on him. The Prime Minister thanked the Secretary General for consistent and unequivocal support of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to the Kashmir cause, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He urged the organization to lead the diplomatic endeavours towards facilitating a peaceful and lasting solution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the United Nations Security Council resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

The Prime Minister maintained that Pakistan, as the current Chair of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, was looking forward to playing a proactive role with regard to the matters of interest and concern to the OIC member states.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif invited the OIC to launch a concerted effort to stop the ongoing

Israeli aggression against Al-Aqsa Mosque and other occupied Palestinian territories. He stressed that Israel must not be allowed to divide the blessed Mosque, temporally and spatially, between the peoples of different faith.

The Prime Minister underscored the need for provision of urgent humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people and emphasized that the OIC should step up its efforts to counter growing Islamophobia at the international level. He invited the OIC secretary general to pay a visit to Pakistan, which was accepted.

The Secretary General reaffirmed the OIC's support for a just and peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions. He expressed his resolve to work closely with Pakistan on key issues of concern to the Muslim Ummah, especially Palestine, Afghanistan and Islamophobia.

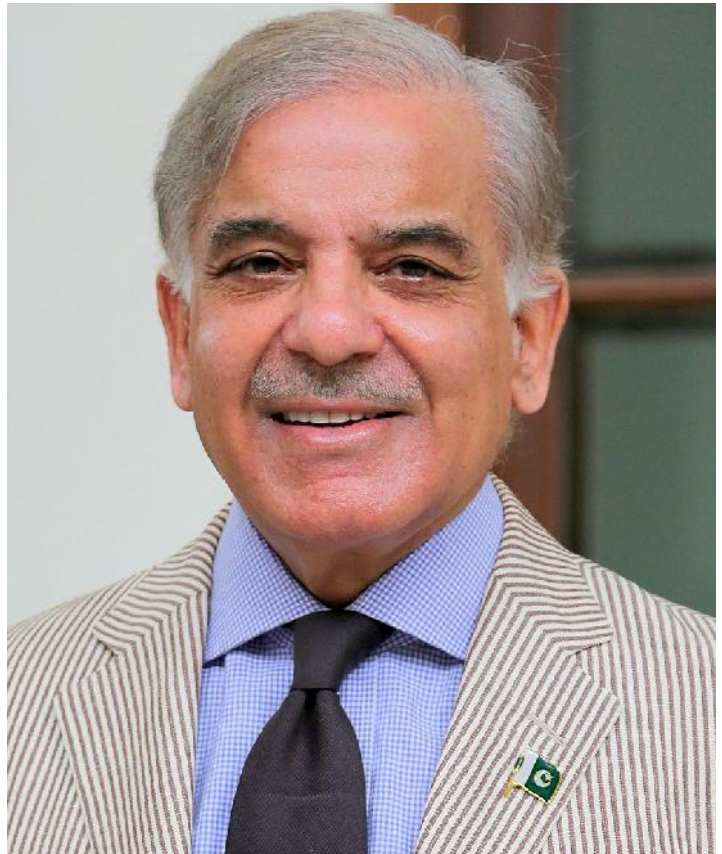
The Secretary General reiterated his felicitations to the prime minister on his recent election and assumption of office. He also highlighted the important role that Pakistan had always played in the OIC as a founding member.

During the meeting, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Ministers Miftah

Ismail, Nawabzada Shahzain Bugti, Marriyum Aurangzeb, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Ahsan Iqbal, Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Mohsin Dawar and Maulana Tahir Ashrafi also accompanied the prime minister.



Bahrain National Guard Commander calls PM to discuss bilateral ties



DF Report

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif received a telephone call from National Guard Commander of Bahrain General Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa Al Khalifa and discussed the bilateral relations.

The National Guard Commander of Bahrain extended his warm felicitations to Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on his assumption of office as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The prime minister thanked National Guard Commander for his gracious gesture. He underlined the

importance Pakistan attached to its relations with Bahrain and reaffirmed his government's commitment to forge deeper economic, trade and investment cooperation. Lauding the successful measures by Bahrain against the global pandemic, the Prime Minister thanked the Bahraini leadership for the measures taken by the Bahraini leadership to look after the Pakistani expatriates, especially during the pandemic. He also welcomed the project of King Hamad Nursing University and Associated Medical Sciences Hospital in Islamabad, which was a testament to the close brotherly

relationship between the two countries. The prime minister added that he looked forward to welcoming King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa to Pakistan, at an early date. Bahrain is home to a large Pakistani diaspora in the Gulf Region.

Pakistan and Bahrain enjoy close, cordial ties resting on the firm foundation of shared faith and values. The two countries closely collaborate bilaterally, as well as on regional and global issues of mutual interest. Pakistan and Bahrain celebrated 50 years of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2021.

Amir of Qatar, PM Shehbaz discuss bilateral relations



DF Report

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meeting with Ambassador of the State of Qatar Sheikh Saoud Abdulrahman Al-Thani and discussed matters of mutual interest.

The Ambassador conveyed the message of felicitations from the Qatari leadership on his election as Prime Minister of Pakistan. Recalling the long-standing and fraternal ties between the two countries, he reaffirmed Qatar's desire to further deepen and broaden bilateral relations with Pakistan.

The Prime Minister thanked the Qatari Ambassador for the messages of felicitations from the Qatari leadership. He underscored the importance Pakistan attached to its relationship with Qatar and reiterated his resolve to work towards further expansion of mutual cooperation in diverse fields.

In particular, the Prime Minister highlighted trade, investment, energy and manpower sectors in this regard. The Prime Minister appreciated Qatar's role in facilitation of the Afghan peace process and expressed the desire that both Pakistan and Qatar would

continue to work together for promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan and provision of humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people. Qatar is home to a large Pakistani diaspora in the Gulf Region.

Pakistan and Qatar enjoy close, cordial ties resting on the firm foundation of shared faith and values.

The two countries closely collaborate bilaterally, as well as on regional and global issues of mutual interest.



PM for exploring economic dimension of Pak-UAE ties

DF Report

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif emphasized his government's commitment to further advance the economic dimension of the relationship with the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The Prime Minister expressed these views in a meeting with UAE Ambassador Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi, who called on to felicitate him on assuming the office on April 19.

PM Shehbaz Sharif stressed focusing on enhanced trade, investment, energy, infrastructure, food security, and employment

generation between the two countries.

He affirmed that Pakistan and the UAE had always enjoyed special relations which were firmly rooted in shared history, common faith, and geographical proximity.

He underlined that these relations were further amplified by close people-to-people contacts.

The Prime Minister also acknowledged the important role of expatriate Pakistanis in the development of the UAE, who were serving as a strong bridge between the two countries.

He also conveyed his warm greetings to the UAE leadership and expressed his firm resolve to closely engage with them to further deepen

and broaden this vital partnership. Shehbaz Sharif expressed deep appreciation for the vision of the UAE leadership for the inspirational transformation of the country in the span of just 50 years.

Extending warm felicitations to Shehbaz Sharif on assuming the office of the prime minister, the envoy reaffirmed the UAE's desire to further strengthen bilateral relations with Pakistan.

Pakistan and the UAE enjoy close fraternal ties marked by decades of close collaboration. High-level interactions provide continuous momentum to the growth of bilateral cooperation.



Pakistan, Turkey's strategic cooperation touching new heights of friendship: PM

DF Report

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the multi-dimensional cooperation between Pakistan and Turkey in the areas of defence, foreign policy and public welfare was touching new heights of friendship for the benefit of the two peoples.

Addressing here at the launch of PNS Badr the third ship under the framework of Turkey's National Ship Project (MILGEM), the Prime Minister said the cooperation between Pakistan Navy and the Turkish defence companies would lead to further strengthening of relations between the two brotherly countries.

The ceremony held at the Karachi Shipyard and Engineering Works was attended by Turkish Defence Minister H E Hulusi Akar, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi and a large number of naval officers from Pakistan and Turkey.

In July 2018, the Pakistan Navy signed a contract for the acquisition of four MILGEM-class ships with Turkey's state-run defence firm ASFAT.

According to the plan, two corvettes are to be built in Turkey and the next two are to be built in Pakistan, which also involves technology

transfer. PM Sharif said the launch of PNS Badr would enhance the maritime activities at the Karachi Port and Port Qasim, thus leading to the development of financial and industrial progress.

He said the launch of the ship was a moment of pride for the entire Pakistani nation and the naval forces of the two countries and appreciated the efforts of the Naval Chief, his team and the Defence Minister.

He said the government of Pakistan was committed to expanding multifarious

Cooperation between Pakistan Navy and the Turkish defence companies would lead to further strengthening of relations between the two brotherly countries.

infrastructure to ensure economic connectivity in the country and emphasized that cooperation

with Turkey would yield positive results. He lauded Turkey for always being a great supporter of the sovereignty of Pakistan.

He said the ongoing China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was set to translate regional connectivity and expressed confidence that a trilateral arrangement with the inclusion of Turkey could prove beneficial for the people in the region.

The prime minister termed Turkey and Pakistan as 'one nation living in two countries' and emphasized that even before the creation of Pakistan, the Muslims of the sub-continent supported the cause of their Turkish brethren.

He recalled that then Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his spouse Emine Erdogan visited the flood-hit areas of Pakistan and the latter also donated a necklace for them.

Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi said the defence ties between Pakistan and Turkey were witnessing the development and hoped that the time would see further collaboration for the benefit of the two sides.

The message of Turkish President Erdogan was screened on the occasion where he assured Pakistan that Turkey would provide all



support needed to strengthen Pakistan's military infrastructure.

President Erdogan said the deliveries of the ships, which would be able to perform all kinds of military duties from air defence to submarine defence, would be made at six-month intervals starting from August 2023.

With an emphasis on the deep-rooted historical ties between Turkey and Pakistan, Erdogan said the project was one of the most concrete and recent examples of it, voicing hope for the project to be 'a harbinger of greater cooperation.'

He said Pakistan is the country with the most strategic location in South Asia. Throughout history, this region has been the apple of the world's eye with its ancient culture and wealth. Pakistan and its people have a special place for us.

Erdogan also emphasized the necessity of providing all means of support to strengthen the military infrastructure of Pakistan, whose security, stability and prosperity we consider equal to ours. The other vessel of the project, named Kaibar, is to be launched in September in Istanbul, he said.



According to Turkish news agency Anadolu, the MILGEM vessels are 99 meters (325 feet) long with a displacement capacity of 24,00 tons and can move at a speed of 29 nautical miles. The anti-submarine combat frigates can be hidden from the radar.

In October 2019, Erdogan, along with the then-

Chief of Pakistan Navy Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi, had cut the metal plate of the first MILGEM Ada class corvette during a ceremony in Istanbul.

Turkey is one of the 10 countries in the world which can build, design, and maintain warships using its national capabilities.





PM urges Japanese investors to benefit from Pakistan's business-friendly opportunities

DF Report

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif while underscoring his government's efforts for creating business-friendly opportunities, invited new Japanese companies to avail themselves of such opportunities and invest in Pakistan.

The Prime Minister, in a meeting with Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan H E Mitsuhiko Wada, assured that the government would extend all possible facilitation to Japanese investors.

Conveying Pakistan's firm resolve to elevate this relationship to new heights, the prime minister emphasized the importance of deepening bilateral cooperation, especially in the areas

of trade, development, education, IT, climate change, and infrastructure.

During the course of their conversation, views were exchanged on further strengthening the existing Pakistan-Japan bilateral relationship.

The Prime Minister recalled that the year 2022 was being observed as the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two nations.

He also appreciated that the special events being organized to commemorate this landmark occasion were a reflection of the special relationship that Pakistan enjoyed with Japan. The Prime Minister was deeply appreciative of JICA's ongoing programmes and meaningful contribution for supporting socio-economic

and development sectors in Pakistan.

Ambassador Wada recalled Japan's longstanding bilateral cooperation with Pakistan in diverse fields and expressed his government's commitment to working together for the achievement of shared goals and objectives. The Ambassador also conveyed Japan's appreciation for Pakistan's facilitation in the post-15 August 2021 evacuation of Japanese nationals from Afghanistan, following the takeover of the Taliban.

While underlining the need to maintain the momentum of high-level exchanges, the prime minister extended a cordial invitation to Prime Minister H E Fumio Kishida to undertake a visit to Pakistan, at an early date.



PNS Shamsheer visits Bahrain

DF Report

Pakistan Navy Ship Shamsheer visited Port Mina Salman, Bahrain during deployment on Regional Maritime Security Patrol (RMSP) as part of Flag Showing Mission.

The ship is patrolling in assigned areas and contributing towards international efforts to ensure maritime security in the region, said a Pakistan Navy media release here received.

Upon arrival at Port, the ship was warmly received by Naval and Air Attaché of Pakistan and Senior National representative of Pakistan, at HQ NAVCENT, Bahrain.

During the stay at port, the Commanding Officer PNS Shamsheer called on Commander Royal Bahrain Naval Forces, Commander Coast Guard Bahrain and Commander Combined Maritime Forces.

During the interactions, matters of mutual interest were discussed and further enhancements of bilateral ties in all spheres were reaffirmed. Commanding Officer of PN Ship conveyed well wishes of Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi for the officers and men of Bahrain Naval Forces.

During port visit, various professional exchange and orientation visits were arranged between PNS SHAMSHEER and Bahrain Defence Forces.

Pakistan Navy believes in promoting peace and stability in the region and is committed to maritime security and order at sea.

The visit by PNS Shamsheer is expected to further enhance existing diplomatic and defence ties between the two countries.



FM stresses upon broader, deeper Pak-US ties

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has stressed that the United States and Pakistan must move beyond the past events and engage in a far broader, deeper and more meaningful relationship.

He said the US and Pakistan must move beyond past tensions over Afghanistan and expressed the confidence that the two countries were now entering a new engagement.

Referring to his meetings with the top diplomats, including a discussion with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, the Foreign Minister called the meeting with Blinken very encouraging and very positive and productive.

We believe that Pakistan must continue to engage with the United States at all levels.

This meeting was indeed an important first step, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said in an interview with The Associated Press in New York, during his stay, where he had been attending meetings on the global food crisis at UN headquarters.

The Foreign Minister said his focus in talks with Blinken was on increasing trade, particularly in agriculture, information technology and energy.

He said he was looking forward to working with the US on an initiative to empower women, including women entrepreneurs.

About Afghanistan, the Foreign Minister said the world could not abandon the Afghan people and must immediately address the country's humanitarian crisis and a crumbling economy.

A total collapse of the Afghan economy would be a disaster for Afghans, Pakistan and the international community, the news wire quoted Bilawal as saying. The Foreign Minister shared his concerns that many Afghans would flee the country.

The Foreign Minister said Pakistan was also insisting the Taliban live up to their international commitments that the country not be used for terrorism, that girls and women be able to pursue education, and that they form an inclusive government.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said the more the humanitarian crisis was alleviated and the economy was saved from collapse, the more likely we are to succeed in our pursuit for women's rights and the more likely we are to succeed in our efforts against terrorism. Asked about former prime minister Imran Khan's anti-US rhetoric, Bilawal dismissed the ex-premier's accusation of American collusion, calling it a fanciful conspiracy theory based on a big lie to explain his removal.



I am particularly anti the politics of hate, division and polarization, the Foreign Minister said, adding 'If we consistently pursue the politics of 'you're with us or against us, whether that's on an international level or a domestic level, I don't believe it serves the interests of the people of Pakistan.

He said he believed Pakistanis understood their country needed to engage with the US and all countries, in order to become democratic and progress economically. During his interview, Bilawal also recalled the legacy of his late

mother and grandfather and called them towering figures on the world stage, adding that he felt the burden of history.

What motivates and drives me is the pursuit of their unfulfilled mission, he said.

I hope that we live up to the expectations of the people of Pakistan who have longed for true democracy and struggled for their economic, political and human rights.

These are the ideals that we hold dear and we work towards every day, he added.

FM meets Saudi, Austrian counterparts, GCC General Secy on WEF sidelines

Expresses resolve to deepen trade ties with friendly countries

DF Report

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that Pakistan had “immense business potential” despite the various challenges the country faced both on the global as well as domestic fronts. Addressing Pakistan’s business community, He said that Pakistan faced “existential threats” some of which were shared by the global community, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, while others were specific to the country’s domestic context. Of the latter, he particularly highlighted the “severe economic consequences” the country suffered subtly pointing to the former PTI government’s policies.

He also added that just like in Afghanistan, ultimately the solution for the Ukraine conflict will have to come through diplomacy as he encouraged the international community to engage in dialogue. Earlier, FM and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary General Dr Nayef Falah M Al-Hajraf agreed to explore further avenues to enhance bilateral trade and economic ties. Bilawal met the GCC Secretary General on the sidelines of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, where the status of Pakistan’s cooperation with GCC member states was reviewed. It was also agreed to strengthen institutional linkages, in line with the Joint Action Plan for Strategic Dialogue.

Recalling historical linkages, geographical proximity and cultural affinities between Pakistan and the GCC, FM underscored that Pakistan attached high importance to its fraternal relations with member states of the GCC, both bilaterally and in the context of the GCC. With regards to the Pakistan-GCC Free Trade Agreement (FTA), the two sides expressed determination to conclude the negotiations at the earliest. Pakistan and the GCC enjoy long-standing cordial relations. Pakistan’s relations with the Member States of the GCC are rooted firmly in shared faith, values and culture.

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and his Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud on Wednesday expressed the resolve to deepen mutual cooperation in all fields including economy, trade and investment as well as at multilateral fora. In a meeting held on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, the two foreign ministers reviewed various aspects of bilateral relations and exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest. The Foreign Minister paid tribute to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz and Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman for achieving new heights of progress and development of the FM Bilawal underlined that Pakistan and Saudi

Arabia had historic and deep-rooted fraternal ties that stood the test of time. He appreciated consistent support of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan and its steadfast solidarity for the Kashmir cause. Moreover, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari met his Austrian counterpart, Alexander Schallenberg on the sidelines of the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos.

He underscored that Pakistan valued its relations with Austria, both bilaterally as well as a key

member of the European Union. The two foreign ministers discussed the entire spectrum of Pakistan-Austria relations. They also exchanged views on the global and regional situation, a press release issued here by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto hoped that the two sides would work together for greater collaboration in various sectors including trade and investment, higher education, renewable energy, tourism, and science and technology.



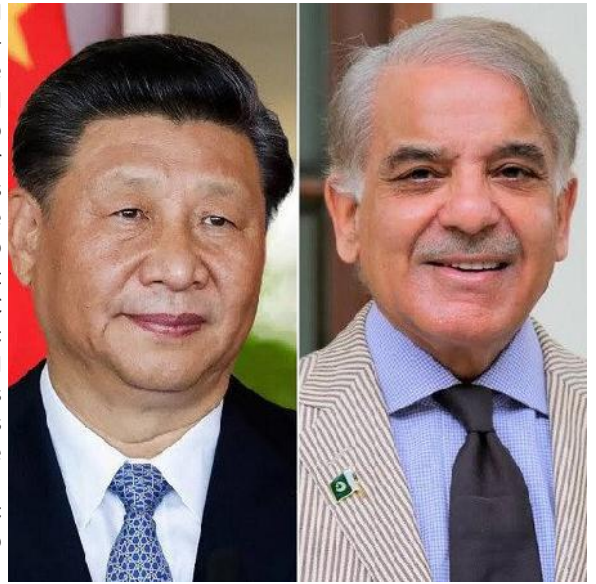
PM Shehbaz congratulates President Xi on 71st anniversary of establishment of Pakistan-China diplomatic relations

DF Report

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has congratulated Chinese President Xi Jinping, the governments and the peoples of the two countries on the 71st anniversary of the establishment of Pakistan-China diplomatic relations. In his message on the occasion, he said China and Pakistan are the names of two brothers. The Prime Minister said the leadership and peoples of the two countries have nurtured this evergreen tree of friendship over the past 71 years, Radio Pakistan reported.

The Prime Minister paid rich tributes to all the leaders of both the countries, who made efforts to transform this unmatched friendship into Cooperative Strategic Partnership and the Iron Brothers relationship. He said no untoward incident,

storm in global politics or jealousy could make any dent to this iron bond (Pak-China Relationship). He said our Chinese brothers and sisters were recently attacked outside Karachi University. We salute to these and all others who sacrificed their lives for Pak-China friendship, and express grief and sorrow with their families. The Prime Minister expressed commitment to bring the culprits of the Karachi incident to justice. Shehbaz Sharif said CPEC provides a strong foundation to economic cooperation, poverty alleviation and connectivity not only for the two countries but for other countries of the region as well. This project is a symbol and guarantee of bright future of the next generations. He expressed resolve to take this economic bond, cooperation and mutual trust of two iron brothers to new heights.



Pak, China FMs cut cake to mark 71st anniversary of diplomatic relations



DF Report

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari along with China's State Councilor and Foreign Minister H E Wang Yi on May 22 cut a cake to celebrate the 71 years of establishment of diplomatic ties between Pakistan and China. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto was on a two-day visit to China at the invitation of H E

Wang Yi. In a tweet, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian had congratulated Pakistan and China on the 71st anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations. In his message, Pakistan Ambassador to China, Moin ul Haque said, on 71st anniversary of Pak-China diplomatic ties, we reaffirm to further fortify our iron-clad friendship, strengthen

strategic communication, deepen ECO engagement and promote people to people exchanges, thus taking the relations to a high pedestal. On May 21, 1951, Pakistan and China established diplomatic ties. Pakistan was one of the first countries to recognize new China and the first Islamic country to enter into diplomatic relations with China.

FM Bilawal Bhutto holds talks with H E Wang Yi to push Pak-China relations to new heights



DF Report

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari talks with his Chinese counterpart H E Wang Yi in Guangzhou to push Pakistan-China relations to a new height and build a closer community of Pakistan-China shared future in the new era.

This was Bilawal Bhuttos maiden visit to China after he took office of Foreign Minister of Pakistan and it was also the first official interaction between high-level officials of the two countries after the establishment of the new Pakistani government.

Bilawal Bhutto jointly met the press after holding talks with State Councilor and Foreign Minister H E Wang Yi. China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic partners and friends who stand together through thick and thin. Close strategic communication is a fine tradition of both sides, according to a statement issued by Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs here.

The Foreign Ministers of the two countries held fruitful talks, which further consolidated the traditional friendship between China and Pakistan, further enhanced the political mutual trust between the two countries, and further strengthened the cooperation confidence between the two sides.

H E Wang Yi introduced the five important consensus reached by the two sides: First, they agreed that the friendship between China and Pakistan is everlasting, the relationship between the two countries is rock solid, and the solidarity and cooperation between the two sides has become an important factor of stability in the turbulent and changing world.

We will firmly support each other's core interests and major concerns, and continuously deepen strategic communication and practical cooperation. While working together to achieve their own development and revitalization, we will accelerate the building of a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future.

Second, they agreed that any terrorist attack against Chinese citizens in Pakistan is unacceptable, any despicable attempt to undermine China-Pakistan friendship will not succeed, and incidents such as the terrorist attack on the Confucius Institute in Karachi must never be repeated.

The Chinese side supports the Pakistani side to speed up the detection of cases, identify the perpetrators and punish them severely, and will continue to provide support and assistance to the Pakistani side in its fight against terrorism.

The Pakistani side reiterated that it will further upgrade security measures and make every effort to ensure the safety of all Chinese personnel, projects and institutions in Pakistan. The two sides agreed to issue an enhanced version for safeguarding the safety of Chinese personnel, institutions and projects in Pakistan, and will formulate specific plans for implementation as soon as possible.

The two sides called on regional countries and the international community to form a joint effort to combat all forms of terrorism.

Third, they agreed that China-Pakistan all-round cooperation has yielded fruitful results and broad space. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has effectively improved Pakistan's infrastructure level and promoted Pakistan's economic and social development.

The two sides will deeply align their respective development strategies, further unleash the potential of economic cooperation, and advance the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in a safe, smooth and high-quality manner. The two sides agreed to further deepen cooperation in the fields of energy, industry, agriculture, information technology and transportation infrastructure, to accelerate the process of Pakistan's industrialization, and at the same time to enhance the momentum and resilience of Pakistan's economic development.

China supports Pakistan in maintaining its

own economic and financial stability, making good use of the policy dividends of the free trade agreement between the two countries, and expanding the export of Pakistan's advantageous products to China, so as to better benefit the people of the two countries, especially the people of Pakistan. The two sides agreed to overcome the impact of the epidemic and take effective measures to facilitate necessary exchanges and personnel exchanges between the two countries. Fourth, it is agreed that the world has entered a period of turbulence and change, and the international community's voice for peace and development has become stronger. The global development initiatives and global security initiatives proposed by China conform to the trend of the times, and contribute Chinese wisdom and solutions to the outstanding problems facing mankind today.

The Chinese side highly appreciates the Pakistani side for taking the lead in supporting global development initiatives and global security initiatives, and is willing to work with other countries in the world to focus on the development agenda, address security challenges, implement the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and join hands to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

Fifth, they agreed that the sound situation of peace, stability and cooperative development in Asia is the result of the joint efforts of countries in the region, and should be cherished. We call on all parties to adhere to mutual respect, treat each other as equals, and achieve win-win cooperation, and oppose the Cold War mentality, zero-sum game, and camp confrontation. It is necessary to consolidate and enhance an open and inclusive regional cooperation framework, insist on resolving hotspot issues through dialogue and consultation, and jointly safeguard regional peace and development.



Pakistan values its relationship with US: PM

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif underscored that Pakistan valued its long-standing relationship with the United States and wanted to further deepen bilateral cooperation based on mutual respect, trust, and equality.

He highlighted that constructive engagement between the two countries could help promote peace, security and development in the region. The Prime Minister was talking to United States House of Representatives Ilhan Omar who called on him. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest including Pakistan-U.S. bilateral relations as well as regional situation were discussed.

Maintaining that the US was Pakistan's largest trading partner, the Prime Minister emphasized the need to further enhance cooperation between the two countries especially in the trade and investment fields.

He lauded the efforts of Pakistani Diaspora in reinforcing the Pakistan-US ties and added that Pakistan deeply valued their contribution to national development and growth. The Prime Minister highlighted the serious human rights situation in IIOJK and stressed the importance of peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, enabling the region to realize its economic potential and promote social

progress.

He emphasized that a peaceful and stable South Asian region can focus on its growth and development. The Prime Minister emphasized that concerted efforts, at the global level, were needed to deal with the scourge of Islamophobia. Congresswoman Ilhan Omar thanked the Prime Minister and hoped that her visit to Pakistan would help strengthen ties between Pakistan and the US Congress.

Appreciating her courage of convictions and her

political struggle, the Prime Minister warmly welcomed her on her first-ever visit to Pakistan.

The Prime Minister hoped that it would lead to deepen people-to-people ties and strengthen exchanges between the Parliament of Pakistan and the US Congress. Congresswoman Ilhan Omar is visiting Pakistan from 20-24 April. Apart from having meetings with leadership in Islamabad, she will visit Lahore and Azad Jammu and Kashmir to have greater understanding of Pakistan's cultural, social, political, and economic potential.





President visits Chinese Embassy Expresses condolence over Karachi's tragic incident

DF Report

In order to express solidarity with the people and the Government of China, President Dr Arif Alvi visited the Embassy of China and offered his heartfelt condolences over the loss of precious lives of Chinese nationals in terrorist attack that took place in Karachi.

Talking to the Charge d' Affaires H E Pang Chunxue and officers of the Chinese Embassy, the President said that the entire Pakistani nation was in deep pain and shock over the unfortunate incident and shared the grief of Chinese brothers and sisters, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release. The President reiterated the resolve that Pakistan would leave no stone unturned to ensure the safety of Chinese nationals and bring to justice the elements involved in this

heinous incident. Condemning the incident, the President said that some hostile countries were behind it which wanted to harm Pak-China friendship and China Pakistan Economic Corridor project but they would not succeed in their designs as both countries enjoyed deep friendship and were strongly committed to further strengthen the all-weather friendship.

He asked the Charge d' Affaires to convey his heartfelt condolences to the Chinese people, Communist Party and President Xi Jinping. The Charge d' Affaires thanked the President for visiting the Embassy and expressing solidarity with the people and the Government of China. She said that both countries had shared future and had a long history of friendship and close cooperation. She condemned the attack and hoped that the culprits behind this incident would be apprehended and punished.

Later, the President wrote remarks in the visitor's book of the Embassy. Talking to media, the President said that friendship between the two countries was enshrined in the brotherly relations of the citizens of Pakistan and China. He opined that losing the three Chinese brothers in Karachi attack was like losing some relatives in Pakistan. The President stressed upon the need to destroy the nefarious terrorist designs that wanted to discourage China from helping Pakistan and expansion of Belt Road Initiative (BRI).

Pakistan had been very successful to defeat such designs but Karachi terrorist attack took place which was very painful, he said and assured that the culprits involved in attack would be brought to justice, besides, improving safety of the Chinese nationals.



PM, MBS agree to further strengthen bilateral economic, trade ties

Pakistani delegation performs Umrah, pray for nation, Ummah

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Crown Prince H H Muhammad bin Salman discussed to further strengthen the bilateral economic, investment and trade ties.

During a meeting at the Royal Palace, they also discussed mutual interest, global and regional issues. On the occasion, the Prime Minister was accompanied by the members of his delegation including federal ministers.

Earlier, upon his arrival at the Palace, the Prime Minister was warmly welcomed by the Crown Prince. He was given a guard of honour. The Prime Minister was undertaking his three-day official visit to Saudi Arabia on the invitation of the Saudi Crown Prince. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia H H Mohammad Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud agreed to work together to further augment and diversify





their bilateral ties in all spheres, in particular trade, investment and employment generation opportunities.

Prince Mohammad Bin Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud warmly congratulated Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on his election as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The Prime Minister thanked the Crown Prince for the felicitations and expressed his resolve to work closely with the Kingdom to enhance and further strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.

While recalling the fraternal and historic bonds between the two countries that had been the hallmark of their strategic relationship over the past seven decades, the Prime Minister reaffirmed his government's and his own commitment to further advance these relations to new heights. Shehbaz Sharif also thanked Saudi Arabia for its historic and continued support and cooperation, both bilaterally as well as at international forums, while also assuring the Crown Prince that Pakistan would stand by the Kingdom at all times.

During the course of their warmest and friendly conversation, the prime minister paid tributes to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques H H King Salman bin Abdulaziz and Crown Prince H H Mohammad Bin Salman for achieving remarkable progress and development of the Kingdom, under their visionary leadership. The Saudi Crown Prince extended his cordial invitation to the prime minister to pay an official visit to the Kingdom, at an early date.

Moreover, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif along with his delegation performed Umrah.

The Prime Minister performed 'Saey' between

Safa and Marwa and afterward prayed for the security, development and prosperity of the nation and the Muslim Umma, PM Office

Media Wing said in a press release. Doors of the Khana-e-Kaba were also opened for the Prime Minister and his delegation.



Bilawal becomes Pakistan's youngest FM



By Mian Fazal Elahi

Following in the footsteps of his grandfather Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on took oath as the Foreign Minister, formally joining the federal cabinet of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

President Dr Arif Alvi administered the oath to the PPP Chairman at the presidency. On the occasion, the venue echoed with slogans of "Jiye Bhutto" as soon as Bilawal was sworn in as Pakistan's youngest foreign minister. PM Sharif, PPP Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari and Sanam Bhutto, the sister of slain former prime minister Benazir Bhutto, were also present at the swearing-in ceremony.

The PPP Chief assumed charge of the first public office of his political career immediately after being sworn in, and took a briefing on the country's foreign affairs. He also called on Prime Minister Sharif along with his father, former president Zardari, and expressed his gratitude for including him in the cabinet.

Thirty-three-year-old Bilawal was first elected to the National Assembly in 2018. This is the first time he will be serving as a member of a federal cabinet. Bilawal is the 12th Foreign Minister of the country.

Three days after his mother's assassination in

December 2007, he had taken over the reins of the PPP. Despite being suddenly pushed to the top political echelons, he initially kept a low profile, focusing instead on finishing his history degree at Oxford University. He returned to Pakistan in 2010, and has since then taken on an increasingly active role as the PPP chairman.

Bilawal's grandfather, former premier and PPP founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, had served as the foreign minister from 1963 to 1966.

ZAB had also served as president of the country from 1971 to 1973 and as prime minister from 1973 to 1977.



PM condoles demise of UAE President H H Sheikh Khalifa Al-Nahyan

DF Report

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visited the United Arab Emirates and offered condolences on the demise of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, who passed away on May 13, 2022.

During his meeting with the newly-elected President of the UAE Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, the Prime Minister expressed deepest condolences on behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan. The members of the Royal family were also present during the meeting.

The Prime Minister conveyed that the Pakistani nation fully shared the grief and sorrow of their Emirati brethren and stood by them in this difficult time.

He offered prayers for His Highness' departed soul. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated that Pakistan had lost a sincere friend and trusted partner in the passing away of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa. He lauded his invaluable contributions in strengthening bilateral ties between the two countries, for which he will always be remembered by the people of Pakistan. The Prime Minister paid tributes to Khalifa bin Zayed's dynamic leadership under which the UAE transformed into a major economic powerhouse. He affirmed that monumental legacy of His Highness would continue to inspire the generations of Emiratis.

The Prime Minister also conveyed best wishes to His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan upon assuming his responsibilities as the new President of the UAE. He expressed the confidence that the newly-elected President would take the UAE to new heights of development and progress in the years to come. His Highness Sheikh Mohamed conveyed sincere gratitude to the prime minister and the leadership and people of Pakistan for their solidarity during the hour of grief.

The two leaders affirmed their shared commitment to further deepen the Pakistan-UAE relationship in all dimensions. Pakistan and the UAE enjoy strong fraternal ties, rooted deep in common faith and shared history and cultural values. Pakistan is committed to further strengthening and expanding existing strong bilateral cooperation with the UAE, in particular the trade, economic and investment dimensions.





By Erlan Karim,
The State Secretary of Kazakhstan

Navigating constitutional amendments

President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signed a decree on holding on 5 June a national referendum on the draft amendments and additions to the country's Constitution. The upcoming constitutional reform is an important step in the implementation of the President's programme of political reforms outlined in his state-of-the-nation address in March.

The draft amendments and additions to the Constitution were developed by leading legal and constitutional scholars and received a positive assessment from the Constitutional Council. The draft constitutional amendments are based on the requests from citizens and are implemented in the interests of the entire society.

All amendments and additions to the Constitution are interrelated and form part of a single goal – to create a legal framework for:

1. The final transition from a super-presidential model to a presidential republic;
2. Redistribution of a number of powers;
3. Strengthening the role and status of Parliament;
4. Increasing the participation of the people in the country's governance; and
5. Strengthening mechanisms for protecting citizens' rights.

The draft Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Amendments and Additions to the Constitution

of the Republic of Kazakhstan" was officially published in the state's print media on May 6.

For an unqualified person, it may be very difficult to navigate through the numerous amendments, to see the difference between the old and new versions of the Constitution. Therefore, to make it easy to become acquainted with these amendments, they are divided into large blocks of amendments and additions, indicating specific points and articles of the Constitution.

The final transition from a super-presidential model to a presidential republic

The constitutional reform will create an optimal balance of relations between the branches of government, ensure maximum equidistance of the institution of the presidency.

Article 43 of the Constitution is supplemented by paragraph 3, which stipulates that the President of the Republic should not be a member of a political party while in office. Based on the same logic, this ban is extended to the chairpersons and judges of the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court and other courts, the chairpersons and members of the Central Election Commission, the Supreme Audit Chamber of the Republic (new version of paragraph 2 of Article 23 of the Constitution).

This will result in increased political competition, creation of equal conditions for the development of all political parties, independence and impartiality in decision-making.

The Head of State should act as a steadfast guarantor of equal opportunities for all citizens.

Kazakhstan's Constitutional Amendments to Expand People's Participation in State Governance

Therefore, Article 43 of the Constitution is supplemented by paragraph 4, according to which close relatives of the President are not permitted to hold positions of political civil servants and heads of quasi-public sector companies.

At the suggestion of the members of the Working Group, the provisions on the right of the First President to be elected more than twice in a row (a new version of Article 42 (5) of the Constitution) and Article 46 (4) of the Constitution, which stated that the status and powers of the First President are determined by the Constitution and constitutional law, are excluded.

Article 91 of the Constitution excludes the provision on the status of the First President as the Founder of independent Kazakhstan (new version of paragraph 2 of Article 91 of the Constitution).

The outcome of the constitutional reform should be the expansion of the powers of local government and self-government, implemented by local representative and executive bodies responsible for the state of affairs in the relevant territory.

The draft envisages the exclusion of the President's powers to terminate or suspend in whole or in part the acts of governors of regions, cities of national significance and the capital (a new version of subparagraph 3 of Article 44 of the Constitution).

It also envisages the exclusion of the President's power to dismiss akims (mayors) of districts, cities, and rural districts (new version of Article

87, paragraph 4, of the Constitution).

The procedure for obtaining powers by governors of regions, cities of national significance and the capital is significantly changing.

According to the new wording of paragraph 4 of Article 87 of the Constitution, they will now be appointed by the President with the consent of deputies of maslikhats (local representative bodies) located in the territory of the region, or deputies of maslikhats of cities of national significance and the capital, respectively. At the same time, the Head of State will offer at least two candidates to be voted on. The candidate who receives the most votes from the deputies who took part in the voting is considered to have received consent.

As such, the powers of the President in relation to local authorities are reduced and concentrated on regional governors, while the role of maslikhats is significantly strengthened.

Redistribution of a number of powers

The presidential quota in the Senate is to be reduced from 15 to 10 deputies. Moreover, five of them will be proposed by the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan (a new version of paragraph 2 of Article 50 Constitution).

The powers of the Senate are supplemented by the right to approve candidates submitted by the President of the Republic for the posts of Chairpersons of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Judicial Council (new versions of subparagraph 4 of Article 44, subparagraph 2 of Article 55, paragraph 4 of Article 82 of the Constitution).

Overall, the institution of constitutional control is being modernised with the establishment of the Constitutional Court (instead of the current Constitutional Council).

The Constitutional Court will consist of 11 judges (the current Constitutional Council consists of 7 members). Its composition is formed as follows: 6 judges are appointed by the Parliament (3 judges each by the Mazhilis and the Senate), 4 judges are appointed by the President. The Chairperson of the

The constitutional reform will create an optimal balance of relations between the branches of government, ensure maximum equidistance of the institution of the presidency.

Constitutional Court, as mentioned above, is appointed by the President with the consent of the Senate (new version of sub-paragraph 1) of

Article 57, sub-paragraph 7) of paragraph 3 of Article 58, Article 71 of the Constitution).

The Accounts Committee for Control over the execution of the national budget is transformed into the Supreme Audit Chamber, the chairperson of which will report to the deputies of the Mazhilis twice a year (new version of subparagraph 2 of Article 53, new subparagraph 3-1) of paragraph 1 of Article 56 of the Constitution).

The institute of the “Secretary of State” will be transformed into the institute of the “State Counsellor”, which will be responsible for forming proposals and recommendations to the Head of State (a new version of subparagraph 19 of Article 44 of the Constitution).

Strengthening the role and status of the Parliament

As a result of the constitutional reform, the legislative branch of government will undergo a significant reformatting. As a result, the role and status of the Parliament and its chambers will significantly increase.

As already mentioned, the Senate will coordinate the appointment by the President of the chairpersons of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Judicial Council.

In addition, the President will appoint not 15, but 10 deputies of the Senate, 5 of them will be suggested by the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan (new version of paragraph 2 of Article 50 Constitution).

At the same time, the quota of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan is transferred from the



Mazhilis to the Senate and reduced from 9 to 5 deputies. Accordingly, the total number of deputy mandates in the Mazhilis will be reduced from 107 to 98 (new version of paragraph 3 of Article 50 of the Constitution).

Deputies of the Mazhilis will be elected by a mixed electoral system: by a system of proportional representation in the territory of a single nationwide constituency, as well as in single-mandate territorial constituencies (new version of paragraph 3 of Article 50 Constitution).

The introduction of a mixed electoral system will make it possible to fully take into account the rights of all citizens and better reflect the interests of voters.

The right of voters to revoke the mandate of deputies of the Mazhilis elected in a single-mandate territorial constituency is introduced (a new version of paragraph 5 of Article 52 of the Constitution). As a result, democratic traditions will be significantly strengthened, and a new political culture based on mutual responsibility and trust between deputies and voters will take root.

The competence of the Mazhilis is being expanded, and parliamentary control over the quality of execution of the state budget is being strengthened.

For this purpose, as already mentioned, the Accounts Committee for Monitoring the execution of the state budget is transformed into the Supreme Audit Chamber, the chairperson of which must report twice a year to the deputies of the Mazhilis (new version of subparagraph 2) of Article 53, new subparagraph 3-1) of paragraph 1 of Article 56 of the Constitution). This will further strengthen the status of the Mazhilis and the Parliament as a whole.

In order to strengthen the mechanism of checks and balances in the political system and optimise the legislative procedure, it is proposed that the Mazhilis pass laws (previously considered and approved bills), while the Senate approves or does not approve laws (previously the Senate passed laws) (new version of paragraphs 4 and 5 of Article 61 and paragraph 5 of Article 62 of the Constitution).

Constitutional laws will be adopted by the Parliament at a joint session of the Chambers in at least two readings (new version of Article 53 of the Constitution).

A special mechanism for prompt adoption of laws in exceptional cases is being introduced.

Draft laws introduced as a legislative initiative of the Government in order to promptly respond to conditions that pose a threat to the life and health of the population, the constitutional order, the protection of public order, and the economic security of the country are subject to

consideration by the Parliament immediately at a joint session of its chambers.

For the period of consideration of these bills, the Government has the right to adopt temporary normative legal acts that have the force of law (supplement to paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 61 of the Constitution).

This mechanism is designed for special circumstances that require immediate joint coordinated work of the branches of government to overcome particularly dangerous threats.

It is not intended for everyday use and is ensured by mutual responsibility of members of Parliament and members of the Government.

Increasing people's participation in the country's governance

The Constitution definitively and unambiguously establishes the norm that the land and its subsoil, water, flora and fauna, and

The draft amendments and additions to the Constitution were developed by leading legal and constitutional scholars and received a positive assessment from the Constitutional Council. The draft constitutional amendments are based on the requests from citizens and are implemented in the interests of the entire society.

other natural resources belong to the people. The State exercises the right of ownership on behalf of the people (new version of article 1, paragraph 2 Constitution).

As already mentioned, it is proposed to elect deputies of the Mazhilis using a mixed electoral system: according to the system of proportional representation in the territory of a single nationwide constituency, as well as in single-

mandate territorial constituencies (new version of paragraph 3 of Article 50 and paragraph 1 of Article 51 Constitution).

It is also going to be possible to revoke the mandate of deputies of the Mazhilis elected in a single-mandate territorial constituency (new version of paragraph 5 of Article 52 of the Constitution).

Governors of regions, cities of national significance and the capital will be appointed by the President on an alternative basis (at least two candidates) with the consent of all deputies of maslikhats of the region/city (new version of paragraph 4 of Article 87 of the Constitution).

Thus, the guarantees of local public administration and self-government, implemented by local representative and executive bodies responsible for the state of affairs in the relevant territory, are strengthened.

Strengthening the mechanisms for protecting the rights of citizens

As already mentioned, the Constitutional Council is being transformed into the Constitutional Court, which, at the request of citizens will consider the compliance with the Constitution of normative legal acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan that directly affect their rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution (new version of Articles 71-74 of the Constitution).

The decision to abolish the death penalty at the constitutional level is finally fixed (new version of paragraph 2 of Article 15 of the Constitution).

The competence, organisation and procedure for the activities of the Prosecutor's Office will be determined by the constitutional law (new version of paragraph 4 of Article 83 of the Constitution).

This should strengthen the system of human rights activities and highest supervision of compliance with the rule of law in the Republic of Kazakhstan on behalf of the State within the limits and forms established by law.

Provisions of the new article 83-1 of the Constitution grant immunity to the Ombudsperson for Human Rights and guarantees independence and non-accountability to any other state bodies and officials when exercising their powers to promote the restoration of violated human and civil rights and freedoms.

To achieve this, they will have the right to appeal to the Constitutional Court.

The legal status and organisation of the activities of the Ombudsperson for Human Rights will be determined by the constitutional law.

Xi's Global Security Initiative and Pakistan

By Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan

NOW Asia & economic NATO has become a hot debate in many regional capitals. It seems that the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict has alarmed many countries which consider that Taiwan would be the next point of conflict between the US and China.

That is why NATO's heavy presence has been on the increase for the last six months in the Indo-Pacific Region (IPR). Moreover, the first step of economic NATO has been initiated during the recently concluded visit of the US President Joe Biden to Japan by launching a new the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF).

The sole aim of this IPEF is to contain China because it does not have spirits of "economic integration" and "inclusiveness" because regional economic cooperation initiatives should be open and inclusive, instead of discriminatory and exclusive.

12 nations joining the IPEF include Australia, India, Japan and South Korea, while China, the second largest economy in the world, is currently not on the list. Besides having a so-called collaborative vision of economic cooperation, the IPEF has not detailed any substantial benefits that it can provide to its signatories yet.

Thus all efforts are being carried out at all corners to contain China. Furthermore, the US increases its influence in IPR with the QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue) and AUKUS (a trilateral security pact between Australia, the UK and the US) under the Indo-Pacific Strategic Framework.

Despite the Chinese government's warnings, NATO is constantly increasing its military presence in the backwards of China. In this connection, the US arms sales and military training to Taiwan and many other regional countries and military strategic alliances and partnerships with Japan and South Korea all indicate that the US and its allies are on the mission of containing China through force and economic barricade.

To counter these emerging socio-economic, geopolitical and geostrategic anti-China trends in the region and beyond, Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi has floated the idea of "BRICS Plus" which would further promote humanity's common values of peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom among the developing countries through unrelenting efforts to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

BRICS Plus vividly reflects true spirits of "multilateralism" and "multiculturalism"

which consequently guarantees the survival of emerging markets and developing countries.

It would follow principles of the United Nations and oppose all tactics of coercion against developing countries. It would also global security enhance governance and safeguard world peace and tranquillity. According to the Chinese Foreign Minister, it would pursue sustainable development goals and implement the mission of global governance.

In this regard, he urged the developing countries to work together to improve global governance and strive for greater space for development. He rightly suggested that true spirits of solidarity and mutual assistance, South-South cooperation should be pursued and implemented on a larger scale, in broader areas and at deeper levels, so as to enhance the power of international discourse, agenda-setting and rule-making, and promote the development of global governance system in a more just and reasonable direction.

Thus the "BRICS Plus" cooperation, as a platform for emerging markets and developing countries, is built for cooperation and development. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi welcomed more countries to join it in promoting democracy in international relations, making the world economy more inclusive and rationalizing global governance, so as to jointly create a bright and better future.

The BRICS comprises Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa accounting for nearly 42 percent of the world population, 27 percent of land surface and 32 percent of global GDP (PPP) and has always remained committed to multilateral cooperation and a multipolar world order. Chinese President Xi Jinping, while addressing the opening session of the meeting, urged the BRICS countries to reject the Cold War mentality and shun confrontation and work together to build a global community of security for all. This was clearly hinted at the geopolitics of polarization pursued by the US and its Western allies wherein the world is divided in the simplistic, yet irrational, binary of allies and adversaries similar to the times of the Cold War.

Xi noted that BRICS could play a constructive role in dealing with these challenges. He was of the opinion and constructive force in the international positive, inspiring that as a community, the BRICS countries should be brave enough to tackle all hurdles to promote peace and development, uphold fairness and justice and advocate democracy and freedom in the world. Good news is that the BRICS is now preparing for the expansion of BRICS to include other large emerging markets as members.

The BRICS Foreign Ministers' joint statement revealed that discussions on the expansion process are already ongoing and "the guiding principles, standards, criteria and procedures" for new members will be formulated through consultation and consensus among the present members. It seems that at least four countries that are part of the Group of 20 (G20) largest economies of the world, including Argentina, Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey along with Bangladesh have expressed strong interest in full membership of the BRICS, while Egypt, Iran, Nigeria, Sudan, Syria and most recently Pakistan have also expressed a desire in joining BRICS.

The five current BRICS countries are G-20 members as well. Thus forces of multilateralism and multiculturalism are on the rise to defeat the forces of darkness and destruction. A BRICS expansion could multiply the global influence of the bloc while also consolidating its principle of multilateralism through greater representation of developing countries. Hopefully, an expanded BRICS will have the potential to become a pivot for global growth, security and peace.

On the other hand, most recently the Chinese President Xi Jinping's proposed Global Security Initiative (GSI) which aimed at creating an Asian security framework that replaces confrontation, alliance and a zero-sum approach with dialogue, partnership and win-win propositions. So it is a value addition in the regional security systems which will be a balancing act in the days to come. It is a holistic and comprehensive new security system which cares about security, economy, sovereignty, dignity and last but not least, humanity. To conclude, Xi's GSI is against the Western theory of geopolitical security rather is a giant step towards Asian Security Architecture (ASA).

It pledges "six commitments", comprising of the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security; respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries; abiding by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter; taking the legitimate security concerns of all countries seriously; peacefully resolving differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation; and staying committed to maintaining security in both traditional and non-traditional domains.

World is changing and changing rapidly thus Chinese BRICS Plus and GSI would be a catalyst for sustainable development and an equitable security system in the world. The policy makers of Pakistan should support both.

—The writer is Director, the Centre for South Asia & International Studies Islamabad & regional expert, China, CPEC & BRI.

Azerbaijan's envoy keen to strengthen economic ties with Pakistan

Invites KP businessmen to make investments in potential sectors in Azerbaijan



By Mian Fazal Elahi

Ambassador of Azerbaijan in Pakistan H E Khazar Farhadove stressed the need for further strengthening mutual trade and economic cooperation with Pakistan.

He invited the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa businessmen to make investments in potential sectors in Azerbaijan. He was addressing a meeting chaired by Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Hasnain Khurshid Ahmad here at the chamber's house on Tuesday.

SCCI Senior Vice President Imran Khan Mohmand, Executive members Muhammad Aurangzeb, Pervez Khattak, Tameotah Khalilov and Shoaib Khan from Azerbaijan embassy in Pakistan, importers, exporters, and traders were present during the meeting in a large number. Hasnain Khurshid while speaking on the occasion emphasized the need for further enhancement of bilateral trade and economic

relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan.

He emphasized it was imperative that joint initiatives and ventures should be launched to give further boost to the present trade volume between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. The SCCI president viewed that vast opportunities were available for foreign investors to make investment in potential sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, like oil, gas, mine, minerals, hydel power generation, furniture, handicrafts, precious and semi-precious stone, etc.

KP is a safe and attractive province for investment and business, all the local and international investors can invest here without fear, says Khurshid. Therefore, the SCCI chief invited the Azari investors to make investment in all those afore-mentioned potential sectors in KP.

KP is gate-way to Afghanistan onward to the Central Asian Republic, so the region has great significance and role toward promotion of regional trade, said Khurshid.

He stressed the need of taking pragmatic steps for promotion of regional trade. Khazar Farhadove expressed that his country is enjoying cordial relations with Pakistan. He said Azerbaijan was giving much important to enhance mutual economic and trade cooperation with Pakistan.

The diplomat informed that a number of working groups have been formed between Azerbaijan and Pakistan, which are working efficiently to remove hurdles and problems, which were being faced by the business community of the two countries.

He said his country is a lucrative destination for foreign investors and invited the KP potential investors to make investments in important sectors in Azerbaijan.

Earlier, in the meeting, the participants pointed out a number of problems and issues that were hampering mutual trade between Pakistan and Azerbaijan and gave a number of suggestions for their amicable resolution.

The Kashmir files: Myth or reality

By Dr Ghulam Nabi Fai

"Terrorism-related charges levelled against me are concocted, fabricated and politically motivated" and that "If seeking Azadi (Freedom) is a crime, then I am ready to accept this crime and its consequences," Yasin Malik said during the trial, reported by Associated Press.

I believe that the loss of a homeland is more than the loss of real estate. A homeland cannot be recreated in a refugee camp, or in a new village or in a city slum.

A homeland is a compendium of experiences and emotions, a wealth of traditions and memories.

When the occupation forces trample upon a homeland, it denies the rights of the dispossessed, trashing their religious values and destroying their sacred books and libraries.

An occupation is a spiritual and intellectual rape where we feel molested and enslaved in an ever-increasing agonizing way.

The foreign occupation has destroyed the very fabric of Kashmiri culture. It has also shattered the communal harmony and the pluralistic nature of the Vale of Kashmir.

The occupation has dispossessed the people from their culture which is distinctly unique and different from Indian culture. The resistance in Kashmir is against alien occupation and is not communal. It cannot be communal and should not be.

The compulsions of Kashmir's history and the demands of its future alike forbid religious conflict or sectarian strife. Kashmiri culture was nurtured over the course of centuries where various religious and ethnic groups lived in complete harmony.

Even after the annexation of the State of Jammu & Kashmir by India, this spirit continued to thrive, and Muslims and Hindus (Pandits) lived in amity in the Valley of Kashmir. It is a fact that the BJP/RSS-led government has tried to weave a smokescreen with some unfounded myths, like, 'The Kashmir Files', which seek to discredit the genuine struggle of the people of Kashmir for right to self-determination.

But these plays will never be able to cover up the reality and sufferings of people in Jammu & Kashmir. India has particularly failingly tried to equate Kashmiri people with fundamentalism.

I want to debunk this myth created by the BJP/RSS-led Modi Administration that Kashmir is an issue of fundamentalism and communalism. The term fundamentalism is quite inapplicable to Kashmiri society. A hallmark of Kashmir has been its long tradition of tolerance, amity, goodwill and friendship

across religious and cultural boundaries.

It has a long tradition of moderation and non-violence. Its culture does not generate extremism or fundamentalism.

Its five religious groups Buddhists, Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims and a tiny minority of Christians – have for centuries flourished in harmony and mutual bond: no religious ghettos; no religious apartheid; no economic or sharp cultural divides.

All religious persuasions rejoiced at each other's holidays and times of joy, attended social gatherings together, lived as neighbours in harmony and treasured their mutual trust.

The various faiths of Kashmir eschew fanatical or extremist dogmas that distort and debauch their doctrinal origins.

Tolerance and mutual respect are their watchwords. For example, Kashmiri Sikhs feature no antagonism towards other religions.

Indeed, their trust in Muslims is so strong that they have refused bribes from the Indian army to blame Muslims for the killing of 36 Sikhs at Chittisinghpura, Kashmir on March 20, 2000, during President Bill Clinton's visit to New Delhi that had been covertly organized by the Indian military itself.

The Valley of Kashmir has remained the symbol of communal harmony for centuries. Can anyone deny the fact – of no small significance – that while the subcontinent under British rule was the scene of recurrent murderous strife, communal riots were unheard of in Kashmir?

That unquestionable fact brings out the real character of Kashmir's heritage. A person no less important than Mahatma Gandhi has eloquently elucidated those sentiments in 1947, "While the rest of the country burns in communal fire, I see a shining "Ray of Hope" in Kashmir only." The sad part of 'The Kashmir Files' is the depiction of Yasin Malik as a vicious and evil person.

Metro Saga reported on March 14, 2022, that after watching, 'The Kashmir Files film', netizens started trending "The Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chief Yasin Malik, is alleged to have been collecting funds through various illegal means for funding separatist and terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The question arises whether Yasin Malik is a terrorist or not? The answer to this complicated question was given by one of the eminent journalists of India rather South Asia and a seasoned diplomat, Ambassador Kuldeep Nayyar, who wrote in Rediff.

com on August 7, 1999, "The first militant, Yasin



Malik, who raised his gun at a public meeting in the heart of Srinagar, has turned non-violent and vegetarian.

Now he is a follower of Mahatma Gandhi. " Bharat Bhushan, a seasoned Indian journalist wrote in 'The Telegraph' on 04 February 2007, "The President of Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), one of the first to wield the gun in Kashmir, is today training youngsters in non-violent politics.

He uses a curious mixture of religion — Sufism — and non-violence in an attempt to build a constituency for peace in Jammu and Kashmir."

Let me mention a report published in a local newspaper in April 2015. It says that a group of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley joined JKLF chairman Mohammad Yasin Malik in the protest at Maisuma early this week.

Reportedly, "The procession marched towards Lal Chowk chanting slogan Sang Sang Jiyaan Gay, Sang Sang Marain Gay (we will live together and die together).

The Kashmiri Pandits said that there was no need and no use of making separate colonies. "These colonies may benefit somebody's politics, but can never benefit Pandits," Pandit Vishin Jee said.

The Kashmir Files film conveniently does not mention that Yasin Malik later gave up arms and professed to be open to talks.

Nor does the 'Kashmir Files' mention that Yasin Malik met the then Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh in 2006. Because of his non-violent ideology, Yasin Malik was invited by Dr. Manmohan Singh on February 17, 2006, for initiating a dialogue between the Government of India and the people of Kashmir.

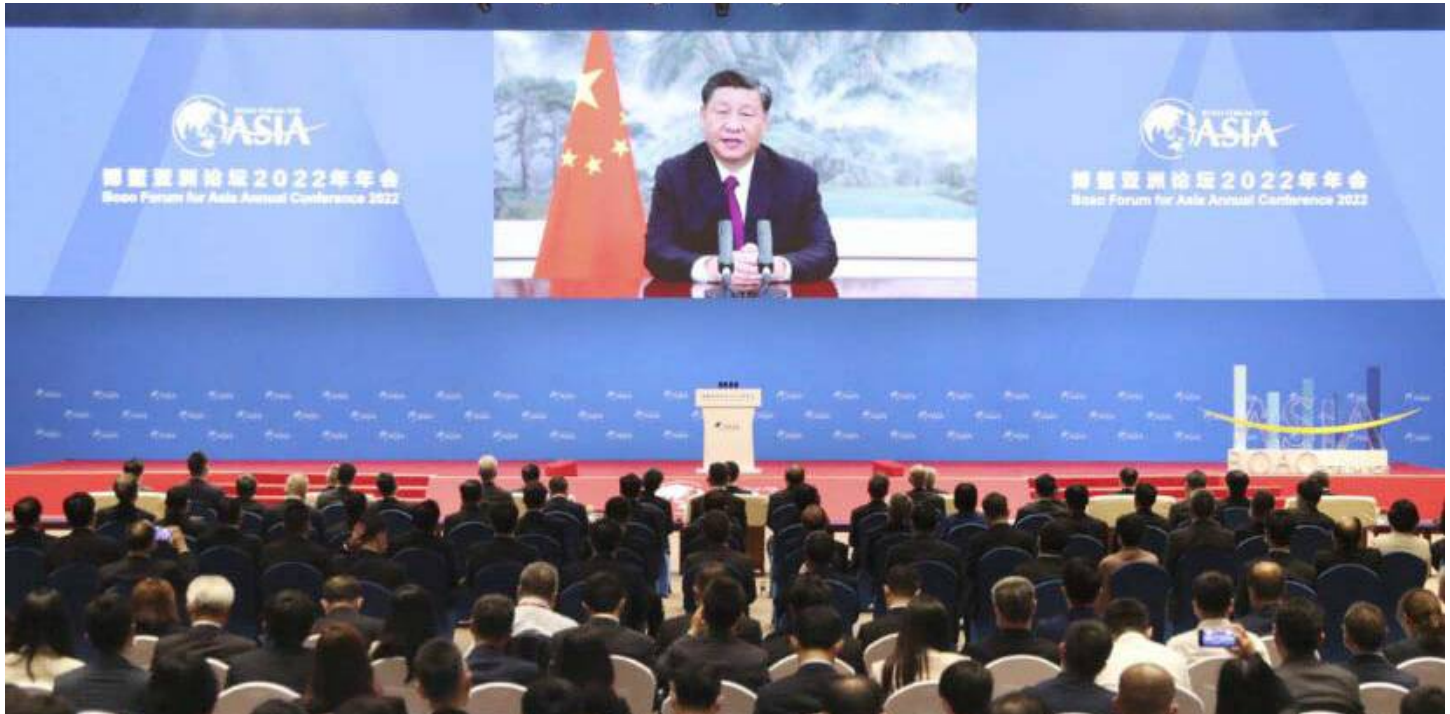
During the recent court hearing, Indian press reported that on May 10, 2022, Yasin Malik pleaded guilty on terror charges. However, the Associated Press reported that during the trial, Malik protested the charges and said he was a freedom fighter. AP added that Malik said, "Terrorism-related charges levelled against me are concocted, fabricated and politically motivated" and that "If seeking Azadi (Freedom) is a crime, then I am ready to accept this crime and its consequences.

" Mushaal Mallick, Chairperson, Peace & Culture Organization and the wife of Yasin Malik represented the sentiments of the people of Kashmir when she tweeted, "If standing for freedom of the people is a crime then every Kashmiri will do it, again and again. " Let the saner elements in Indian public square decide who is speaking the truth?

—The writer is the Secretary General, Washington-based World Kashmir Awareness Forum.

Chinese economy to provide great dynamism for stability, recovery of world economy: President Xi

Boao's takeaways add confidence to global cooperation amid COVID-19



DF Report

The Chinese economy will provide great dynamism for the stability and recovery of the world economy and broader market opportunities for all countries, Chinese President Xi Jinping said.

The fundamentals of the Chinese economy -- its strong resilience, enormous potential, vast room for maneuver and long-term sustainability -- remain unchanged, Xi noted while delivering a keynote speech via video at the opening ceremony of the Boao Forum for Asia Annual Conference 2022.

He said no matter how the world will change, China's faith in and its commitment to reform and opening-up will not waver. China will unwaveringly follow the path of peaceful development, and always be a builder of world peace, a contributor to global development, and a defender of the international order, he said.

The three-day annual conference of BFA was held at Boao, in China's Hainan Province, under the theme of The World in COVID-19 & Beyond: Working Together for Global Development and Shared Future. The Annual Conference was an on-site occasion supplemented with online links, where delegates from governments, business, academia and media all over the world gathered and discussed the post-pandemic development agenda for Asia and the world, focusing on green development, innovative

development, inclusive development and collaborative development, so as to promote international solidarity and cooperation.

In his comprehensive speech, President Xi made a number of important calls to the Asian and wider international community, stressing the need to unite together to win final victory over the Covid-19 pandemic; to promote economic recovery and to overcome uneven and inadequate development through the Global Development Initiative; and to work together to promote peace and stability in the world. The Cold War mentality, President Xi explained, would only wreck the global peace framework, hegemonism and power politics would only endanger world peace, and bloc confrontation would only exacerbate security challenges in the 21st century.

China would therefore like to propose a Global Security Initiative -- to stay committed to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and work together to maintain world peace and security; stay committed to respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, uphold non-interference in internal affairs, and respect the independent choices of development paths and social systems made by people in different countries; stay committed to abiding by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, reject the Cold War mentality, oppose unilateralism, and say no to group politics and bloc confrontation; stay committed to

taking the legitimate security concerns of all countries seriously, uphold the principle of indivisible security, build a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture, and oppose the pursuit of one's own security at the cost of others' security; stay committed to peacefully resolving differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation, support all efforts conducive to the peaceful settlement of crises, reject double standards, and oppose the wanton use of unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction; stay committed to maintaining security in both traditional and non-traditional domains, and work together on regional disputes and global challenges such as terrorism, climate change, cybersecurity and biosecurity.

Specifically turning to Asian issues, the Chinese president noted that: "The Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and the Bandung Spirit, first advocated by Asia, are all the more relevant today. We should honor such principles as mutual respect, equality, mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence, follow a policy of good-neighborliness and friendship, and make sure that we always keep our future in our own hands."

The entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), and specifically the opening to traffic of the China-Laos Railway, were cited by Xi as key examples of Asian cooperation.

No attack by miscreants to affect unprecedented Pak-China ties: Sherry Rehman



DF Report

Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on April 29 visited Chinese Embassy here and condemned Karachi van attack that killed three Chinese teachers.

The Minister met Chinese Charge d' Affaires

Pang Chunxu and expressed her grief and solidarity with the Chinese government and people over the tragic incident.

Senator Sherry said the friendship between Pakistan and China was historic and unprecedented, adding, "No attack by

miscreants will affect Pakistan-China relations".

"Cooperation between Pakistan and China on issues of mutual interest will continue", Sherry Rehman said. Federal Minister Senator Sherry Rehman also recorded her remarks in the guest-book at the Chinese Embassy.

British HC, Sherry Rehman review bilateral corporation

DF Report

The British High Commissioner Christian Turner and his team here on April 28 called on Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman and discussed bilateral climate corporation.

She said, "Climate Stress is a pressing concern for Pakistan and it is high time that we articulated several pressing climate issues into policy. We need a innovative, bold and far-reaching solutions that cover not just investments in nature to curtail deforestation, but also an infrastructure for energy transition, investment in renewables, and resilient infrastructure whilst still humanizing the climate change conversation for the general population."

She said, engagement with the UK through a dedicated bilateral dialogue will provide support to Pakistan in several areas which have help with the real progress towards implementation of the Nationally Determined Contributions.

Sherry Rehman said Pakistan needs for instance, assistance of a 35% grant towards the goal of a 50% reduction of emissions by 2030 which will render it attainable and upon which our policy is contingent. We are not a big global polluter



and while contribute only 6% to GHG emissions we suffer a disproportionate impact of global pollution.

So while we must take responsibility for our climate, and take steps at home to mitigate effects, it is entirely understandable to expect support. She also said that gender mainstreaming of climate policies is essential. Women suffer more from the impacts of Climate Stress as compared to their male

counterparts in developing countries and a policy, which focuses on gender mainstreaming and adaptation efforts to the impacts of Climate Stress must also be rolled out, along with policies that provide for sustainable waste management and water conservation.

During the meeting, the British High Commissioner extended an official invitation to Pakistan for the May Ministerial in Denmark in advance of COP 27 in November.

Kyrgyz-Pakistani Trade & Investment Forum held



DF Report

The Kyrgyz-Pakistani Trade & Investment Forum was held in the cities of Islamabad and Lahore and was attended by the representatives of the Kyrgyz and Pakistani business circles.

The event was organized at the initiative of the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan with the support of the USAID Regional Office for Economic Integration, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, as well as the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the cities of Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore.

The forum was held as part of the work carried out by the Embassy of Kyrgyz Republic to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to promote economic diplomacy by establishing and further developing business contacts between representatives of the business community of the two countries with the main goal to strengthen mutually beneficial trade and economic relations, as well as investment cooperation between both countries. Among the main tasks of organizing such events there is the promotion of economic cooperation between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which will help strengthen interaction and also open new markets for trade and investment between the countries of the region. The Kyrgyz delegation

included participants operating in the fields of agriculture, logistics, pharmaceuticals, tourism, food production, construction, the IT industry, the textile industry, etc., representatives of the Administration of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Investment and Development Agency of the Kyrgyz Republic, Kyrgyz Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, as well as the General Directorate of the Free Economic Zone "Bishkek".

During the main sessions of the above mentioned forum, held in two cities of Pakistan with the participation of business circles of Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan, the Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan in Pakistan H.E Mr. U.A.Totuaiev, Head of the Department of control on the fulfillment of the decisions of the President and the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic Mr. A.D.Djunushaliev, Head of the USAID Regional Office for Economic Integration Bano Burki, as well as Presidents of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore delivered their speeches.

The Ambassador U.A.Totuaiev informed about the ongoing reforms in the Kyrgyz Republic aimed at improving the economy and investment climate. Also, special emphasis was placed on the need for a comprehensive active development of trade, economic and investment opportunities between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in particular, taking into account the significant



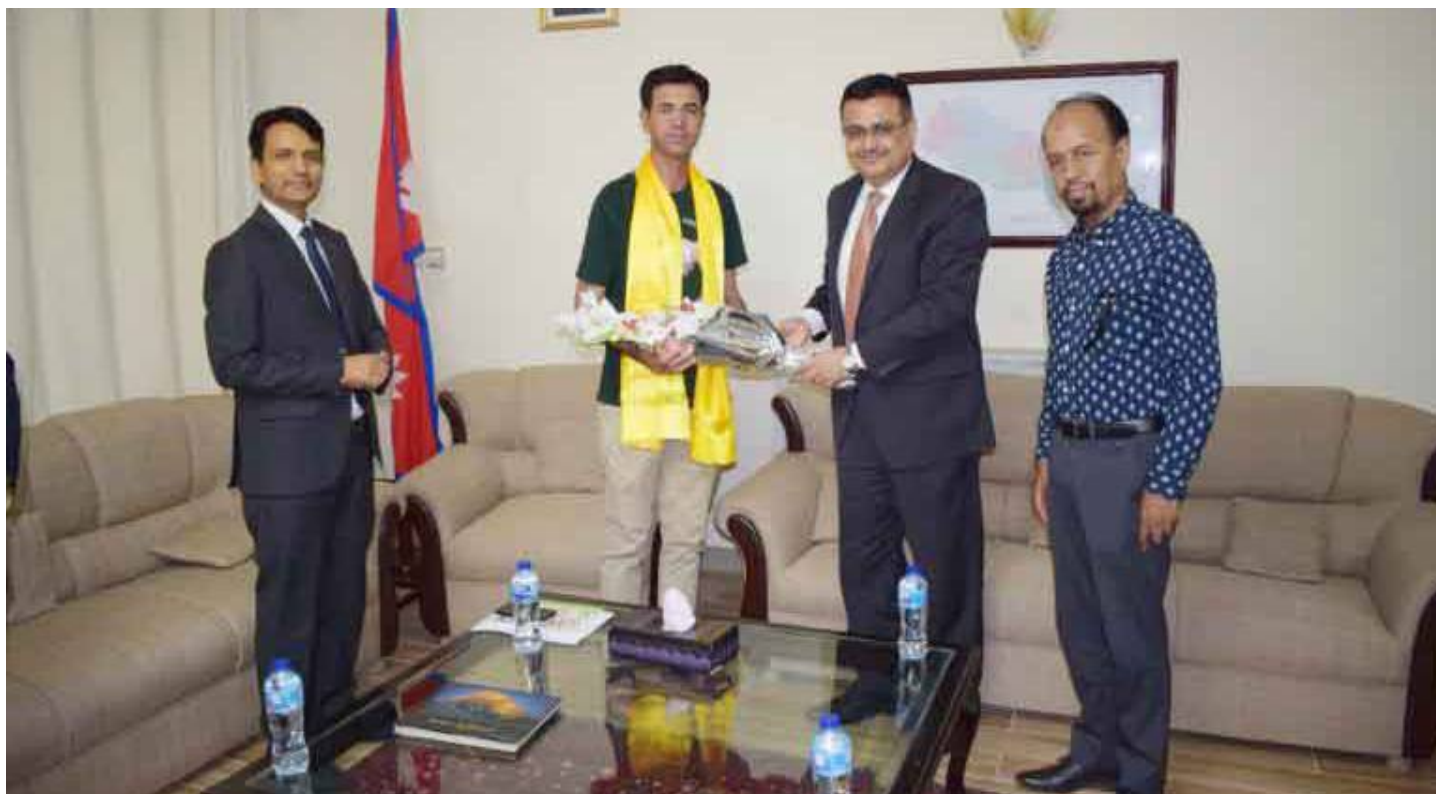
unrealized potential in this area. He called on the participants of the event to actively interact and establish mutually beneficial cooperation, in particular, in such promising areas as agriculture, the energy sector, the textile industry, mining and many others.

During the forum, representatives of Kyrgyz companies showed detailed presentations on their activities, as well as areas of interest in Pakistan market. At the same time, the Pakistani side provided extensive information on the conditions and advantages of doing business in Pakistan, the trade and economic potential between the two countries and the prospects for its development, as well as other information useful for representatives of the Kyrgyz business community interested in interacting with Pakistan. On the sidelines of the event, B2B meetings and negotiations were held between representatives of business circles from the Kyrgyz and Pakistani sides.

As a result of the forum, below mentioned bilateral documents were signed:

1. Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation» between the General Directorate of the Free Economic Zone "Bishkek" and the International Special Economic Zone "Pvt. OOO".
2. Memorandum of Understanding» between the LLC "By Elim Company" and the HAC AGRI Limited in sphere of sugar supplies.

Nepal eager to enhance cooperation in tourism, mountain adventure: Envoy



By Mian Fazal Elahi

Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan H E Tapas Adhikari said that there are vast opportunities between Pakistan and Nepal in various fields of tourism including mountain adventure which should be tapped on priority.

Pakistan and Nepal have the highest mountain peaks in the world, including Mount Everest and K2, where mountaineers, who come every year and get international fame by demonstrating their skills in this sport, he said. Embassy of Nepal in Islamabad organized a programme here on Tuesday to commemorate the first ascent to the Mt. Everest by Tenzing Norgay Sherpa and Edmund Hillary on 29 May 1953.

Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan, welcomed the guests to the programme and congratulated Abdul Joshi on his recent ascent to the Mt. Everest on May 16, 2022. On the occasion, the Ambassador said that there are vast opportunities between Pakistan and Nepal in this field, which would require further cooperation between the two countries in the future.

Ambassador said that Pakistan and Nepal are the countries connected to the Himalayan

region, where there are many opportunities for tourism and other adventures. He said that 2 million tourists visit Nepal every year, where the government is committed to provide all kinds of facilities to them.

Ambassador said that direct air flight was essential for economic, trade and other cooperation between the two countries. He said that both the countries have beautiful

Pakistan and Nepal have the highest mountain peaks in the world, including Mount Everest and K2, where mountaineers, who come every year and get international fame by demonstrating their skills in this sport.

views of nature and tourist destinations, so a direct air link is essential for the promotion of tourism in both the countries.

He said that transportation and logistics was an essential sector in both the countries for the movement and promotion of international mountaineering adventurers on both sides.

In response to a question, he said that many issues of transit trade in Nepal and Pakistan still need to be resolved for the promotion of bilateral trade.

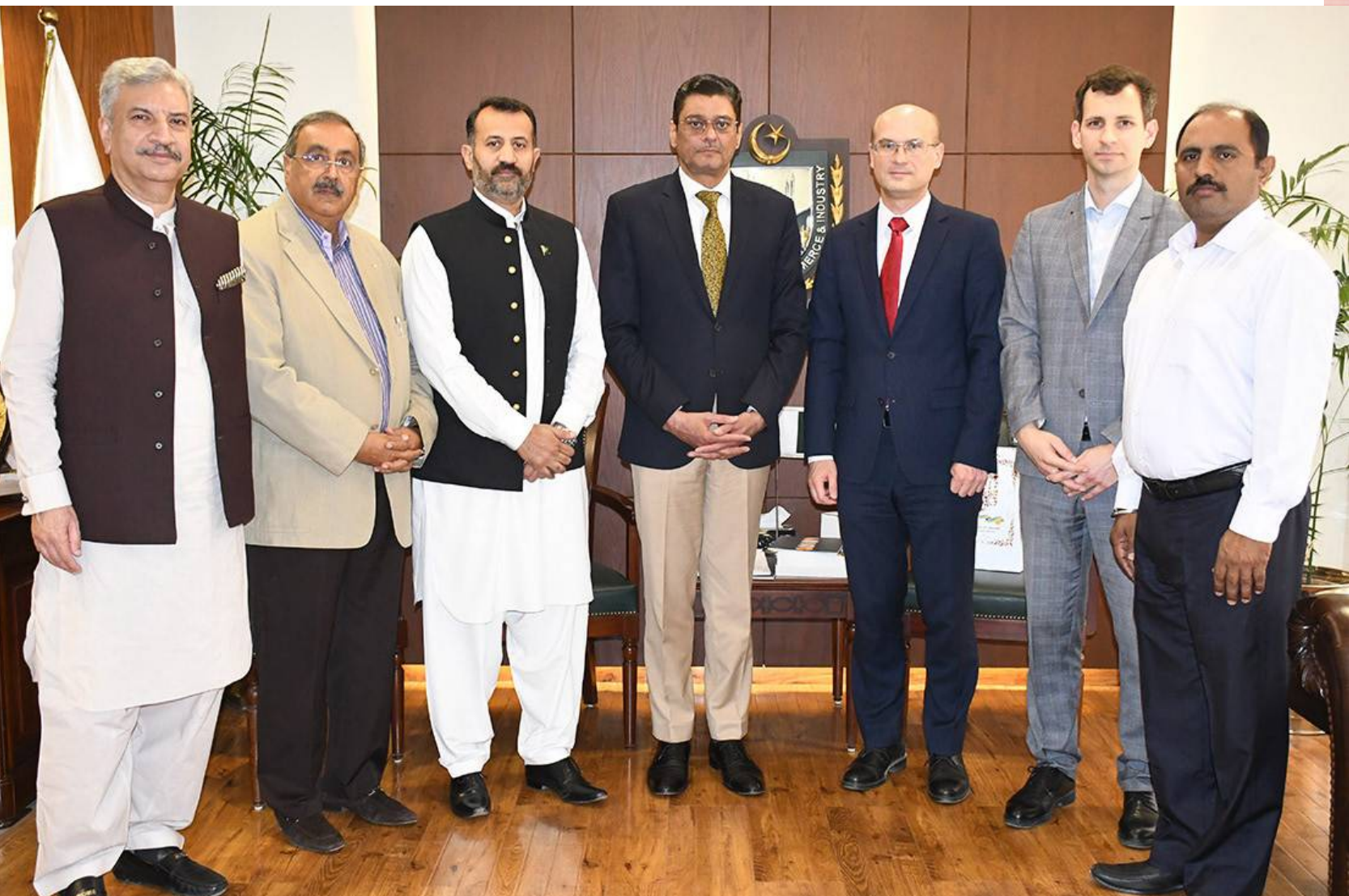
On the occasion, Ambassador Adhikari expressed his confidence that his expedition will inspire many young Pakistanis for mountaineering and adventure tourism and increase people-to-people contacts between Nepal and Pakistan.

He also highlighted the impacts of climate change on the mountains and urged for collectively addressing the negative consequences.

During the programme, Mountaineer Joshi shared his interesting expedition experience, while scaling the summit. He also drew many parallels between Nepal and Pakistan, particularly in the field of trekking and tourism.

The programme was attended by alpinists and media persons from Pakistan and Embassy officials.

Business community assures Ukrainian envoy of humanitarian aid



DF Report

Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Ukraine in Pakistan H E Vitalii Zaianchkovskyi appreciated the humanitarian aid provided by Pakistan to Ukraine and thanked for this kind gesture.

The Ambassador visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and discussed matters of mutual interest with Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President ICCI. Vadym Muraviov, Second Secretary for Economic Issues also accompanied him during his visit to ICCI. Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President, Mian Shaukat Masud former President ICCI, Muhammad Saeed Khan and Ali Akram Khan Executive Members ICCI were also present at the occasion. The Ukrainian envoy said that his

country was a reliable partner of Pakistan in energy and food security fields, but the ongoing war has caused significant downfall in business and economic activities besides creating lot of humanitarian issues.

He briefed the business community about the damages caused by the current war in Ukraine to infrastructure and civilian losses. He appealed that the business community should come forward to provide humanitarian aid for the war-affected civilian population of Ukraine including food items and medicines.

Speaking at the occasion, Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that the business community always wanted peace, which was the basic requirement for promoting business

and investment activities in any country and emphasized that the world community should play role for establishing peace in Ukraine so that business and economic activities could flourish that would reduce miseries of people and improve their living standards. He assured that the business community would fully support all efforts aimed at ending war and restoring peace in Ukraine.

Muhammad Faheem Khan Vice President ICCI, Mian Shaukat Masud former President ICCI and others also spoke at the occasion and said that the business community was feeling sad over what was happening in Ukraine. They also called for the settlement of Ukraine issue through negotiations as war was not a better solution of disputes.



US launches \$23.5m project to address climate change, green energy issues in Pakistan

DF Report

The United States (US) government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is partnering with the Pakistani government to launch a \$23.5 million, four-year power sector improvement project to address climate change and increase the share of green energy in Pakistan's energy mix.

Through technical assistance to the government and private sector, the project will also improve the management and operations of power transmission and distribution systems, increasing the financial viability, reliability, and affordability of Pakistan's power system. The United States looks forward to advancing our partnership with Pakistan to build a clean,

efficient, and reliable electricity generation sector, laying a foundation for sustainable and inclusive growth, said USAID Mission Director Julie A Koenen at the launch ceremony.

Through this new initiative, USAID will partner with the Government of Pakistan to support the transition to a truly competitive wholesale power market. This will increase private sector participation in an open and transparent manner and support our shared energy reform goals, she added.

Shah Jahan Mirza, Managing Director of the Private Power Infrastructure Board, praised USAID for its strong partnership, innovation, and sustained cooperation in supporting Pakistan's transition to clean energy and said he looks forward to continuing the partnership to improve Pakistan's power sector

performance. Over the last 75 years, the US-Pakistan partnership has improved Pakistani lives by building dams and transmission lines, responding to humanitarian emergencies, and combatting shared challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and water vulnerabilities.

To expand Pakistan's energy supply, the United States and Pakistan have built three dams Gomal Zam dam in South Waziristan, Satpara dam in Gilgit Baltistan, and Golen Gol dam in Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, adding 143 megawatts of electricity to the national grid and together have rehabilitated the Mangla and Tarbela dams and three thermal power plants, and connected more than 860 megawatts of commercially-funded wind and solar projects to the national grid.



Indonesian embassy to establish facilitation corner in UoP: Envoy

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Indonesian Ambassador to Pakistan H E Adam Mulawarman Tugio said his embassy would establish a 'facilitation corner' on the premises of the University of Peshawar aimed at facilitating students and enhancing people-to-people contact.

Addressing an online internship programme titled 'Contemporary Dynamics of Indonesia,' he said the facility would also share Indonesia's social, cultural, and economic information with students. He expressed his gratitude to the faculty of University of Peshawar for providing space for the establishment of the facilitation corner. The Vice-Chancellor of the University and a large number of students attended the event.

He said the objective of the online internship program was to increase a better understanding of modern Indonesia through dialogues with experts or scholars of different studies on Indonesia. It is expected to enhance the knowledge and awareness of the participants about the existing potential and opportunities for development in the two countries by sharing lessons from the past and modern eras.

The envoy said his country had provided 500 scholarships to Pakistani students to study at

top Indonesian universities.

He said his government was looking to facilitate students to students exchange programs, and the University of Peshawar was a one-stop in this regard. Pakistan and Indonesia are enjoying cordial ties and people-to-people contact will further enhance bilateral and brotherly relations between two countries, he added.

He said Indonesia and Pakistan were blessed with rich cultural heritage and traditions carrying interesting and attractive similarities. Both the countries cherish various traditions and share many similarities from nature to culture and preserving (Islamic) tradition being two of the most populous Muslim countries in the world, embracing modernity.

He said his embassy was planning to arrange a 'Museum program' during the current year to exhibit the strong Islamic and Buddhism civilization in Peshawar city.

Renowned Indonesian scholar Abdul Ghaffar Karim informed the participants that Indonesia has 17000 islands and 273 million populations and is the fourth most populous country.

He said that the country had 87.2 percent Muslims including hundreds of ethnic groups and religious groups.



Pak-Iraq to sign agreements on cooperation in various sectors: Iraqi Envoy



DF Report

Ambassador of Iraq in Pakistan Hamid Abbas Lafta said that Pakistan and Iraq will sign agreements on cooperation in various sectors, including trade promotion and tariff rationalization to enhance the bilateral economic and trade ties.

Pakistan and Iraq will sign 10 agreements to promote such cooperation in coming June, which will mark the beginning of a new era in enhancing bilateral relations, the Ambassador of Iraq to Pakistan said.

These agreements will be signed on tax and tariff exemptions, economic and trade cooperation, promotion of diplomatic cooperation, human trafficking, Coordination in crime, drug and air connectivity, he said.

Ambassador Lafta said that there was a huge potential for the development of bilateral trade between the two countries in near future. Ambassador said that Iraq was a free market where there were vast opportunities for Pakistani investors, from which the local business community can benefit from.

He said the current \$100 million bilateral trade needs to be doubled, which would require new petroleum, tourism cooperation on both sides and more facilities for mutual air travel. Talks are also underway to make air connectivity more effective in both the countries and agreements will be signed in this regard, he added.

Ambassador expressed that in order to improve economic and trade cooperation, it was necessary to know each other's markets and in this regard exhibitions and seminars should be organized to increase the interest of business class and investors of both the countries to promote mutual economic cooperation.

He said that about 200 businessmen had gone to Iraq to participate in the trade exhibition this year 2022. In response to another question, he said that 200,000 Pakistanis go to Iraq every year for religious tourism, the number of which is increasing every year and the Iraqi government provides them with best facilities in every way possible.

The Iraqi Envoy said that these thousands of religious devotees visit the Iraqi cities of Karbala, Najaf and Baghdad every year and their locals do not leave any stone unturned in their service and love. In addition, there is a need to attract Pakistanis for traditional tourism in the tourist areas of Iraq, which will boost tourism on both sides, he said.

He said that special attention is being paid to the facilities for tourists in Iraq and there are many opportunities for foreign tourists to come to Iraq for tourism. In response to another question, he said that Iraq is currently one of the largest producers of petroleum in the world.

He said that Iraq was ready to meet the energy needs of Pakistan and talks were underway

between the two countries in this regard. The Iraqi Ambassador said that Iraq has vast potential for investment in the following sectors of the petroleum and energy sector and that local investors could play their best role in this regard.

He said, we want to promote mutual cooperation with Pakistan in petro-chemical and other fields of energy and in this regard technical support and mutual cooperation can be extended in every possible way.

Hamid Abbas Lafta also said that there are numerous investment opportunities for Pakistani companies in the construction sector in southern Iraq. In this regard, some Pakistani companies have also expressed their interest, which will help the two sides to understand each other.

He said that interaction between the people of the two countries was already sufficient but more work was needed in this regard in order to further improve the public relations between the two countries and pass on this legacy to the next generation. The Ambassador said that Pakistan is a youth-majority country and the youth in Iraq and Pakistan need to be made aware of the historical religious ties that span centuries.

Responding to a question, he said that Arab countries are not new to Pakistan and Pakistan's relations with the Middle East, especially Iraq will be of utmost importance in future.



2ND JUNE MESSAGE BY THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR

I am pleased to address the readers of Diplomatic Focus on the occasion of Italian National Day. I would start by thanking all Pakistani friends who sent messages of warmth and solidarity on this auspicious occasion.

Italy and Pakistan have a long history of cordial relations and cooperation in political, economic, cultural and social spheres. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the two nations have unanimity of views on several issues of global importance, and mutual cooperation in all the fields has been on the rise.

Foreign Ministers of our two countries recently met in New York where they renewed the determination of strengthening bilateral partnership.

Italy is home to more than 150,000 Pakistanis, the largest Pakistani diaspora in Europe (after Brexit). Engaged in various production sectors in Italy, they continue to make great contribution to the economies of both countries.

Italian government and people very much appreciated Pakistan's solidarity to Italy when Italy was badly affected during the early stages of Covid-19 pandemic.

Pakistan, with its unique geo-strategic location and improved security conditions, offers great investment opportunities for Italian companies. With a population of around 220 million and a constantly growing demand of high-end products, Pakistan remains an attractive market for Italian manufacturers and businessmen.

Italy is among top ten exporting countries for Pakistan globally, and third largest trade partner in European Union. Although global trade shrank during Covid-19 pandemic but Pakistan's exports to Italy in year 2021 grew by 22.1% with a total value of €763.51 million. In the same period Italian exports to Pakistan saw an increase of 48.6% with a total value of €754.06 million. Bilateral trade has seen a growth from € 1.42 billion in 2019 to €1.52 billion in 2021. Trade volume in Jan-Feb 2022 stood at €289.37 million as compared to €203.41 million during the same period of year 2021.

It is worth mentioning that remittances from Pakistani workers in Italy hit an all-time high. With the figures of \$711.7 million in FY22, Italy has become the seventh largest center of worker remittances to Pakistan globally, and the top one in the EU countries.

The ultimate Italy-Pakistan Mixed Economic Commission took place in Islamabad, where the two sides discussed trade opportunities between the two countries, with focus on development of foreign investments through SEZ (Special Economic Zones) in key sectors such as agro-industry.

Apart from business and trade, Italy has carried out significant projects in fields of archaeology, agriculture, health, culture and tourism.

Our Archaeological Mission is one of the oldest present missions in Pakistan, and has made great contributions to Pakistan's already rich archaeological sphere.

Italian cooperation has supported several ventures in fields of agriculture, health and infrastructure in diverse regions of the country. Italians' love for Pakistani mountains is no secret and that reflects through their activities of conservation and uplift of Pakistan's mountainous areas. You would be pleased to learn about all these activities through articles published in this supplement.

The Embassy of Italy in Islamabad is committed to boost commercial ties between the two countries and for that purpose we shall explore all the possible avenues with focus on agriculture, machinery, textiles and tourism. Collaboration in fields of textiles, agriculture, livestock, construction, marble, pharmaceuticals and tourism would help enhance Pakistan's industrial scope and increase exports of value added goods. We are excited on the launch of "Olive Culture Project" in Pakistan that would bear tangible fruits for the country in future.

We have ambitious plans to further strengthen bilateral economic ties, with an aim to take mutual trade to its natural size. We look forward to a deeper collaboration with Pakistani business community, relevant bodies such as Italian Development Committee and chambers of commerce and industry in both countries.

From everyone at the Italian Embassy in Islamabad: "buona festa".

Viva l'Italia!

Pak-Italy dosti zindabad!

Message from Mr. Danilo Giurdanella Consul General of Italy in Karachi



The Italian Republic is celebrating her National Day today, on the 2nd of June. In fact, people should be aware that Italian independence was obtained on 17 March 1861, but we have rather chosen as our National Day the 2nd of June - we call it FESTA DELLA REPUBBLICA - because it is the day that commemorates the referendum held by universal suffrage in 1946, in which the Italian people - for the first time women could vote as well - were called to the polls to decide on the form of government following WWII. They elected to have a Republic and the subsequent Constitution adopted in 1948 stated that this Republic should be founded on the principles of rule of law, solidarity and equality of all its citizens.

It is therefore a symbolic date, not only for Italy, but also for the values that, I think, should be deep-rooted in any honorable Nation: love of peace, attachment to democracy, steadfast support for the needy. In my 1 ½ year I've spent in Karachi - meeting thousands of Pakistanis in the process - I can say that both Italian and Pakistan people hold these values close to their hearts.

That is why, besides the all-important Government-to-Government cooperation, so many initiatives still belong to "the people" and, if the Consulate's action has been successful, credit is frequently due to a group of Pakistan-loving Italians or Italy-loving Pakistanis - let's not forget to mention the vital role played by the Pakistani diaspora in Italy, numbering more than 150.000 and contributing the Pakistani economy with the 7th overall largest workers' remittances!

In that regard, one of the main goals of the Italian Consulate has been the promotion of economic and commercial relations. Numbers show very positive trends: exports to Italy in 2021 grew by 22% with a total value of €763 million; in the same period Italian exports to Pakistan equally saw an increase of 48% with a total value of €754 million. The bilateral trade balance between Italy

and Pakistan therefore remains to the latter's advantage. Similar positive data are already being recorded for 2022. While textile remains the top export to Italy, machinery is the first import for Pakistan.

In its commercial promotion the Consulate has been assisted by the Office of the Italian

The Consulate also strived to promote cultural and social exchanges by celebrating the Italian Language Week together with local stakeholders, schools and Universities in Karachi.

Trade Commission in Karachi and by the Italian Development Committee (IDC), which has an associate status with the Italian Association of Chambers of Commerce Abroad.

Much has been done, promoting economic opportunities, by working with the government, many of Pakistan's leading businessperson as well as with a plethora of association of SMEs, but much more remains to be done since the trade potential between Italy and Pakistan is at least 3 times the total current amount of bilateral trade! The Italian Consulate plans to show-case in future events new opportunities of economic cooperation in the fields of energy, food processing and real estate development - for those who would be interested! The Consulate also strived to promote cultural and social exchanges by celebrating the Italian Language Week together with local stakeholders, schools and Universities in Karachi; the week of Italian Cuisine was also celebrated to endorse

sustainable food and by organizing a series of events, which included a Ho.Re.Ca Summit, an Italian Food Festival and an awareness seminar on sustainable agriculture using Italian technology; an Iftar Dinner was also held in Karachi to promote inter-faith harmony. The cooperation in the field of archeology, which is also very much appreciated by the supportive Sindh Ministry of Culture together with an Italian archeological mission is currently working in Banbhore. New projects in the field of health care are also being established in cooperation with the local Government.

During this year, Italy in Karachi has also been actively engaged in developing political and diplomatic cooperation. I would like to underline in this context the 2021 visit of the Italian Foreign Minister to Pakistan as an important milestone in the bilateral relation between the two Countries. The recent meeting of the newly appointed Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari with the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs in New York, also shows the two governments working very closely on strengthening multilateral as well as bilateral partnerships.

Last but certainly not the least, I feel honored to announce the readers that during the ceremony of the 76th Republic Day of Italy to be celebrated in Karachi, I will present "Officer of the Order of the Star of Italy" award to EDHI Foundation for their services to humanity not only in Pakistan but across continents.

Italy and Pakistan enjoy excellent bilateral relations, the two peoples showing many likenesses and looking forward to enhance the existing cooperation in the years to come.

We are eager to develop our friendship and to facilitate and welcome all Pakistani and Italian engagements to promote joint prosperity in our Countries!



Message from Amedeo Scarpa, Italian Trade Commissioner for Pakistan, UAE office



The Italian Trade Commission (ITA) is the Italian Government trade and investment promotion agency whose duty is to develop, facilitate and promote the economic and trade relations of Italy with other countries, with particular emphasis on the needs of small and medium sized businesses.

It gives me immense pleasure to address the readers of this special supplement on occasion of the Italian National Day to be celebrated on 2nd, June 2022 in Islamabad and Karachi respectively.

Trade promotion is becoming increasingly complex and difficult in the era of globalization and pandemic where every day brings new commodities and market forces in the global trading system.

The Italian Trade Commission has always worked under the auspices of the Embassy and Consulate of Italy to enhance the existing trade relations between Italy and Pakistan, through its office for Pakistan in Karachi karachi@ice.it

Italy stands among the top ten trading partners of Pakistan. Italian industrialists have been enjoying good trade relations with their Pakistani counterparts for the past many

decades.

However, there are still large margins for further improving such trade by enhancing trade promotion activities to be realized in both countries. PAKISTAN's exports of goods and services to Italy witnessed an increase of 35.58% during the first three quarters of fiscal year (2021-22) as compared to the exports of corresponding period of last year.

Italy stands among the top ten trading partners of Pakistan. Italian industrialists have been enjoying good trade relations with their Pakistani counterparts for the past many decades.

The overall exports to ITALY were at \$758.795 million during July-March (2021-22) against exports of \$559.664 million during July- March

(2020-21).

And this is above the average considering that Pakistan's exports to other countries had an increase of 26.64% in nine months (from US \$18.713 billion to US \$ 23.699 billion).

On year-on-year basis, the imports from Italy increased by 98.32%, by going up from \$43.320 million during March 2021 against the exports of \$85.916 million in March 2022.

Meanwhile, on month-on-month basis the imports from Italy witnessed surge of 47.31% in March 2022 as compared to the exports of \$58.323 million in February 2022.

(Source: SBP) We look forward to increased interaction between Italy and Pakistan in the years to come and for Italy to become major stakeholder in Pakistan's industrial growth and development, not only in terms of provider of technology for Pakistan manufacturing units but also in terms of quality standards of FMCG in which Italy has a worldwide reputation and can represent a win-win best practise for Pakistani partners and new products.

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The Mother of Pakistan; BILQUIS BANO EDHI

PERSONAL PROFILE

Bilquis Bano Edhi was a Pakistani nurse who helped save the lives of over 16,000 babies. She was one of the most active philanthropists in Pakistan. She was the co-chairperson of the Edhi Foundation, a charity organization that provided many services in Pakistan including a hospital and emergency service in Karachi.

For her contributions, she was awarded the 1986 Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service and the Mother Teresa Memorial International Award for Social Justice in 2015.

For her service to the country, she was also referred to as The Mother of Pakistan. She

was also a recipient of Hilal-i-Imtiaz, Pakistan's second highest civilian honour.

In 2022, Edhi was named among The Muslim 500, a worldwide list of most influential Muslims.

The Government of Italy in the first quarter of 2022, recognized the services of EDHI foundation and bestowed upon Madam Biquis Edhi, the second highest civilian award "Officer of the Order of the Star of Italy", few months before her demise.

The award will be presented posthumously in a ceremony at the occasion of the National Day of Italy in Karachi.



Life of Bilquis Edhi:

Edhi was born in 1947 in Bantva, in present day Gujarat State. As a teenager, she was noted to have not enjoyed school and instead joined a small and expanding dispensary as a nurse in 1965. At the time, the Edhi home was in the old city area of Karachi known as Mithadar where it had been founded in 1951. The small number of Christian and Hindu nurses who worked there had just reduced in number. The founder, Abdul Sattar Edhi, whom she would later go

The Government of Italy in the first quarter of 2022, recognized the services of EDHI foundation and bestowed upon Madam Biquis Edhi, the second highest civilian award "Officer of the Order of the Star of Italy", few months before her demise.

on to marry, recruited a number of nurses including Bilquis who, unusually, was from a Muslim background. Her husband, Abdul Sattar Edhi, died on 8 July 2016.

Her husband recognizing her talents, had her lead the small nursing department. He had recognized her enthusiasm and interest during her six-month training program where she had learned basic midwifery and healthcare. They were married when she was nineteen and her husband was nineteen years older. Their honeymoon was unusual in that the newlyweds

discovered a young girl with head injuries at their dispensary just after their wedding ceremony. Edhi said in 1989 that she did not regret the time lost in consoling the twelve-year-olds concerned relatives or supervising blood transfusions as now "that girl is married with children; that's what is really important." The Edhi Foundation's unofficial website uses the line "Making a difference and changing lives forever".

Edhi took over the management of the jhoolas project (transl. baby hatch), the first of which had been built by her husband in 1952. She established over 300 cradles throughout Pakistan where parents can abandon unwanted children or those that cannot be raised. They carry the message "Do not kill, leave the baby to live in the cradle" in English and Urdu. A small minority of abandoned children are disabled and over 90% are female. This alternative is thought to have reduced the number of dead babies who are killed by their own parents given the alternative provided by the Edhi Foundation to leave the unwanted babies in the cradles. The Edhi project is also responsible for burying dead babies found by the police. Along with her husband, Edhi was the co-chair of the Edhi Foundation. The foundation also runs a hospital and emergency service in Karachi.

She died on 15 April 2022 in Aga Khan Hospital, Karachi, due to congestive heart failure after a prolonged illness. Her funeral prayers were offered at New Memon Masjid after which she was buried in Mewa Shah Graveyard on 16 April 2022. The Government of Sindh issued an official obituary for Edhi on her death and announced a day of mourning on 16 April 2022.

Cooperation with Italy:

Edhi Foundation has been working with Italy very closely for the last many years and recently played a significant role for the Refugees of

Afghanistan together with the Italian mission in Karachi.

During Corona prevalence, Edhi Foundation contributed tremendously well not only in Pakistan but also generously donated funds to the Government of Italy to help combat

Edhi Foundation provided free ambulance service to 70% patients across Pakistan. When people were deadly scared of touching Covid patients, we arranged burial facilities for the dead bodies. Edhi Foundation also furnished gloves, masks, hand sanitizers and apron for free of cost to all hospitals across Pakistan.

the COVID pandemic during the first wave of COVID, where Italy had suffered great losses.

Furthermore, Edhi Foundation provided free ambulance service to 70% patients across Pakistan. When people were deadly scared of touching Covid patients, we arranged burial facilities for the dead bodies. Edhi Foundation also furnished gloves, masks, hand sanitizers and apron for free of cost to all hospitals across Pakistan.



ITALY - PAKISTAN TRADE RELATIONS



By Amedeo Scarpa

Italian Trade Commissioner for Pakistan, UAE Office

Italy - Pakistan have cordial relations. Italy is among the top trading partners of Pakistan and third largest in context of trade with European Union. Italy helped Pakistan acquire the EU Generalized Scheme of Preferences (GSP-Plus). Trade relations between Pakistan and Italy have been improving with the passage of time. Economic, trade and cultural relations between Italy and Pakistan are at an all-time high. Currently, Italy is providing technical assistance in footwear, textiles, marble and agriculture through modern machinery and value addition also in agricultural sector including dairy and livestock, olives and olive products, plastics, processed food and the construction sector through transfer of technology. During the Year 2021 the overall trade volume contracted due to COVID pandemic disruption and Italy imported goods of worth 902.88 US\$ million as against exports of 714.29 US\$ million in the same period last year recording an increase of 26.40 %.

In the Year 2021 Italy exported goods to Pakistan worth 845.71 million US\$ against 581.76 million US\$ in FY20 recording an upsurge of 45.36 %. The worker remittances from Italy hit historic high of \$601 million in FY21 and as a result, Italy emerged as the seventh largest global destination for workers remittances to Pakistan and ranked first among the countries in the EU. The Country's trade deficit during July-June (2020-21) stood at \$31.076 billion against the deficit of \$23.159 billion during July-June (2019-20). During the fiscal year 2021 country's exports registered about \$25.304 billion whereas the imports \$56.380 billion. (Source: PBS)

FISCAL YEAR 2022 (3 Quarters)

PAKISTAN's exports of goods and services to Italy witnessed an increase of 35.58% during the first three quarters of fiscal year (2021-22) as compared to the exports of corresponding period of last year. The overall exports to ITALY were at \$758.795 million during July-March (2021-22) against exports of \$559.664 million

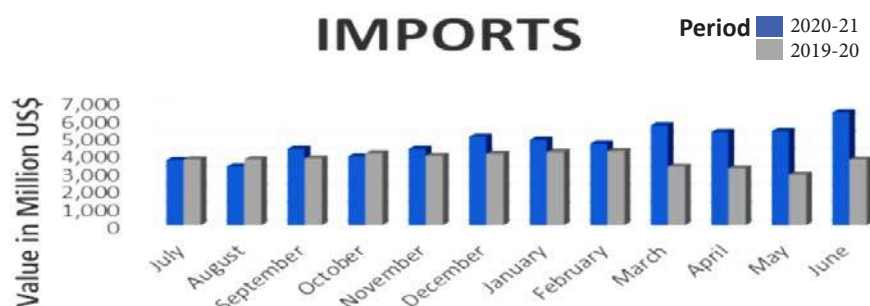
during July- March (2020-21), showing growth of 35.58%, according to (Source: SBP). The exports to ITALY also increased by 42.79% by going up from \$75.006 million during March 2021 against the exports of \$107.105 million in March 2022, the SBP data revealed. The export to ITALY also witnessed surge of 30.89% in March 2022 as compared to the exports of \$81.826 million in February 2022 on month-on-month basis.

Pakistan's exports to other countries have an increase of 26.64% in nine months, from US \$18.713 billion to US \$ 23.699 billion. During the first nine months of fiscal year 2021-22, the imports from Italy were observed at \$620.487 million against \$391.109 million last year, showing growth of 58.64%. On year-on-year basis, the imports from Italy increased by 98.32%, by going up from \$43.320 million during March 2021 against the exports of \$85.916 million in March 2022. Meanwhile, on month-on-month basis the imports from Italy witnessed surge of 47.31% in March 2022 as compared to the exports of \$58.323 million in February 2022. (Source: SBP)

FISCAL YEAR 2021; PAKISTAN'S IMPORTS

During FY 2021, imports stood at US\$ 56.38 billion as compared to US\$ 44.55 billion during FY2020 showing an increase of 26.55%. Non-energy imports remained the main contributor in raising the import bill. The surge in imports may be attributed to the rising demand for intermediate goods due to the resumption of economic activities; supply shocks in agricultural products especially wheat, sugar and cotton; governments accommodative measures to underpin the production of industrial sector in the form of removal of customs duty on import of raw-materials; and concessionary loans.

During Jul-Jun, 2021 the share of Other Asia in total imports increased to 48.04% from 46.60% during the same period of last year. The share of Middle East decreased to 24.47% from 25.88% during the same period of last year. The share of European Union decreased to 9.32% from 10.40% during the same period of last year. (Source: PBS)



IMPORTS FROM ITALY

Italy exports to Pakistan was US\$845.7 Million

during FY21, surged 45.37% comparing to 581.76 Million in FY20.

		2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
IMPORTS FROM ITALY		845.7 m	581.76 m	765.29 m	944.45 m	855.01 m
TOP IMPORTS FROM ITALY		2021	2020	2019	2018	
84	Nuclear reactors, boilers, machinery and mechanical appliances; parts thereof	396.68 m	249.7 m	326.55 m	347.19 m	
85	Electrical machinery and equipment and parts thereof; sound recorders and reproducers; television image and sound recorders and reproducers, parts and accessories of such articles	93.88 m	62.46 m	69.4 m	93.64 m	
90	Optical, photographic, cinematographic, measuring, checking, medical or surgical instruments and apparatus; parts and accessories	45.14 m	33.57 m	34.4 m	26.82 m	
72	Iron and steel	44.16 m	31.09 m	21.82 m	20.65 m	
30	Pharmaceutical products	31.58 m	32.17 m	42.05 m	36.68 m	
39	Plastics and articles thereof	22.17 m	14.62 m	14.14 m	16.11 m	
32	Tanning or dyeing extracts; tannins and their derivatives; dyes, pigments and other coloring matter; paints, varnishes; putty, other mastics; inks	20.25 m	12.31 m	14.03 m	15.89 m	
27	Mineral fuels, mineral oils and products of their distillation; bituminous substances; mineral waxes	17.3 m	10.94 m	6.76 m	20.63 m	
29	Organic chemicals	16.37 m	14.51 m	12.85 m	12.87 m	
38	Chemical products n.e.c.	13.88 m	11.03 m	19.1 m	18.35 m	
73	Iron or steel articles	12.92 m	9.24 m	8.12 m	11.35 m	

PAKISTAN'S EXPORTS

The exports during July – June, 2020 - 2021 totaled \$ 25,304 billion against \$ 21,394 billion during the corresponding period of last year showing an increase of 18.28% as compared to the negative growth of -6.81% in FY20.

During July-June, 2021 the share of European Union in total exports increased to 35.09% from 34.59% during the same period of last year. During July-June, 2021 the share of European Union in total exports increased to 35.09% from 34.59% during the same period of last year. The share of other Asia in total exports increased to 23.91% from 23.73% during the same period of last year.

The share of North America increased to 21.64% from 18.65% during the same period of last year. The share of Middle East decreased to 10.14% from 12.79% during the same period of last year. The share of other African countries decreased to 4.53% from 5.80% during the same period of last year. (Source: PBS)

EXPORT TO ITALY

During the Year 2021 the overall trade volume contracted due to COVID pandemic disruption and Pakistan exported goods of worth 902.88 US\$ million as against exports of 714.29 US\$ million in the same period last year recording an increase of 26.40 %. (Source: UN Comtrade)

ITALIAN TECHNICAL INDUSTRIAL COLLABORATION WITH PAKISTAN

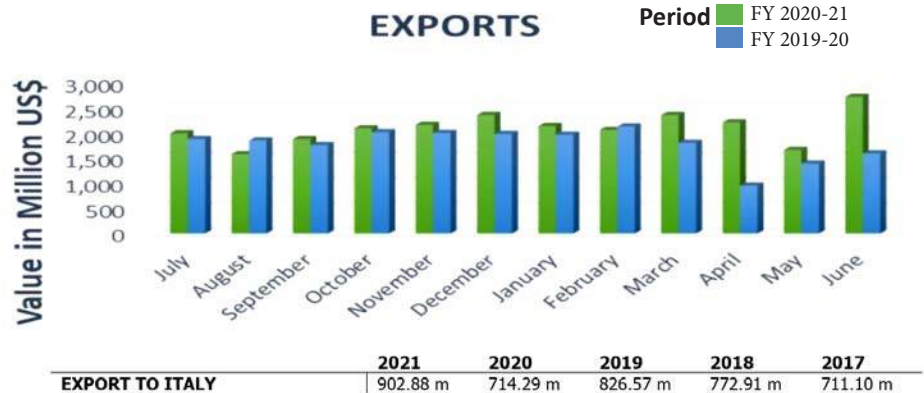
1) ITALY-PAKISTAN TEXTILE TECHNOLOGY CENTER "I-PK TTC" FAISALABAD

To establish Italy - Pakistan Textile Technology Centre (IPTTC) in Faisalabad Memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between The Association of Italian Textile Machinery Manufacturers (ACIMIT) and The National Textile University (NTU) on January 2018 in Lahore - Pakistan.

The project was approved by both governments and the Letter of Intent (LOI) between the Ministry of Economic Development of the Italian Republic and the Ministry of Commerce and Textile Industry of Islamic Republic of Pakistan was signed on 31st of January 2018 in Rome - Italy.

The Collaboration agreement (CA) was signed between Italian Trade Agency (ICE), Italian Trade Commission - Dubai and The National Textile University (NTU), Faisalabad on 08th September 2018. The purpose of the Agreement between ICE and NTU is to work together to develop the "Italy-Pakistan Textile Technology Centre". The agreement describes their understanding and commitments to this collaborative effort, in accordance with their respective laws and rules in order to further contribute to the achievement of their targeted goals and objectives.

A strong relationship is established between the Italian Government Institutions and the Pakistani National Authorities, in particular through



ITALY TOP IMPORTS FROM PAKISTAN		2021	2020	2019	2018
63	Textiles, made up articles; sets; worn clothing and worn textile articles; rags	190.05 m	142.78 m	154.56 m	163.91 m
52	Cotton	161.84 m	132.06 m	161.01 m	177.54 m
62	Apparel and clothing accessories; not knitted or crocheted	131.46 m	109.25 m	122.08 m	96.67 m
10	Cereals	81.56 m	70.5 m	62.82 m	49.29 m
61	Apparel and clothing accessories; knitted or crocheted	75.72 m	55.65 m	70.42 m	59.57 m
22	Beverages, spirits and vinegar	37.49 m	30.46 m	43.41 m	22.39 m
41	Raw hides and skins (other than fur skins) and leather	37.23 m	25.84 m	39.39 m	47.47 m
55	Man-made staple fibers	28.97 m	23.44 m	20.88 m	21.57 m
39	Plastics and articles thereof	24.15 m	22.54 m	27.78 m	13.65 m
42	Articles of leather; saddlery and harness; travel goods, handbags and similar containers; articles of animal gut (other than silk-worm gut)	21.61 m	16.1 m	19.88 m	19.69 m
64	Footwear; gaiters and the like; parts of such articles	16.97 m	16.84 m	23.39 m	22.57 m

the implementation of significant bilateral cooperation. ICE/ITA strives to sustain and strengthen the Islamic Republic of Pakistan authorities' ownership of the development process by providing technical cooperation and assistance to boost employment and income generation in Pakistan, within the framework of the promotional plan of the Italian Governmental institutions - Ministry of Economic Development.

Project Status:

Machinery for the Institute arrived at Karachi port on 6th January 2020 and moved to Faisalabad after custom clearance.

The inaugural ceremony was graced as Chief Guest by H. E. Andreas Ferrarese, The Italian Ambassador to Pakistan on 16th November 2020.





2) ITALY-PAKISTAN FOOTWEAR TECHNOLOGY CENTER "IPFTC" – LAHORE

Memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between The Italian National Association of Manufacturers of Footwear, Leather Goods and Tanning Technologies (ASSOMAC) and the Pakistan Footwear Manufacturers Association (PFMA) on December 2016 in Lahore - Pakistan; in order to establish Italy - Pakistan Footwear Technology Centre (IPFTC) in Lahore. The project was approved by both governments and the Letter of Intent (LOI) between the Ministry of Economic Development of the Italian Republic and the Ministry of Commerce and Textile Industry of Islamic Republic of Pakistan was signed on 31st of January 2018 in Rome - Italy. The Collaboration agreement (CA) was signed between Italian Trade Agency (ICE), Italian Trade Commission - Dubai and Pakistan Footwear Manufacturers Association (PFMA) on 19th September 2018. The purpose of the Agreement between ICE and PFMA is to work together to develop the "Italy-Pakistan Footwear Technology Centre". The agreement describes their understanding and commitments to this collaborative effort, in accordance with their respective laws and rules in order to further contribute to the achievement of their targeted goals and objectives.

A strong relationship is established between the Italian Government Institutions and the Pakistani National Authorities, in particular through the implementation of significant bilateral cooperation. ICE/ITA strives to sustain and strengthen the Islamic Republic of Pakistan authorities' ownership of the development process by providing technical cooperation and assistance to boost employment and income generation in Pakistan, within the framework of the promotional plan of the Italian Governmental institutions - Ministry of Economic Development.

PROJECT STATUS:

Machinery for the institute arrived at Karachi port on 6th January 2020 and moved to Lahore after custom clearance, online Installation of machines completed by ASSOMAC/PISIE and concerned machinery manufacturers in September 2020.

INUGURAL CEREMONY:

Finally the governments of Italy and Pakistan, in collaboration of Embassy of Italy in Pakistan, Italian Trade Commission ICE/ITA, ASSOMAC / PISIE with support of the Pakistan Footwear Manufacturers Association (PFMA), have inaugurated the Italy-Pakistan Footwear Technological Centre (IPFTC) in Lahore on 30th September „2020. The inaugural ceremony was graced by Punjab Industries Minister Mian Aslam Iqbal, Italian Ambassador to Pakistan H. E. Dr. Andreas Ferrarese (online), Pakistani Ambassador to Italy Mr. Jauhar Saleem (online),



Italian Trade Commissioner Dr. Amedeo Scarpa (online), and President ASSOMAC Ms. Marchioni Bocca Gabriella (online), Engr. A. R. Daudpota ICE (Pakistan Desk) was present at event.

3) ITALY-PAKISTAN STONE TECHNOLOGY CENTER "I-PK STC" RISALPUR

Memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between CONFINDUSTRIA MARMOMACCHINE, General Confederation of Italian Industry and The Pakistan Stone Development Company (PASDEC) on January 2018; which has been already approved by the Federal Cabinet of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The project was approved by both governments and the Letter of Intent (LOI) between the Ministry of Economic Development of the Italian

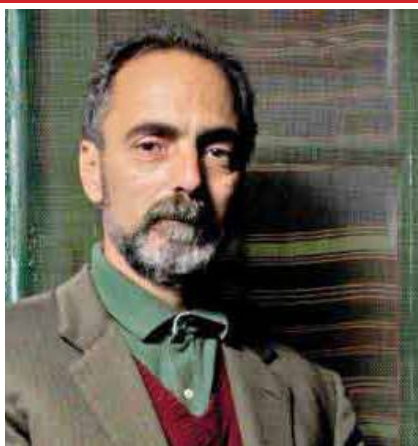
Republic and the Ministry of Commerce and Textile Industry of Islamic Republic of Pakistan was signed on 31st of January 2018 in Rome - Italy. Pakistan Stone Development Company "PASDEC" and the Italian Association will contribute an equal amount of 400,000 Euros each towards setting up of the center in Risalpur.

This project will also serve as an export promotion center for the stones being extracted in Pakistan. The companies associated with the Marble Association of Italy supply the advanced technology that makes Italy a global leader in stone and manufactured stone industries.

PROJECT STATUS: Collaboration Agreement (CA) between ICE / ITA and PASDEC is in inking process.



ITALIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL MISSION IN SWAT



By Prof. Dr. Luca M. Olivieri
(Sitara-i-Imtiaz). Mission Director

So much has been said about Alexander in Pakistan (327 BC). Now it is known that Barikot, a relatively small village located on the left bank of the Swat river, is the ancient Bazira besieged by the Macedonian.

Excavations and linguistic studies by the Italian and Pakistani scholars have proved this. Little was also known about the role of the Indo-Greek king Menander and his successors between 150 and 50 BC.

Again, the Barikot excavation proved, lastly in 2021, the existence of Greek-speaking groups, who, while fortifying cities and managing the agricultural wealth of Swat, supported the spread of Buddhism in the 2nd-1st century BC.

In so many years of commitment the Mission managed to protect the site, at least the parts where it had opened excavations, to the point that in 2019 the provincial government (Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa) acquired all the vacant land, together with other sites excavated or documented in the past by the Mission: Amluk-dara, Gumbat, Abbasahab-china, the Mosque of Udegram, the third oldest mosque in Pakistan (1044 CE/435 AH).

The Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan of the ISMEO and Ca' Foscari University of Venice has been working in Swat since 1955,

when it was founded by the famous orientalist Prof. Giuseppe Tucci. In particular, over the last thirty years, the support to the Mission by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in the framework of the co-financing programme for archaeological research in the world has been fundamental.

In this framework one should not forget the activity promoted by the Italy-Pakistan Debt Conversion Programme for a cultural heritage project (2011-2016) called "ACT, Archaeology Community Tourism Field School", run by the Mission.

Almost three hundred local workers were involved by the ACT project in the

The Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan of the ISMEO and Ca' Foscari University of Venice has been working in Swat since 1955. The Mission in a couple of years will celebrate its 70 years of continuous activity in Pakistan, a record that places it among the longest-running foreign archaeological institutions in Asia.

archaeological sites dotting Swat.

Among other things, the first government-recognised association of archaeological guides was formed.

Today, Pakistan is focusing a great deal on the tourist enhancement of Swat, starting from its symbolic sites, including the ancient city of

Barikot, a true 'Pompeii of Asia', the epicentre of our Mission's activities.

The same ACT project was entrusted with the reconstruction of the Museum of Saidu Sharif, the district capital, inaugurated by Giuseppe Tucci in 1963, damaged by an earthquake in 2005 and by a bomb in 2009, finally reopened in 2013.

Another activity of paramount importance was the restorations (again performed under the umbrella of ACT) of the colossal Jahanabad Buddha (7th century CE), intentionally damaged during the Swat crisis in 2007.

The Mission in a couple of years will celebrate its 70 years of continuous activity in Pakistan, a record that places it among the longest-running foreign archaeological institutions in Asia.

The Mission's team has always worked closely with its colleagues and the Pakistani authorities, and this has always been a strength of the Mission's work.

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan has honoured Tucci and other prominent members of the Mission with prestigious civilian awards, the latest of which (2017) conferred on the current Mission Director.

We should not forget the local component, workers who have been trained for decades, which ultimately represent the key to the Mission's success over so many years.

The secret was passed on to new generation by Tucci: "Always be close to the human reality of the places where you work".

It is no coincidence that the Mission's motto is in fact "archaeology from below"!

Author: Prof. Dr. Luca M. Olivieri (Sitara-i-Imtiaz). Mission Director.

**ITALIAN AGENCY FOR
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION-AICS**



**ITALIAN AGENCY
FOR DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION**

Italian Development Cooperation with Pakistan has a record of 4 decades of support for remote communities in North and West Pakistan, converging today on 3 pillars: Nature, Culture, Olive-Culture, by promoting the nexus

research-education-labour and a bridge of knowledge with Italy.

The Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, AICS, active since 2016, has in

Islamabad a regional office, competent since January for Afghanistan as well to promote humanitarian support, basic needs and beyond.



Pakistan, Italy to sign labour agreement soon: Ambassador Jauhar



DF Report

Ambassador of Pakistan to Italy, Jauhar Saleem on April 30 expressed the hope that Pakistan and Italy would soon sign a labour agreement, which would provide employment opportunities to Pakistan's skilled labor in the potential Italian market.

Documents are being exchanged between the two sides to finalize the labor agreement and positive news is expected soon, he said while talking to the media through video link from Rome. In a media talk, Jauhar Saleem informed that a draft agreement has been shared with the Italian side in March 2022 and negotiations are expected to commence soon.

He said the labour agreement aims at providing comprehensive market access to Pakistani workers to the Italian labour market. Replying to a question, he said the embassy's lobbying also helped in Pakistan being re-included in the Italian Seasonal Work Visa Program for 2021 and 2022, which would offer diverse opportunities to our workers in agriculture and services sectors. Italy is expected to allow around seventy thousand seasonal workers from selected countries in 2022 to come to Italy for

work, he said. Pakistani workers under Seasonal Work Visa Programme have started arriving in Italy since March 2022, he said. Italy has a huge demand for workers in the agriculture sector, hospitality services, construction, logistics, truck drivers and engineers and Information Technology (IT) Professionals.

According to Confindustria, the largest employer association of Italy, there are around 193,000 vacancies available in the industrial sector. Confindustria is of the view that 45,000 jobs are expected to be available in the technology sector. There are estimates that around 200,000 Pakistanis are currently residing in Italy, he informed.

The Ambassador said this number is continuously increasing and in 2020 the Pakistan Embassy facilitated regularization of around 18000 undocumented Pakistanis workers by legalizing their stay in Italy through an Amnesty Scheme of the Italian Government. Italy, the third largest economy of the EU, has a 25.9 million strong labour force with a labour participation rate of 59%, he said.

He said that its services sector employs 70.4% of the labour force whereas industry and

agriculture attract 25.8 and 3.68% of the total labour force, respectively. He said Italy is facing the issue of an aging population hosting the second largest old population in the world after Japan.

Ambassador Jauhar said this signifies that Italy would continue to need immigrant workers in several sectors of its economy. In order to utilize this opportunity, Pakistan Embassy Rome intensively engaged with the concerned Italian Authorities to explore opportunities of sourcing labour from the Pakistani, he informed.

In 2021, the Italian side agreed in principle to negotiate a labour service agreement with Pakistan. Replying to another question, he said that some of the most in-demand positions will include software/app designers and developers, computer equipment designers and telecommunication systems designers.

He said the ongoing pandemic has enhanced demand for IT services. Pakistan Embassy Rome is promoting sourcing of IT and BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) services from Pakistan and some Italian IT companies have shown keen to invest in Pakistan's IT sector, he said.

Olive Culture- “Holistic and Multi Professional Mechanism for a Pakistani Olive Value Chain”

Though Olive cultivation is being done in the country for last decade in Pakistan, yet there are certain missing links in the value chain of olive sector. For addressing the missing pitfalls, a new project was conceptualized for technical assistance to the Pakistani Olive sector. This project is implemented for 26 months (January 22 - March 2024) executed jointly by Government of Italy through International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) Bari, Italy, Italian Agency for international Cooperation (AICS) and Pakistan Oilseed Department, Ministry of National Food Security & Research, Islamabad with the total cost of £ 1.5 million.

The project is aimed at Provision of a baseline information of olive sector in Pakistan, working out the challenges, trade & future trends in olive sector, Establishment of Pakistan Olive Oil Council (POOC) for national & Int. linkages, Formulation of standards/guidelines for labeling, branding, marketing & certification

The government of Pakistan is committed for the promotion of Olive cultivation and its value chain in Pakistan. For this purpose, a flagship project “Promotion of Olive cultivation on commercial Scale in Pakistan, Phase-II” is being implemented from 2021-22 for 03 years till 2023-24.

of olive oil & products under POOC (Advisory Council), Strengthening rural economy & small-scale cottage industry, Collaborative research & development in olive sector, Ensuring the participation of women and youth in olive value addition, Building value chain & promotion of olive agro-tourism and rendering Certified trainings - nursery to post harvest, HACCP, GPM & Global GAP.

The project is expected to have outcome and results such as Agronomic, cultural, and social heritage of the olive oil value chain valorized, the rural development of the olive value chain is supported by an appropriate policy, Pakistani olive value chain improved and characterized at different levels, Women and young people are engaged in income generation activities along the olive value chain and Pakistani society is engaged in promoting the olive culture.

Promotion of Olive Cultivation on Commercial Scale in Pakistan



The government of Pakistan is committed for the promotion of Olive cultivation and its value chain in Pakistan. For this purpose, a flagship project “Promotion of Olive cultivation on commercial Scale in Pakistan, Phase-II” is being implemented from 2021-22 for 03 years till 2023-24.

Through this initiative, 75000 acres of land mainly culturable waste in all regions including Northern Areas will be brought under olive cultivation. Special focus is given to the grafting of already present 5 million wild olives after detailed survey & study and make it a fruitful economic asset for the farmers and country. Moreover, water saving technology such as Drip Irrigation System is also being installed along with olive plantation in areas with low water delta.

Olive value chain will be strengthened by the

provision of 500 pre & post harvesting tools on matching grants.

Fruit processing units and olive oil extraction units will be provided along with storage, filling, and testing equipment on matching grants to farmers, stakeholders, and entrepreneurs to promote the value chain and create employment opportunities for youth and Gender in the country. Pakistan being in the early stages of olive value chain need standardization of olive oil and value-added products.

For this purpose, dedicated certification Labs for the testing, quality control and further exports of olive commodities will be established in the country.

The project envisaged that with these interventions, Pakistan will be in a better position in olive production and value chain globally.





Alberobello, Italy: A Visit to the trulli of this unusual historical town

Alberobello is a fascinating place to visit, above all because of the trulli, the traditional dome shaped buildings made from the local stone. The town is surrounded by the olive groves and vineyards typical of the Puglia region. Trulli is a word that derives from the Greek “tholos” or “dome”, the typical shape of the buildings. Each whitewashed “trullo” is built without lime or cement, and has a roof which is conical on the outside and dome-shaped on the inside, and consists of a square central compartment that communicates through arches with the kitchen and other rooms.

Alberobello is located 426 metres above sea level, on two hills about 20 kilometres from the Adriatic Sea in Apulia, at the top of the ‘heel’ of southern Italy. It is on the northern edge of the Salentina Peninsula, and north of Taranto.

There are trulli throughout the countryside of the region but there are more in Alberobello than anywhere else (more than 1000) and because of this the town is now a listed UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The visit to Alberobello can start with the ‘trulli’ in the central area of the town between the Aia Piccola District and Piazza del Popolo. There are many to be seen which make the streets of the ancient village centre a very interesting and unusual region to explore.

The fully restored group of trulli here can be visited by tourists, the oldest of which date back to the 14th-18th century, and is the main attraction in Alberobello.

The tallest and biggest trullo is the so-called ‘Sovereign Trullo’, a two storey building located in a small square behind the Cathedral Church that plays host to cultural events and entertainments during the summer.

Folklore and traditions

The town of Alberobello boasts of ancient traditions and a flourishing handicraft industry, with artisanal handicrafts made from leather, terracotta, iron, baskets and olive wood. Alberobello is also known for production of the famous Galatina wine and the finest olive oil with a deep enriching flavor. For those who love folklore, in Alberobello every year in July, there is a festival linked to the town’s history and recalls the liberation of the residents from feudal servitude in 1797. There is also an International folk festival which takes place in the second week of August.

Alberobello cuisine

The area around Alberobello is very charming and full of farms, where you can enjoy not only



the landscape, but also the local cuisine. Local favourites include hand-made pasta, produced in many varieties such as orecchiette, laganelle, lasagne, and strascinate.

Among the first courses to enjoy are “green soup” (with cabbage, celery, chard, fennel and pork broth), mashed Fava Beans and a delicious broad beans and chicory soup. The local breads are also excellent (taralli, buns, stuffed pizzas). One can also enjoy the dairy products, especially the manteche and of course the ever popular burrate.

Typical desserts in Alberobello include pettole

The town of Alberobello boasts of ancient traditions and a flourishing handicraft industry, with artisanal handicrafts made from leather, terracotta, iron, baskets and olive wood.

(rustic fritters of sweet dough), cartellate (pastry composed of flour, sugar, marsala, honey, cinnamon, oil and a little liquor, used at Christmas time) and amaretti.



Places to visit nearby

There are more trulli in the nearby town of Locorotondo, while the caves at Castellana are also very impressive and worth visiting. Nearby Ostuni is a charming town known as the “White City” for its traditional whitewashed buildings.

Visit Martina Franca for its elegant streets and Rococo balconies.

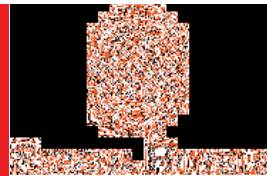
You can find more local travel ideas on the <https://www.italythisway.com/regions/puglia.php>

Excerpts from <https://www.italythisway.com/places/alberobello.php>





Italian Ambassador HE Andreas Ferrarese hosts reception to mark Italy's National Day



Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan H E Andreas Ferrarese, addressing the audience, said that Italy and Pakistan have a long history of cordial relations and cooperation in political, economic, cultural, and social spheres.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that the two nations have unanimity of views on several

issues of global importance, and mutual cooperation in all the fields has been on the rise. The Embassy of Italy in Islamabad is committed to boosting commercial ties between the two countries.

The Ambassador informed that both countries should explore all the possible avenues focusing on agriculture, machinery, textiles,

and tourism. He said that our collaboration in textiles, agriculture, livestock, construction, marble, pharmaceuticals and tourism would help enhance Pakistan's industrial scope and increase exports of value-added goods.

"We are excited about the launch of "Olive Culture Project" in Pakistan that would bear tangible fruits for the country in the future".





Tajikistan's Water Governance and Management Strategies: An Appraisal of Robust Initiatives

By Maryam Raza, Research Executive,
Center for Global & Strategic Studies
(CGSS), Islamabad

Water sustains life, economic prosperity, ecological security, and human civilization. Globally, the pressure on water resources is increasing from rapidly growing demands and climate change.

Sustainable management and water use could reduce some of that pressure, but actions towards improving existing practices are lagging.

Meeting the water needs of a growing population is largely associated with the need for water to grow food, alongside access to safe water supply and sanitation being increasingly recognized as an essential element of human capital contributing to public health, which became even more evident in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

The shortage of clean drinking water - a current challenge for population across the globe, is not a pure function of the physical scarcity of water, as a combination of factors, such as "business as usual" practices in the use and management of water and water pollution undermine the achievement of poverty eradication, posing a threat to human well-being, economic growth and national security.

Today, per capita freshwater availability is diminishing. Over the past four decades, it dropped by one-third.

According to UN-Water's World Water Development Report (2018), by 2050, between 4.8 billion and 5.7 billion people out of 9 billion will live in areas that are water-scarce for at least one month each year, up from 3.6 billion today while the number of people at risk of floods will increase to 1.6 billion, up from 1.2 billion today.

Depletion and degradation of freshwater supplies, driven by population growth and mobility, impacts of economic development, lifestyle changes and unsustainable production and consumption patterns can only be reversed by deliberate and comprehensive interventions.

Water is a powerful tool for cooperation and dialogue in support of sustainable development and safer and resilient societies. However, there is a need for more effective, integrated and coordinated actions, coupled



with strong political will.

All stakeholders, including those in government, international organizations, civil society, the private sector and academia, should be engaged, paying special attention to the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable people, leaving no one behind.

Water Action Decade and the Dushanbe Water Process:

On the great initiative of President Emomali Rahmon, in December 2016, the United Nations General Assembly declared the period 2018-2028 as the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" (hereinafter Water Action Decade), which aims at supporting sustainable development and integrated management of water resources,

while promoting cooperation and partnerships to support achieving internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

On 22 March 2018, the United Nations Secretary General's Plan for the Water Action Decade was released during a High-Level Launch Event, convened by the President of the 73rd United Nations General Assembly.

The plan outlines current activities and capabilities of the UN system and international organizations and the operational setup envisaged to support Member States in the implementation of the Water Action Decade.

In this connection, the Government of Tajikistan is committed to continue providing



a platform for policy dialogue, partnership and action at the global, regional and national level.

It is pertinent to highlight that Tajikistan with the support of the United Nations and other partners, is organizing high-level international conferences throughout the Water Action Decade. This series of events constitutes the so-called “Dushanbe Water Process”.

As part of this process, the First High-level International Conference on the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018 — 2028 (First Dushanbe Water Action Decade Conference), was held in Dushanbe in June 2018.

The outcomes of the conference included recommendations to the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development that took place in 2018, for its in-depth review of the implementation of SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation).

The Final Declaration of the First Dushanbe Conference confirmed the focus of the next conference to be on ‘Catalyzing water action and partnership at the local, national, regional and global levels’ to achieve the goals of the Water Action Decade and other water-related SDGs and targets.

The Importance of Second Dushanbe Water Action Decade Conference and Proactive Role of Tajikistan:

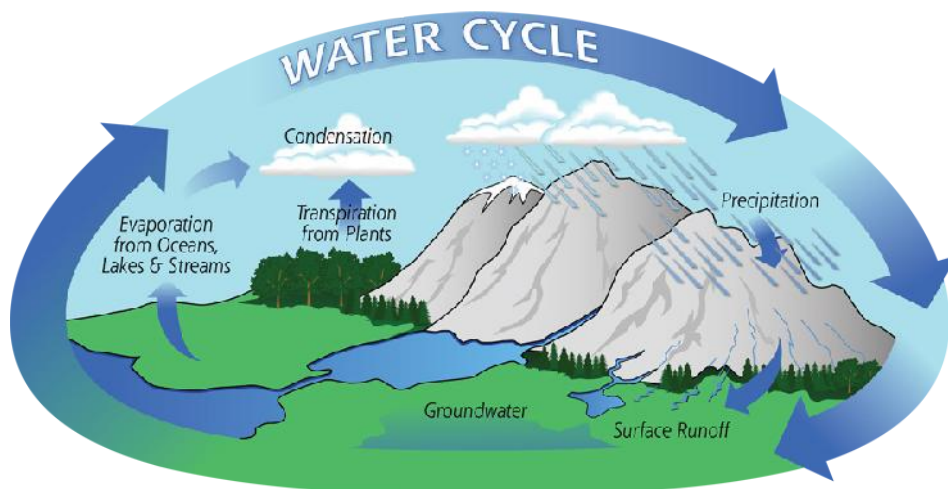
The Second Dushanbe Water Action Decade Conference is co-organized by the Government of Tajikistan and the United Nations and planned to be held from 6th to 9th June 2022.

The Conference will be co-chaired by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan and the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.

These activities and conferences clearly manifest that Tajikistan is actively pursuing SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation) and taking significant steps for water conservation and management.

The Republic of Tajikistan has made and continues to make a substantial contribution to this process. From 2000 to 2016, at the initiative of Tajikistan, the United Nations General Assembly adopted several resolutions on water:

- i. International Year of Freshwater (2003)
- ii. International Decade for Action, “Water for Life” (2005-2015)
- iii. International Year of Water Cooperation (2013)
- iv. International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development” (2018-2028), which



deserve special attention.

Throughout this period, Tajikistan has repeatedly provided a platform for discussing global water issues. The country moves towards this course by actively promoting water issues identified in the 2030 Agenda.

As a member of the High-level Panel on Water, Tajikistan, in cooperation with other panel members, has proposed a number of initiatives and is advancing them by demonstrating political leadership and commitment.

Furthermore, Tajikistan has also been an important player in solving water problems at the regional level.

About 60 per cent of the water resources of the rivers in Central Asia (the Aral Sea basin) are formed in Tajikistan.

The visionary government under the leadership of President Emomali Rahmon generously shares this vital resource with its neighbors.

Tajikistan is a co-founder of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea and its two commissions, the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (ICWC) and the Interstate Commission on Sustainable Development (ICSD), which provide platforms for discussing urgent transboundary water issues in the region.



The country is working on the aspects for effective water governance and management strategies, i.e., grand financing, investment & modernization of existing infrastructure, transition to green growth, active involvement of all stakeholders, construction of new dams, rehabilitating water reservoirs capacity, and resolving transboundary water disputes.

In Tajikistan, where over 95 per cent of electricity is generated by hydroelectric power stations, water and energy are closely interrelated.

The development of agriculture sector is also primarily based on the use of water resources since more than 80 per cent of agricultural products are produced through irrigation.

Thus, these vital initiatives by the dynamic leadership of Tajikistan would pave the way for achieving the water-related goals and objectives of sustainable development.

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Miftah for further enhancing relations with UK



DF Report

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Miftah Ismail underscored that Pakistan had long-standing historic ties with the United Kingdom, which needed to be further expanded for the mutual benefits of the two countries.

The Minister was talking to British High Commissioner, H E Dr. Christian Turner who called on him here along with Development Team head Ms Annabel Gerry at Finance.

Secretary Finance was also present in the meeting, the statement added.

The Federal Minister extended warm welcome to the British High Commissioner and exchanged views with him on matters of common interest. The Finance Minister shared with the envoy broad economic agenda and priorities of the new government and said that present government aims to bring about economic and fiscal stability leading to economic recovery and growth. On the occasion, H E Dr. Christian Turner, British High

Commissioner extended the felicitations and warm wishes of the government of United Kingdom to the minister on assuming his new responsibilities and expressed his good wishes for the new government.

He said that both countries enjoyed excellent economic relations which will be further strengthened. He assured the Minister of the full support of the British government and people of Britain. The Finance Minister thanked the British High Commissioner for his cooperation and support, the statement added.

Govt keen to attract US investment on priority: Ismail



DF Report

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Miftah Ismail said that the present government was keen to attract the U.S. foreign investment in different sectors of Pakistan's economy on priority basis.

Talking to Charge d' Affaires of the Embassy of the United States of America H E Angela P. Aggeler here, the Minister said the present government was focusing on creating a business

friendly environment for foreign investors.

Finance Minister Miftah Ismail extended warm welcome to H E Angela Aggeler and said that Pakistan and the US enjoy long-term, broad-based and multi- dimensional relationship. The Finance Minister further highlighted the economic agenda and policies of the new government with aim to bring about economic and fiscal stability. H E Angela P. Aggeler, Charge d' Affaires congratulated the Finance Minister on assuming the office and extended

full support of the US Government and its people to the Government of Pakistan. She further underscored that both countries enjoy good relations and extended her support to further promote bilateral economic relations.

The Finance Minister thanked H E Angela P. Aggeler, Charge

d' Affaires and reiterated the desire of the present government to further deepen bilateral trade and investment ties with the USA.



Senate defence panel depllores attack on Chinese teachers

DF Report

shameful.

inland war against terrorism.

Senator Mushahid Hussain led a delegation of Senate Defence Committee to the Chinese Embassy for expression of sorrow, solidarity and support following the terror strike against Chinese teachers in Karachi.

The delegation was received by the Acting Ambassador, H H Madame Pang Chunxue and her senior colleagues.

Senator Mushahid Hussain said the delegation was visiting the Embassy with a heavy heart as this was the third act of terror against the Chinese in Pakistan within a year and that Chinese teachers were target was quite

He said all political parties in Parliament shared these sentiments as China is Pakistan's paramount partner and strongest friend, a friendship that has widespread support from the people of Pakistan. Senator Mushahid Hussain expressed regret that 'our security system has failed, both, to protect the Chinese working in Pakistan or to prevent recurrence of such acts of terror'.

He said 'a comprehensive review and rethink of such a faulty system is needed' if 'we went CPEC to move forward successfully'. He said 'such a breach of security is unacceptable' for Pakistan whose armed forces successfully overcame an

He said 'we fully share in your sorrow, we fully share in your indignation and we fully share your concerns about this serious security lapse', which, if allowed to recur, can result in drying up of foreign investment.

The delegation included Senators Mushtaq Ahmed, Faisal Javed, Anwarul Haq Kakar and Dr Zarqa Suhrwardhy. Secretary of DefCom, Major (r) Hasnain Haider was also present. The Chinese acting Ambassador profusely thanked the Senators for their gesture. Incidentally, this was the first visit by a Parliamentary Committee to the Chinese Embassy since the terror strike in Karachi.



Finance Minister for further enhancing cooperation with China

DF Report

Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Miftah Ismail here expressed desire to further enhance bilateral cooperation with China in various fields.

The Minister was talking to Ms. Pangchunxue, Charge de Affaires of the Embassy of People's Republic of China who called on him here at the Finance Division. Referring to China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the Federal Minister said that the corridor would play an important role in taking Pakistan's economy forward as well as cementing the bilateral relationship between both the countries. He further assured his full support for the assistance in that regard, the statement added.

On the occasion, Ms. Pangchunxue extended her felicitations to the Minister on assuming his new responsibilities and expressed her good wishes for the new government. She assured full support and cooperation of Chinese government in developing Economic Zones as part of CPEC. She also thanked Government of Pakistan in facilitating Chinese companies in various projects in Pakistan.



Khar stresses enhanced Pak-UAE trade cooperation



DF Report

(UAE) in the field of trade and investment.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar stressed for exploring close relations with the United Arab Emirates

She expressed these views in a meeting with Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates H E Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Al-Zaabi here at the

The State Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's close ties with the UAE in diverse fields.

Pakistan values its ties with U.S. based on mutual respect, trust: Khar



DF Report

mutual respect, trust and equality.

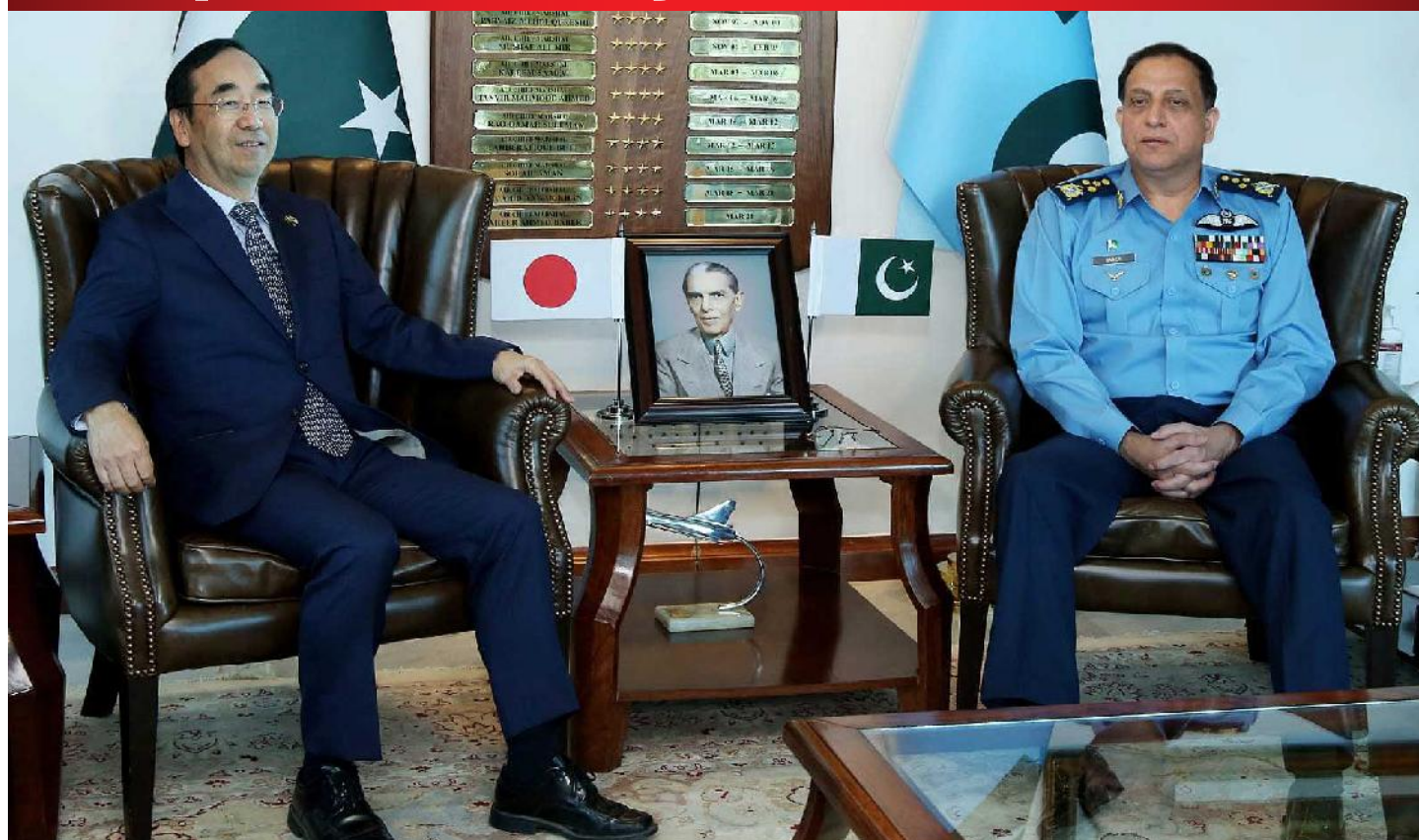
Affairs.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar said Pakistan valued its relations with the United States based on

Khar expressed these views in a meeting with U.S. Charge d' affaires Angela Aggeler who called on her here at the Ministry of Foreign

The State Minister said Pakistan wanted to strengthen its relations with the U.S. in diverse fields.

Japanese envoy calls on Air Chief



DF Report

Ambassador of Japan WADA Mitsuhiro called on Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu. The visiting dignitary lauded the professionalism of PAF personnel

and the exceptional progress made by PAF over the years, especially through indigenization, said a Pakistan Air Force media release.

The Air Chief highlighted that both countries enjoy cordial relations and reiterated his resolve to further enhance the existing bilateral

cooperation between the air forces of the two countries.

Various matters of mutual interest and professional cooperation also came under discussion during the meeting.

Pakistan, Japan agree to enhance cooperation in IT

DF Report

Pakistan and Japan agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation in the field of information technology between the two countries.

Talking to Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan H E Mitsuhiro WADA, Federal Minister for IT Syed Amin Ul Haque said Pakistan greatly values its relations with Japan. The Minister said that it is vital to enhance cooperation between the two countries in the field of IT and telecommunication. Syed Amin Ul Haque said that Pakistan has great potential in the field of IT and Japan can benefit from expertise



of Pakistani IT professionals. Japanese IT companies can hire the services of Pakistani IT experts, he added. He said that Ministry of IT & Telecom would extend every possible cooperation to facilitate Japanese companies.

Ambassador of Japan expressed that Pakistani

youth were able and talented and Pakistan's IT experts can be beneficial for Japan. He also lauded the steps of Ministry of IT & Telecom for the uplift of IT and telecom sector. Senior officers of the Ministry of IT were also present in the meeting.

Pakistan's ties with UK, based on mutual respect, common views: Marriyum

DF Report

Pakistan's relations with the United Kingdom are based on mutual respect, common views on a wide range of regional and international issues and Islamabad immensely values these bilateral ties.

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb made these remarks during a meeting with British High Commissioner Christian Turner who called on her on April 26. She remarked that Pakistan's relations with UK continued to grow during the past 75 years, and Pakistan was looking forward to further strengthen bilateral ties in future. Congratulating Marriyum Aurangzeb on assuming the portfolio of Minister for Information and Broadcasting, the British High Commissioner expressed his desire to work together to further strengthen and expand bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

They discussed development of bilateral relations, including cooperation in various fields of media, digital media, media training and film-making. The Minister termed fake news as a big challenge for the entire world including Pakistan. Christian Turner congratulated the Information Minister on the 75th anniversary



of Pakistan's independence. They also agreed to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom in a befitting

manner. The Minister said that there would be special celebrations on Independence Day of Pakistan on August 14 at the embassies of Pakistan and United Kingdom and London City.

Hina Khar, UK HC discuss bilateral ties

DF Report

British High Commissioner Dr. Christian Turner called on Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar here and congratulated her on assuming the office and hoped that both sides will work together to further deepen the Pakistan-UK relations.

Minister of State Khar thanked the British High Commissioner for the felicitations and stated that Pakistan highly valued its relations with the UK, which were based on mutual respect and shared perceptions on broad range of regional and international issues.

Minister of State also appreciated the role undertaken by the British government in promoting health, education, governance and human development in Pakistan. Both sides also agreed to celebrate 75th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations in a befitting manner.

Besides bilateral relations, discussions on evolving geopolitical situation and regional matters including Indian Illegally Occupied



Jammu and Kashmir and Afghanistan also took place. Hina noted with concern the economic impact of the continuity of the Ukraine crisis and expressed the need for early resolution of the matter through diplomacy and peaceful

means. The British High Commissioner thanked Minister of State and conveyed his good wishes and keen interest in promoting bilateral relations.



Nepali envoy calls on COAS, lauds Pakistan's efforts for regional stability

DF Report

Ambassador of Nepal H E Tapas Adhikari on Apr 05 called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at GHQ and appreciated Pakistan's efforts for regional stability. During the meeting, matters

of mutual interest, regional security situation and measures to improve bilateral relations between the two countries were discussed, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release. The COAS said that Pakistan wished to enhance long term multi-domain relations with Nepal based on common interests. The

Army Chief reiterated that all regional countries needed to work collectively for enduring peace and stability in the region. The visiting dignitary pledged to play his part for further improvement in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.

Romanian envoy calls on COAS Lauds Pakistan's role in regional stability

DF Report

Romanian Ambassador Nicolae Goia Monday called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa at the General Headquarters and appreciated Pakistan's role in regional stability.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, regional security situation, including the latest situation in Afghanistan, and enhanced bilateral cooperation with Romania were discussed, said an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release.

The COAS said Pakistan valued its relations with the European Union (EU) countries, and "we earnestly look forward to enhance mutually beneficial multi-domain relations based on common interest".

Both sides reiterated the desire to further enhance bilateral relations in all fields. The visiting dignitary pledged to play his role for further improvement in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.



UAE envoy, NA speaker discuss bilateral matters

DF Report

National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) had significant convergence in political views on host of regional and global issues, which provided an opportunity to develop a strategic, broad-based and compressive partnership in the diverse sectors.

He said this while talking to UAE Ambassador to Pakistan Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Saleem Al-Zaabi, who called on him here at the Parliament House. Referring to the parliamentary relations between the two countries legislatures, he said enhanced exchange of parliamentary delegations would further solidify the bilateral relations.

The NA speaker extended an invitation to his UAE counterpart to visit Pakistan, which, he said, would pave the way for further enhancing bilateral trade and commercial activities.

Drawing attention of the UAE ambassador to the atrocities being committed by the tyrant Indian forces on innocent Kashmiris, he said the world community should take cognizance of them and should resolve the issues in accordance with the aspirations of people of Kashmir.



He said Pakistan was strategically located at Asia's premier trade, energy and transport corridor. This advantage made Pakistan a market full of opportunities, he added.

He stressed the need to devise a mechanism to further enhance bilateral economic cooperation as China Pakistan Economic Corridor had generated immense economic opportunities in Pakistan.

The UAE Ambassador felicitated Raja Pervaiz

Ashraf on being elected unopposed as NA speaker. He said the UAE had and would stand by Pakistan in its pursuit for economic and social sector development. He said Pakistan was a land of opportunities and the UAE investors would certainly like to benefit from them. He said parliamentarians from both the countries could bring their nations more closer.

Appreciating the role of Pakistani diaspora, he said they were playing a vital role in the socioeconomic development of the UAE.

Pakistan values its time-tested friendship with Saudi Arabia: NA Speaker

DF Report

Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said that Saudi Arabia is a selfless friend which has stood by Pakistan in time of need.

The decades-old friendship had witnessed positive progression with the passage of time, the Speaker said this while talking to the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki. The Speaker said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoy brotherly relations and the same transcends to the legislatures of both the countries and have supported each other on international and regional forums.

The Speaker said that Pakistan attaches immense importance to its time-tested and all-weather friendship with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He said that the brotherly relations between the two countries were intertwined in bonds of religion, history, and culture. Paying gratitude to the Saudi Leadership, the Speaker said that they have always stood by Pakistan

whenever needed. He called for enhancing cooperation in diverse sectors.

Saudi Ambassador Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki agreed with the Speaker saying that undoubtedly the hearts of the people of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan beat together.

He said that his government and people hold Pakistani close to their hearts. He said that Saudi Arabia had and would always stand by Pakistan whenever needed. He agreed for enhancing parliamentary interaction between both the legislative bodies and extended his all-out support.



CLAS organizes conference on Lawfare and Pakistan's Response at Marriott Hotel, Islamabad



Centre for Law and Security held a conference on 'Lawfare and Pakistan's Response' at the Marriott Hotel, Islamabad. The conference was attended by eminent lawyers and jurists that included Justice (retired) Ali Nawaz Chowhan, Barrister Ali Zafar, Ahmer Bilal Soofi, Maj General Irfan Arshad, Mohsin Kamall, Dr. Salma Shaheen, Barrister Muhammad Ahmad Pansota, Taimur Malik and Imtiaz Gul. Law papers on Pakistan's response to lawfare were presented at the conference. CLAS also launched their report on 'Lawfare and Pakistan' during the event. The report contains several recommendations that can be adopted by Pakistan in order to create a comprehensive lawfare strategy.

applauded and encouraged the audience to further promote international law and lawfare, so that the nation can take a serious front towards lawfare strategy. While discussing lawfare, he termed it as a modern day warfare tactic and said that Pakistan must be prepared to address future lawfare challenges. He stressed upon the significance of international law and the need for Pakistan to focus on international law in order to build a comprehensive narrative at international forums. Dr. Chaudhry Faisal Mushtaq, Chairman Executive Board, CLAS introduced the Centre and thanked the audience for their participation. He stressed upon the fact that it is the responsibility of each and every national of Pakistan to strengthen Pakistan's position on lawfare.

The Chief Guest of the event, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, Federal Minister of Law and Justice

Justice Ali Nawaz Chowhan, Honorary





Chairman, Legal Forum for the Oppressed Voices of Kashmir discussed the use of lawfare by the Western states through sanctions. He also mentioned how it is only a matter of time until lawfare is used against other issues such as water and therefore said it is very important that Pakistan develops a lawfare strategy.

Mr. Mohsin Kamall, International Law Expert, emphasized on the growing significance of international law. He also mentioned that lawfare is the future of international law and politics. He gave the example of China and how it promoted international law in order to help them diplomatically and politically. Mr. Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director, Centre for Research and Security Studies discussed various Western countries and the way they used lawfare for their own advantages such as for normalizing India's illegal occupation in Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Taimur Malik, Founder, Courting the Law pointed out the internal issues of Pakistan. He then reiterated that Pakistan needs some focal point, within the limits of which the policies shall be determined on relevant forums. Barrister Ali Zafar, Partner, Mandviwalla and Zafar, talked about the importance of international treaties in relation to lawfare. He highlighted some historic mistakes that nations have made. He elaborated how certain policies and laws have affected Pakistan. Dr. Salma Shaheen, Professor, King's College London, referred to the internal Lawfare mechanisms of Israel, India, North Korea, US and Pakistan. She highlighted the geographic position of Pakistan, and stressed why we need lawfare system more than any nation in our region. Barrister Muhammad Ahmad Pansota, Advocate Supreme Court, discussed the



rise of disinformation laws and talked about the legal tools that can be used by Pakistan to fight disinformation.

The first session was followed by a panel discussion that was moderated by Mr. Rehman Azhar. The panelists included Justice Ali Nawaz Chowhan, Major General Irfan Arshad, Imtiaz Gul and Mohsin Kamall. The discussion was focused on contemporary lawfare issues and strategies Pakistan can adopt to counter lawfare moves in future. The second session was opened by Mr. Ahmer Bilal Soofi, President, Research Society of International Law, who talked about how Pakistan's success in politics and diplomacy depends on its expertise regarding international law. He discussed major developments in international law and emphasized that Pakistan needs to encourage capacity building in international law. Ms. Amna Riaz Ali, Partner, Legal Ease International, while discussing the Kulbhushan Jadhav case stated that Pakistan's lawfare strategy aimed to expose the loopholes in India's lawfare enforcement armour. Pakistan brought the ICJ's attention that India had sought the court for political means rather than justice.

Mr. Rehman Azhar, Executive Director, CLAS emphasized on the importance of lawfare and how adversarial states have been using lawfare tactics against Pakistan.

He stressed upon the need to develop a lawfare strategy by Pakistan. The conference was concluded with the distribution of shields to the Chief Guest, Guests of Honor and speakers along with the distribution of CLAS's report on 'Lawfare and Pakistan'.



European, Pakistani musicians enthrall audience during heritage concert at Lok Virsa. The audience got the chance to witness this authentic encounter between Pakistani, Oriental and Western musical cultures within the tracks but also throughout the whole concert.



Mr Aziz Boolani, Chief Executive Officer Serena Hotels South & Central Asia introduced Mr Otto Kurzendorfer, the newly appointed General Manager of Islamabad Serena Hotel



Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



A delegation led by the First Deputy Defence Minister/Chief of General Staff of Armed Forces of Kazakhstan Lt. Gen Khussainov Marat Rakhimovich exchanging views with President of Pakistan Dr Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.



The Charge d'Affaires of People's Republic of China H E Pang Chunxue calls on Prime Minister Mian Shehbaz Shrief at his office.



Prime Minister Shehbaz Shrief offering Dua after inaugurating Metro Bus Service, Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan, and Chinese Charge d'Affaires also present.



The Charge d'Affaires of People's Republic of China H E Pang Chunxue calls on Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani at Parliament House.



Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to UN in a meeting with ASG Nikhil Seth, ED of UNITAR.



Ambassador of Iran Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini calls on Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf at Parliament House.



Ambassador of Belgium H E Philippe Bronchain during a meeting with Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar.



British High Commissioner H E Dr Christian Turner discussing mutual matters with the Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain at his office.

Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens



In-charge Masjid-e-Nabawi Ibrahim Alghamdi welcoming President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mehmood on his arrival.



US Congress woman discussing mutual interest issues with President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mehmood.



The Charge d'Affaires of China Her Excellency Ms. Pang Chunxue called on Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah Khan



Ambassador of Arab Republic of Egypt to Pakistan H E Tarek Mohamed Dahroug exchanging views regarding defence matters with Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral M Khan Niazi.



Ambassador of Netherlands H E Wouter Plomp calls on Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar at his office.



Group Photo of Federal Secretary for Narcotics Control Dr Syed Kaleem Imam with Drug Liaison Officers at 1st DLO Conference.



A delegation led by FEO Jazz Aamir Ibrahim calls on Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Syed Amin ul Haque to discuss professional issues.



Mr Yannick Glemarec, ED of Green Climate Fund in a meeting with Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to UN.

Islamabad Serena Hotel hosted a Jashn-e-Qawwali with the legendary Qawwal Imran Aziz Mian. The beautifully organised musical event began with Sufi melodies and ended with a lavish sehri.



On the occasion, Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels, said, “We must promote our culture otherwise our young generation will never become familiar with our immensely rich heritage. Moreover, without encouragement, through platforms and by audience, this talent will not flourish.”

Imran Aziz Mian said, “The word Qawwali derives from the Arabic word qaul, which means to speak, to deliver, to give a message. Before it was called Qawwali, the name for such a gathering was a Mehfil-i-Samaa. Samaa, which is listening as a spiritual practice, has a much longer history, while this version of the Samaa, that is Qawwali, originates with Hazrat

Amir Khusrau. Speaking of his late father, the extraordinary Qawwal Aziz Mian, he said, “The title of Shehanshah-i-Qawwali was given to him by the Shah of Iran.” The event was attended by members of the diplomatic community, the corporate and development sectors, and people from various walks of life.

Following the performance, an elaborate buffet of traditional and continental food was served.



CEO of Islamabad Serena Hotel Aziz Boolani and his spouse Wiqar Boolani hosted annual corporate 'Dinner Reception' at the banquet hall.



Where government officers and members of the armed forces, diplomats, heads of international agencies, and corporate executives were present. The event coincided with the completion of 20 years of the hotel's successful

operations. A variety of different cuisines was served including Pakistani, Middle Eastern, East Asian and Continental.

An opulent canopy embedded with flowers covered the 'Aangan' area outside the Sheesh Mahal, featuring live stations serving

'shawarma' and live barbecue, right off the grill.

The visitors enjoyed the Iftar dinner in a tranquil setting with live folk music, while the evening highlighted memories of Serena's history of impeccable service and excellent standards.



Norwegian Constitution Day celebrated at Ambassador's residence

Ambassador of Norway to Pakistan H E Mr. Per Albert Ilsaas hosted a grand reception at his residence to mark Norwegian Constitution Day reception. A large number of diplomats, members of the business community, govt officials and

media persons attended the reception. Ambassador of Norway Mr. Per Albert Ilsaas, on the occasion, said Norway and Pakistan enjoy excellent bilateral relations adding people to people relations between the two countries were also warm and cordial. He said,

the Norwegian-Pakistani Diaspora, one of the largest in Europe, was an important bridge between the two countries — and contributed to making his job as Norway's Ambassador to Pakistan a rewarding and enjoyable one.





Wife of Tajikistan Ambassador hosts dinner in the honor of wives of envoys, diplomats



Habib Ahmad Honorary Consul General of Russian Federation hosts reception



Azerbaijan's Independence Day celebrated at Marriott Hotel, Islamabad



The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Pakistan held an official reception to mark Independence Day at the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad. The reception was attended by Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi as the main guest, Federal Minister for States and Border Regions Muhammad Talha Mahmood, Federal Minister for Defense Production Muhammad Israr Tareen, foreign ambassadors to Pakistan, Representatives of the Pakistani government agencies, public, cultural, and business circles, high-ranking officers of the Armed Forces of Pakistan, media representatives, as well as Azerbaijanis living in Pakistan.





South Africa's National Day celebrated at Marriott Hotel, Islamabad



A large number of Ambassadors and diplomats were present on the occasion. On the occasion as Chief Guest Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb stated that The diplomatic relations between Pakistan and South Africa were established in 1994, she said, adding it was a matter of pride for Pakistanis that the country continued to extend moral, diplomatic, and political support to South Africa in its struggle against apartheid.







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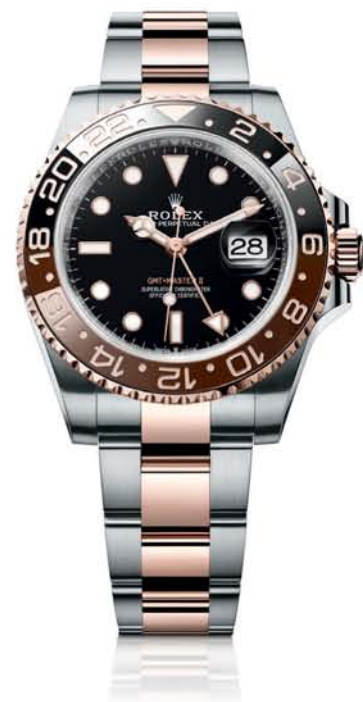
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ROLEX

Monthly Magazine on National & International Political Affairs, Diplomatic Issues

May - June 2022

Volume 13

Issue 05-06

Promoting Bilateral Relations | Current Affairs | Trade & Economic Affairs | Education | Technology | Culture & Tourism

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HE Andreas Ferrarese, Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan