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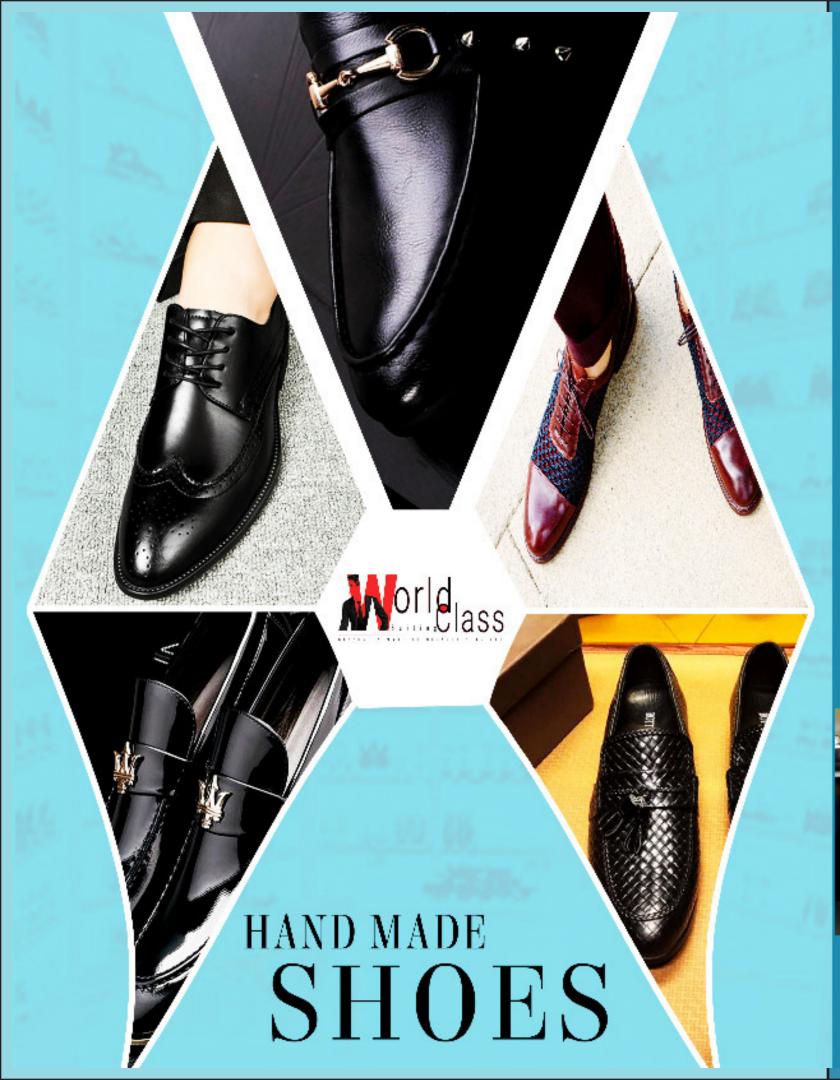
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The newly appointed envoys of the United States of America (USA), Newly appointed envoys present credentials to Turkiye, Australia, European Union (EU), Bhutan, and Sudan presented their credentials to President Dr Arif Alvi in a ceremony at the Aiwan-e-10 **President Alvi** 

18 **German FM H E Annalena Baerbock visits Pakistan** 

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, appreciating German companies doing business in Pakistan, invited more foreign firm to take advantage of the country's business friendly policies.

Pakistan to partner SCO agenda for region's collective good: FM

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said Pakistan would always be a strong partner in all endeavors of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) aimed at promoting collective good of the region. Addressing the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting, he said SCO's contributions to regional security and stability as well as to the shaping of economic and information environment would continue to grow.

UN commemorates Nelson Mandela's 'fight for a better world'

UN Member States gathered in the General Assembly Hall to observe Nelson Mandela International Day, a celebration for everyone to take action and inspire change in their communities. The first democraticallyelected President of South Africa, and the country's first Black leader, died in December 2013 at age 95. The annual commemoration on 18 July, his birthday, recognizes his contribution to the culture of peace and freedom.

Pak-Belarus ties moving forward to open new opportunities for cooperation

First of all, I would like to thank Diplomatic Focus Magazine for this great opportunity on the occasion of the Independence Day of Belarus to share with the esteemed readers information about Belarus and Belarusian-Pakistani bilateral relations. As for my diplomatic career, I was posted in New-York and Belgrade. Before coming to Pakistan I held a position of the Director-General for Treaties and Legal Affairs in the MFA.

50

28

32

#### Contents

**RBI** Mediaminds **Group of Publications** Electronic & Print Media Production House

10 Newly appointed envoys present credentials to President Alvi

12 PM reaffirms Pakistan's full support to SCO's objectives, charter

14 President for expeditious FTA signing between Pakistan, Switzerland

15 US Ambassador calls on PM

16 Sanjrani, President of Azerbaijan for enhanced regional collaboration

17 COAS calls on Emir of Qatar during official visit

18 German FM H E Annalena Baerbock visits Pakistan

20 Envoys of KSA, UAE, Egypt, Deputy Chief UNHCR meet FM Bilawal

21 National Meet on Sustainable Development Goals 2030 held in Islamabad

22 Five-member delegation of Chinese investors calls on Chairman Senate

23 Diplomatic Focus Thru Lens

24 KAHF International launches new Rolex boutique in Karachi

26 PM extends support to Turkey on failed coup anniversary

28 Pakistan to partner SCO agenda for region's collective good: FM

30 FM for close Pak-Iran cooperation on Afghanistan matters

31 95th Anniversary of the founding of Chinese People's Liberation Army commemorated at GHQ, Rawalpindi

32 UN commemorates Nelson Mandela's 'fight for a better world'

34 CPEC Phase-II & New Architecture of Regional Security

36 Ministry of Foreign Affairs organizes mango festival as part of its 75th anniversary celebrations

38 Sino-Pak media outlets to join hands to project CPEC development: Wang Wenbin

39 Pakistan, China vow to boost defence, anti-terror cooperation

40 China delivers 2nd Type 054 A/P frigate to Pakistan

41 Korea enhances employment quota for Pakistani workers: Envoy

42 Kyrgyz Ambassador calls on Education Minister to discuss bilateral matters

43 Pak-Iran enjoy multi-dimensional relations: Asad Mahmood

44 Musadik, Turkmen envoy discuss Pakistan-Turkmenistan energy collaboration

45 RCCI, PABF organize 4th Pakistan America Trade Summit at Serena Hotel Islamabad

46 Pakistan, Azerbaijan celebrate 30 years of diplomatic ties

47 Italy to invest \$1.5 million for olive cultivation in Pakistan, Says Italian Ambassador

48 Pak-Bangladesh trade to reach \$1 billion soon: HC

49 Mazari welcomes start of direct flights from Karachi to Almaty

50 Pak-Belarus ties moving forward to open new opportunities for cooperation

56 Indonesian govt paying special attention to increase supply of Palm oil to Pakistan: Indonesia's Envoy

57 Indonesian Embassy Organizes Cultural Exhibition at Lok Virsa

58 Pakistani, American diplomats for closer Islamabad-Washington ties

59 US envoy for robust economic cooperation with Pakistan

60 Pakistan safe, peaceful country for investment: Danish Ambassador

61 British envoy, HR Minister, Punjab Governor discuss matters of mutual interest

62 Outgoing Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan H E Benedict de Cerjat hosts farewell reception at his residence

63 Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Islamabad holds 2022 K-pop Festival.

64 Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan railway project is anchor for regional peace: Uzbek Ambassador

66 Steel Cutting Ceremony of Pakistan Navy Offshore Patrol Vessel Held in Romania

67 China, Pakistan, CPEC - History, Background, Challenges and Way Forward

68 PAKISTAN TO ORGANIZE FIRST INTERNATIONAL MARITIME EXPO & CONFERENCE 2023

70 124th Anniversary of the Philippine Independence celebrated

71 Charge d Affaires of Malaysia H E Deddy Faisal hosts farewell

72 Dean of Diplomatic Corps HE Mr Atadjan Movlamov hosts farewell reception in the honor of outgoing ambassadors

73 The British Council in collaboration with Patakha Pictures

74 HE Dr Tarek Dahroug Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan hosts reception to mark National Day of Egypt

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#### **Editorial**



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congratulate entire Pakistani nation on the occasion of 75th National Day. This day

reminds us that the homeland was created after great sacrifices and it is our responsibility to work for the unity, peace and prosperity of Pakistan while shunning prejudice and discriminations. We have to follow Quaid's vision and teachings. Pakistan's economic problems revolve around depleting foreign reserves, widening current account deficit and the depreciation of the rupee. This has catapulted the country into a balance of payment crisis that is not likely to go away without financial assistance from allies. Fortunately for us, a few friendly nations have promised to funnel in \$4 billion through loans, cash deposits, stock investments and deferred oil payments, provided we move forward with the IMF disbursement and the incumbent government manages to retain control. Currently, Pakistan only has two months' worth of foreign reserves available to cover exports. Poor economic performance has enabled our balance of payment crisis to escalate to the point that without additional financial assistance, our survival will become unlikely. Friendly states have vowed to provide funds to bridge the gap. \$1.2 billion has been promised in deferred oil payments, especially helpful considering the high price of fuel across the globe. \$2 billion will be invested in stocks, and other countries will provide loans to Pakistan that are more than enough for us to get by. Securing these funds is heavily reliant on continuous progress with the IMF. Thus, Pakistan must ensure that it continues to implement policies that fulfil requirements put forth by the international body, and regulates them so that economic growth can be achieved in the future. Without this, we are unlikely to secure the funds because defaulting on the IMF's deal will reflect the inability of our economy to sustain itself. Additionally, it is also vital that we achieve some semblance of political stability. Our allies have promised this amount to the government in office today, and that too for a reason. Turbulence in the political arena is likely to impact economic policies, which can lead to foreign investors losing confidence in the country's ability to repay or use the funds productively. Our economic environment is tough right now but as long as we play our cards right, we will surely experience some relief in the future. This is what the government must continue to focus on going forward. On the other hand, Pakistan and Afghanistan have penned an agreement to facilitate bilateral trade, especially when it comes to the use of coal in power generation to make up for the shortfall in electricity production in the wake of the high cost of furnace oil in the international market. It is good to see mutually beneficial arrangements being agreed upon considering how Pakistan has already turned into a net importer from Afghanistan since the Taliban took control of Kabul in August 2021. This is a win-win arrangement for both sides given how the global economy has been suffering due to the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war. At this point, Afghanistan's coal trade market is one of its biggest revenue resources, which is running an economic cycle benefitting the common Afghans from miners to transporters.





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



December 2021



#### **Newly appointed envoys present** credentials to President Alvi





he newly appointed envoys of the United States of America (USA), Turkiye, Australia, European Union (EU), Bhutan, and Sudan presented their credentials to President Dr Arif Alvi in a ceremony at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Following the presentation of the credentials, the US Ambassador H E Donald Armin Blome, Turkish Ambassador H E Dr Mehmet Pacaci, Australian High Commissioner H E Neil Hawkins, EU Ambassador H E Riina Kionka, Sudanese Ambassador H E Salih Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed Siddig, and non-resident Ambassador of Bhutan H E Rinchen Kuentsyl separately called on the President.

Talking to the US Ambassador, the president emphasised that a constructive and sustained engagement between the two countries on the principles of mutual respect and mutual interest was vital to promote peace, development and security in the region.

He said that this year would mark the 75th anniversary of the establishment of Pak-USA diplomatic ties which would be celebrated befittingly.

The President noted that there had been a healthy momentum of engagement between Pakistan and the USA through dialogues on the climate change, health, energy, Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA).

We encourage US companies to invest in Pakistan and reap dividends from the lucrative benefits offered by Pakistan's Special Economic Zones, he said.

President Alvi highlighted that Pakistan was actively involved in engagement with its diaspora in the USA in the Tech sector and was desirous of more tech sector investments from the US companies.

Talking to the Turkish ambassador, the president noted with satisfaction convergence between the two countries on critical issues, including Kashmir, Northern Cyprus, Islamophobia, and Afghanistan. He said that both countries would celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two brotherly countries, on November 30, this year.

He further underlined that Pakistan remained committed to furthering bilateral trade and investment ties with Turkiye.









In a meeting with the Australian High Commissioner, the president said that Pakistan offered attractive investment opportunities in different sectors. The Australian companies can invest in infrastructure development, agriculture, renewable energy, mining, manufacturing, water and waste management, the president said.

He stated that Pakistan offered a large pool of highly skilled human resources in many areas with professionals qualified from top Pakistani and Western Universities. e also expressed satisfaction over the ample educational opportunities being offered in Australia for Pakistani students.

Talking to the Ambassador of the EU delegation, the president stated that Pakistan valued its relations with the EU and was satisfied that PakEU relations were moving in a positive direction in all spheres of coordination.

Economic and trade ties are the key feature of Pakistan and EU multidimensional relationship, the president said. He highlighted that GSP+ had been a mutually beneficial scheme and had played an important role in the expansion of Pak-EU bilateral trade.

He further said that Pakistan saw the GSP+ scheme as a constructive engagement for the betterment of its economy and promoting its economic agenda. Talking to the Sudanese ambassador, the president appreciated the historically fraternal ties, bilateral cooperation, and coordination at OIC and UN between the two countries. In a meeting with non-resident ambassador of Bhutan, the president said that Pakistan took immense pride in its rich Buddhist

heritage. Pakistan is home to the second most sacred site in Buddhism in Swat, which is the birthplace of Guru Padmasambhawa (better known as the second Buddha), he highlighted.

The President said that Pakistan would welcome religious tourism from Bhutan, which would help promote people-to-people contact between the two countries.

He reassured the ambassador that Pakistan would continue to assist Bhutan in the development of its human resources by offering courses in Pakistan's professional institutions.

President Alvi congratulated the envoys on their appointments and expressed the hope that they would make efforts to further broaden bilateral relations with Pakistan in different fields.

#### PM reaffirms Pakistan's full support to SCO's objectives, charter SG SCO hails Pak contributions to SCO's across all domains Meets FM to discuss matters of mutual interest

By Mian Fazal Elahi

rime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif assured Pakistan's full support in the fulfillment of the purposes and objectives of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), under his stewardship.

He hoped that all SCO members would continue to work together for building peace, enhancing international solidarity and cooperation.

The Prime Minister was talking to Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Ambassador Zhang Ming who called on him, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The prime minister also reaffirmed Pakistan's strong commitment to the principles of the SCO Charter and the 'Shanghai Spirit.'

He highlighted the current global challenges manifested in the high fuel and food prices and the resultant food insecurity as well as economic and financial difficulties for a large number of countries including SCO members.

Appreciating the comprehensive development agenda of SCO, the prime minister emphasized that the core purpose of the Organization remained the growth and prosperity of the SCO region and how well the SCO leaders were responding to the aspirations and ambitions of their people to have better standards of living.

He underlined Pakistan's priorities and national development goals as well as important areas of interest within the SCO framework of cooperation including trade and economy; connectivity & transport; poverty alleviation; energy; agriculture and food security; climate change; security; information technology; digitalization; and cultural and people-topeople linkages.

The Prime Minister underlined the need for developing appropriate funding mechanisms to promote intra-SCO trade as well as development initiatives.

Stressing the enhancement of transport and communication links, the prime minister underscored the importance of the connectivity agenda and, in this regard, also highlighted that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) could serve as a useful model in its facilitation.

The Prime Minister also shared his perspective on a number of specific regional and global security issues as well as SCO's role in promoting stability in the region and beyond.



In this context, he appreciated the work of SCO-RATS where Pakistan, together with other member states, was playing an active role in countering common security challenges.

The SCO secretary general expressed his sincere gratitude to the government and leadership of Pakistan for arranging his visit before the upcoming SCO Council of Foreign Ministers and Heads of State meetings in Uzbekistan.

The Secretary General lauded Pakistan's constructive contributions to SCO's work and activities across all domains and thanked the Prime Minister for the guidance provided with regard to SCO's priorities and endeavours in the



future.

He also highlighted the invitation to the Prime Minister to attend the SCO summit in Samarkand in September 2022 to which Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif responded that he was looking forward to participate in the summit.

The prime minister also warmly felicitated the secretary-general on taking up his important assignment.

While in a tweet on social media platform Twitter, he said, "In my meeting with SCO Secretary General, I reiterated Pakistan's strong commitment to the principles of SCO & Shanghai Spirit.

The SCO has a great role in strengthening international solidarity & cooperation at a time of global challenges, especially high fuel & food prices."

"Pakistan is keen to work with other SCO member countries for the promotion of cooperation in the fields of trade & economy, connectivity & communication, energy & agriculture, climate change & information technology. There is a massive scope for intra-SCO trade."

Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) ambassador Zhang Ming called on Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at the Foreign Office and discussed matters of mutual interest.

The Foreign Minister warmly welcomed the secretary general and his delegation to Pakistan and congratulated him on his appointment to this important post, at the helm of the SCO Secretariat.

The Foreign Minister assured the Secretary General of Pakistan's active support in taking forward SCO's development cooperation agenda.

The Foreign Minister highlighted the enormous potential of the SCO region and stated that it was a collective responsibility to work together in harnessing this potential effectively for the sustained progress and prosperity of the SCO region as a whole.

While discussing the comprehensive and diverse socio-economic cooperation matrix of SCO, the foreign minister underlined Pakistan's interest in key priority areas of connectivity and transport; food security; innovation and technology exchange, trade and economy, including e-commerce; start-ups and digital literacy; youth empowerment etc.

He also highlighted Pakistan's potential as a trans-shipment and trade hub for SCO countries and reiterated Pakistan's keenness to play an active and constructive role in further strengthening SCO.

Views were the also exchanged on





modernization of working mechanisms of SCO as well as the further expansion of the organization, which was a testimony to its growing stature as a major multilateral platform.

The Foreign Minister reassured the secretary general that Pakistan would be supportive of the reform process.

Sharing his perspective on the situation in Afghanistan, he underscored the need to maintain constructive engagement and practical cooperation to promote the shared goals of peace, stability, development and regional connectivity.

He added that the international community must scale up assistance to help address the twin challenges of a dire humanitarian situation and economic crisis.

The Afghan interim authorities, on their part, must address the concerns of the international community pertaining to inclusivity; respect for rights of all Afghans, including girls' education;

and continued efforts in counter-terrorism.

The SCO is a trans-regional multilateral organization of eight countries comprising, in addition to Pakistan, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and India. The SCO strived to promote multi-faceted and comprehensive cooperation in diverse areas.

The visit of the SCO Secretary General to Pakistan was part of customary visits to member states after assumption of office.

It is aimed at exchanging views with the leadership on the strategic direction of the Organization in future, as well as our priorities in the SCO development cooperation framework.

The visit provides a valuable opportunity for consultations on Pakistan's role and participation in SCO, especially in the run up to the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) later this month in Tashkent and the Council of Heads of States (CHS) meeting in Samarkand in September 2022.

#### President for expeditious FTA signing between Pakistan, Switzerland



**DF Report** 

resident Dr Arif Alvi on June 30 stressed the need for expeditious signing of the mutually agreed upon Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Pakistan and Switzerland after taking all stakeholders on

The president, in a meeting with outgoing Ambassador of Switzerland

H E Bénédict de Cerjat, who paid a farewell call on him, said the FTA would provide a formal framework for enhanced and speedy cooperation in the fields of trade, economy and commerce. The President said that the world community should take serious notice of the rising Islamophobia and polarization in Indian society.

He called upon the international community to take meaningful steps for curbing the incidents of intimidation and terrorization of minorities in India, and violence connected with Islamophobia to mitigate the sufferings of Indian Muslims and other religious minorities. President Alvi emphasized that refugees originating from any part of the world should be treated with equity and equality.

They should also be extended with facilities and refuge without any discrimination on the basis of colour, creed, race, religion or region.

He further urged the need for taking practical steps by the international community to help defuse tensions and unrest in conflict-ridden countries, besides creating enabling conditions for peace to prevent their populations from turning into refugees to reduce the pressure on receiving countries.

The President said that Pakistan could benefit from the Swiss experience in technical education and training in the tourism and hospitality sectors. He hoped that the outgoing ambassador would work toward realizing the

full potential of tourism-related cooperation between the two countries.

The President said that Pakistan valued Switzerland's long-term partnership with Pakistan in the economy, trade and commerce. He appreciated Swiss contributions towards the socio-economic development of the country as well as the humanitarian assistance provided by Switzerland.

The President felicitated the outgoing ambassador on completing a successful tenure in Pakistan.

He appreciated his efforts for the promotion of bilateral relations between the two countries, especially in promoting a soft image of Pakistan through social media.

Switzerland is the sixth-largest investor in Pakistan in the fields of food processing, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and engineering sectors.



#### **US Ambassador calls on PM**

#### Reaffirms United States' commitment to further strengthen ties with Pakistan

DF Report

mbassador of the United States to Pakistan H E Donald Blome called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here on Friday and discussed the bilateral ties.

The Prime Minister congratulated the Ambassador on his presentation of credentials and expressed the hope that he would devote his efforts to deepening and enhancing bilateral ties between the US and Pakistan.

In this context, the prime minister highlighted the historic, longstanding ties between the two countries and underscored Pakistan's desire to further develop that relationship on the basis of mutual respect, trust, and interest.

Recalling the depth and breadth of Pakistan-US relationship, the prime minister underscored that various dialogues established between Pakistan and the US had been playing a critical role in strengthening their bilateral ties in the areas of trade, investment, IT (information technology), climate change, health, and energy.

He emphasized that given the country's

economic and demographic potential, US companies needed to be encouraged by the Development Finance Corporation of the US to invest in Pakistan's large market. The prime minister also stressed the need to have the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement Ministerial Meeting take place later this year, besides holding of the Business Opportunities Conference.

This year marked the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Pakistan and the United States. The Prime Minister hoped that both countries would celebrate the historic occasion in a befitting manner, which would further deepen bilateral and people-to-people ties. He also stressed the need to have more exchanges at high-level between the two countries.

Ambassador Blome thanked Pakistan for its prompt and effective assistance in facilitating evacuation from Afghanistan. In this context, the prime minister emphasized that the deepening of cooperation between Pakistan and the United States would promote peace and stability in Afghanistan and contribute to averting the humanitarian crisis in that country, which had been further aggravated by the

recent earthquake.

While highlighting the rising wave of Islamophobia in India, he condemned the sacrilegious remarks by the two BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) officials about the revered personality of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) that had deeply hurt the sentiments of Muslims.

The Prime Minister also underlined that India was committing grave violations of human rights in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). While reiterating Pakistan's commitment towards promotion of peace in the region, he stressed the importance of peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. In this context, he called upon the international community to discharge its moral and normative obligations, while also calling upon India to adhere to the UN resolutions.

The Prime Minister also conveyed his sincere good wishes to the people and Government of the United States on their 246th Independence Day. Ambassador Blome thanked the Prime Minister for receiving him and reaffirmed the United States' commitment to further strengthen and reinforce Pakistan-US ties.

#### Sanjrani, President of Azerbaijan for enhanced regional collaboration



Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani called for regional collaboration to expedite the process of regional growth and prosperity through cooperation in trade, agriculture besides other diverse energy, sectors.

Leading a parliamentary delegation to Azerbaijan, he participated in the Conference of Non-Aligned Movement Parliamentary Network and spent a busy day while interacting with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, and Speaker of the Milli Mejlis Sahiba Gafarova and dignitaries from different Parliaments, said a press release issued here. He said Pakistan and Azerbaijan enjoyed close brotherly relations based on shared religious and cultural bonds.

Our continued high-level bilateral exchanges are proof of a strong and cordial partnership, he observed. He hoped to continue to uphold these cordial relations to effectively align all our common interests and shared prosperity.

Sharing his thoughts with the Azerbaijani president, the Senate chairman said Pakistan highly valued its bilateral relations with Azerbaijan and these relations were based mutual trust, respect and love.

He called for expending these ties through enhanced interactions at government and business levels. He said there was huge scope for investment in Pakistan and investors from Azerbaijan could explore opportunities through mutual collaboration with Pakistani counterparts. He also highlighted the importance of Gwadar port and said the new emerging port would provide Central Asia a short route to connect with other continents for business and trade.

Pakistan would welcome Azerbaijani investors to invest in different projects for mutual benefits of the two sides, he added.

During his meetings with President and Speaker separately, the Senate chairman congratulated Azerbaijan for the successful hosting of the conference of the NAM Parliamentary Network and acknowledged the leading role played by Azerbaijan in making this network promising and effective.

He expressed the confidence for tangible outcomes from the deliberations. This NAM conference also aligns with 30 years of independence for Azerbaijan, and also 30 years of bilateral relations with Pakistan. On behalf of the parliament and the people of Pakistan, I extend to you our warmest sentiments of goodwill on this milestone Sanjrani observed.

Addressing the reception hosted in honor of

the delegates, he said Pakistan also wished to enhance ties between the two countries on all political and economic fronts. He also acknowledged Azerbaijan's support to Pakistan on critical geopolitical issues, and Pakistan is honoured to reciprocate its full support to Azerbaijan across own challenges. He said Pakistan and Azerbaijan have great expertise to share and trade in the fields of energy, defense, agriculture, natural resources, transport, and health.

He termed the much-needed resumption of direct flights between the two countries as fruitful and said the step would help enhance people to people and business to business connections.

The Senate Chairman said Pakistani delegation was amazed by the hospitality of Azerbaijani government. Both the president and speaker of Azerbaijan thanked the Senate Chairman and delegation for participating in such an important conference.

They were of the view that active participation of Pakistani delegation in the conference showed that Pakistan was keen to promote regional growth, peace and prosperity. They also called for enhanced cooperation at all

#### **COAS** calls on Emir of Qatar during official visit



hief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa during his official tour to ■Qatar called on Emir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs, State of Qatar, Doctor Khalid Bin Mohammed Al Attiyah. During

the meetings, matters of mutual interest, defence and security cooperation and regional environment were discussed, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release.

The COAS said that both countries shared great history of cordial relations and deep spirit of brotherhood, which were being transformed into an enduring partnership. Both sides underscored the importance of further enhancing the cooperation in all fields.

The dignitaries also appreciated Pakistan's continuous efforts for peace and stability in the region and pledged to keep working for better relations between the two brotherly countries.

#### **Turkish Commander lauds Pakistan's Armed Forces** professionalism during meeting with COAS Gen Bajwa



ommander Turkish Land Forces General Musa Avsever on July 5 called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa here at GHQ and acknowledged the professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces.

During the meeting, matters of mutual and professional interest with special emphasis on defence and security collaboration between the two brotherly countries, were discussed, said an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) media release.

The COAS said, "We highly value our brotherly relations with Turkiye which are deeply rooted in history and entrenched in our cultural and

religious affinities." Both the sides agreed to further optimize military to military ties particularly in training and counter-terrorism The visiting dignitary vowed to domains. enhance cooperation in various fields and also pledged to play his role for further improvements in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.



#### German FM H E Annalena Baerbock visits Pakistan

oreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, appreciating German companies doing business in Pakistan, invited more foreign firm to take advantage of the country's business friendly policies.

The Foreign Minister said as he received his German counterpart Annalena Baerbock at the Foreign Office and held wide-ranging consultations.

During the delegation-level talks, the two sides had an extensive exchange of views on various aspects of bilateral relations with a special focus on enhancing cooperation in the fields of trade and investment, climate change, and renewable energy.

Foreign Minister Bilawal hoped that bilateral relations would be strengthened further through regular high-level exchanges, which had acquired a steady momentum in recent years, a press release issued here by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said.

In the regional context, he stressed the need for the international community to come together to address the dire humanitarian situation

in Afghanistan. The Foreign Minister added that the release of Afghan financial assets was important for helping stabilize the economy. He also said that Pakistan continued to provide humanitarian assistance for the people of Afghanistan.

Foreign Minister Baerbock thanked Pakistan for its role in facilitating the evacuation of foreign nationals and others from Afghanistan. Foreign Minister Bilawal assured the German side that Pakistan would support the evacuation request.

While discussing the situation in Ukraine, the





Foreign Minister shared Pakistan's concern over the continuation of military conflict. Reiterating Pakistan's principled position, he said Pakistan believed that a solution must be found through dialogue and diplomacy.

The Foreign Minister added that ramifications of this conflict were being felt far beyond the European Continent, as far as in Pakistan, due to rising fuel and food prices.

In solidarity with the people of Ukraine, and despite its own economic challenges, he said, Pakistan had sent relief goods and humanitarian aid for the affected Ukrainian people.

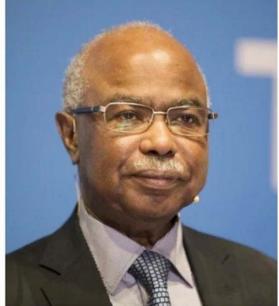
The Foreign Minister also drew attention to the



serious human rights violations in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), the rising tide of Islamophobia across India also manifested in the recent repugnant remarks by two BJP officials towards the person of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), and risks posed by these developments to peace and stability.

#### Bilawal, OIC Secretary General discuss rising Islamophobia in India





inister for Foreign Affairs Bilawal Bhutto Zardari had a telephone conversation with Secretary General of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Hissein Brahim Taha on June 12 and they discussed the issue of rising Islamophobia.

In a tweet on a social media platform Twitter, the minister said that the conversation focused on the series of Islamophobic actions in India, in particular blasphemous remarks made by two senior officials of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The Foreign Minister said that he spoke to the

OIC Secretary General over the uncalled and condemnable remarks by Indian BJP officials towards the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

They shared concerns on rising Islamophobia and persecution of Muslims in India and the need to address that through collective efforts.

#### **Envoys of KSA, UAE, Egypt, Deputy Chief UNHCR meet FM Bilawal**

**DF** Report

mbassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to Pakistan H E Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi called on Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari and exchanged views on enhancing bilateral and economic ties.

According to a statement of the Foreign Office, discussions were held on issues of mutual interest. "Keeping in view the wider potential of enhancing trade and investment ties between Pakistan and the UAE, it was agreed to further enhance bilateral economic ties,' it added.

Meanwhile, Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan H E Tarek Dahroug also called on Bilawal and exchanged views on a range of bilateral and global issues of mutual interest.

They agreed to strengthen economic cooperation between the two countries for the benefit of the two peoples.

Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan H E Tarek Dahroug called on Foreign Minister and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, where the two bonded over a shared admiration of ancient civilisations, The Dependent can confirm.

In addition to exchanging views on a range of bilateral and global issues of mutual interest as part of the portfolios given to them by their governments, the duo expressed respectful eulogies for graves, which they maintained are the bedrock of their sustenance.

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari also held a meeting with Saudi Arabian Ambassador to Pakistan H E Nawaf Bin Saeed A. Al-Malkiy. During the, the FM exchanged views on a wide range of issues of mutual interest. "(We) agreed to enhance bilateral economic cooperation with particular focus on trade & investment," the FM tweeted later.

Meanwhile, Deputy UN High Commissioner for Refugees Kelly T. Clements called on Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari as part of her visit to Pakistan. Discussions were focused on the Afghan refugee situation and the longstanding cooperation between Pakistan and UNHCR, said a foreign ministry statement. The Foreign Minister emphasized the importance of sustained engagement by the international community in support of Afghan refugees as well as for the provision of humanitarian and economic assistance to the people of Afghanistan.

He underscored that the new humanitarian situations emerging around the world must not divert the global attention away from the needs of millions of Afghans. Both sides agreed to continue working closely for the provision of necessary assistance to Afghan refugees, and the implementation of sustainable solutions for their well-resourced, safe and dignified return.









#### National Meet on Sustainable Development Goals 2030 held in Islamabad







peaker National Assembly of Pakistan Raja Pervaiz Ashraf urged to make joint efforts to achieve the targets set under Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Addressing the National Meet on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, the Speaker National Assembly said that Pakistan has affirmed its commitment to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development by adopting SDGs through unanimous Resolution in 2016. He said that COVID-19 has been a major setback for the global economy and our prosperity. He said that the COVID-19 pandemic is transforming how we think about our economies and our societies. He added sincere efforts will be critical to ensure a green, resilient, and inclusive recovery from the pandemic.

He said that there are several factors affecting the implementation of the SDGs, which include but are not limited to climate change, health, economic growth, poverty, gender inequality and socio-economic challenges. According to the Sustainable Development Goal Index ranking 2021, Pakistan ranked 129th out of 165 countries, with an overall score of 58 per cent, mainly for its progress on one of the 17 goals climate action, he added. He said that given the interdependent nature of the SDGs, national governance for the SDGs can only be effective when in accord with global governance for sustainability.

"Pakistan is a developing country where millions of people go to sleep without having a meal. We must join hands to ensure no one, especially children are deprived of essential nutrients, which directly hinders their growth."He said that deteriorating health conditions in Pakistan with little to no access to health care services is yet another issue and as legislators it is our responsibility to provide equal and quality health services to all. He said that Pakistan is a country that has experienced political and economic turmoil for decades. These conditions coupled with the impacts of natural disasters have made under-nutrition and malnutrition a huge concern in the country. He said that over the past several years the country has implemented initiatives to improve food security but the challenges surrounding food security still remain unaddressed at large.

"Building a world with zero hunger which can positively impact our economies, health, education, equality and social development is integral to building a better future for everyone." He said that Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to the consequences of climatic change because of its diverse geographical and climatic features. Pervaiz Ashraf said, "Together we must pledge to protect our environment today, to leave a better tomorrow for our future generations." He said that it is imperative to take action and protect our climate in order to ensure sustainable development for the country.

Devising a national budget aligned with the SDGs will enable the country to prioritize all the 17 goals in accordance with the need of our constituents and public at the lowest tier

of society, he added. He said that the formation of national accountability and governance structures required to track a nation's progress on all global goals will also accelerate the progress on each target. He said that this event is an opportunity to devise a roadmap that empowers everyone to face the future with confidence. The Minister for Information Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Thursday underlined the need for aligning the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with climate change, which was having more impact on the developing countries as compared to the developed ones. The developing countries do invest more in disaster response, but their budget for disaster risk management has been meager," she said while addressing the closing session of a two-day seminar on SDGs. The Minister said the country was currently facing severe flooding due to the climate change.



Balochistan had been severely affected by the torrential rains during the ongoing monsoon season.

She said today the provinces had representation in the SDGs framework, which was in line with the real spirit of the initiative. She said in 2016, the SDGs office was established within the parliament, and mobilization was done at the provincial level by establishing its offices in PIPS premises. Lauding the efforts made by the then Speaker Ayaz Sadig for implementation of the SDGs, she said its results were in front of everyone. She said the world was moving beyond the Sustainable Development Goals, as from 2022 to 2030, the SDGs would be monitored and evaluated to see how the targets had been met. She said the number of women in the SDGs had increased for which Chairperson of Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs Romina Khursheed Alam deserved appreciation.

The Minister said about 65% of Pakistans population consisted of youth and their engagement in implementation of the SDGs had also witnessed an increase. The minister opined that even at the district and union council levels, there was a need to involve youth in policy making for sustainable development goals. The Minister said it was the responsibility of all to work for the improvement of education, health facilities, environment, development, energy and economy as it was a national agenda, everyone should work together to achieve the goals.



## Five-member delegation of Chinese investors calls on Chairman Senate

hairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani said that the government was keen to further expand economic ties with China, which would eventually enhance people-to-people contact of both the countries and would offer massive opportunities to the investors.

The Chairman, in a meeting with a five-member delegation of Chinese investors, said business partnership and investment would help bring the people of both the countries closer. The two countries' investors could benefit from investing in various sectors, he added.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, including bilateral relations, investment and CPEC projects also came under discussion. Both sides agreed to further enhance the bilateral relations.

The Chinese delegation was led by MCCT President Dong Gaofing. The chairman Senate said Pakistan attached great importance to the

role of Beijing in global and regional affairs. He said Balochistan was rich in natural resources and Chinese investors should look forward to the opportunities to invest in various sectors across the province. Pakistan welcomes Chinese investors, he said, underlining the need for further promoting Chinese investment in industrialization, mining, agriculture and digital technologies through which a new chapter of cooperation would begin.

The head of the delegation thanked the Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani and expressed his delight for visiting Pakistan. He highlighted the importance of enhancing bilateral cooperation and said that bilateral ties would be further strengthened through investment and trade.

Moreover, a batch of epidemic prevention supplies was donated to Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) at the Khunjerab Pass, China's highest border checkpoint. These supplies consist of about 170 boxes of medical protective clothing and masks, worth 300,000 yuan, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. They are donated by the Foreign Affairs Office of Kashgar, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, China.

It aims to support Pakistan to strengthen the prevention and control of COVID-19 at the border and facilitate resumption of work and production on two sides of border.

This donation is to implement the specific measures of the consensus reached by Kashgar China and Gilgit-Baltistan Pakistan on a video conference held on May 30, 2022, said Gao Fei, the Chinese liaison man of the Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism of China-Pakistan border ports.

Gao added the donation would demonstrate the iron friendship between China and Pakistan and their determination to work together to overcome difficulties and promote bilateral development by cooperation. Khunjerab Pass has been open since April 1, 2022.

Mr. Azfar Kamal Chairman Standing Committee Private Defense Sector RCCI during his visit to London, travelled to Birmingham for an exclusive and extremely successful meeting with the Lord Mayor of Birmingham Cllr Maureen Cornish at her office in the Council house of Birmingham. The Lord Mayor assured her of maximum cooperation for further strengthening up the trade bonds among the business communities of Birmingham and Pakistan. The Lord Mayor also showed her positive willingness to visit Pakistan on the invitation of Azfar Kamal.









### Diplomatic Focus Thru Len



Assistant Secretary of State for Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Mr. Todd D. Robinson calling on Minister for Interior Rana Sana Ullah in Islamabad.



USA Ambassador H.E. Donald Blome exchanging views with Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at Foreign Office, Islamabad.



H.E. Mr. Bernhard Stephan Schlagheck, German Ambassador to Pakistan calls on Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq in Islamabad.



Federal Minister for Industries and Production Syed Murtaza Mehmood meeting with his Indonesian Counterpart Minister of Industry Agus Gumiwang Kartasasmita, Minister of Trade Muhammad Lutfi and Coordinating Minister of Maritime & Investment Affairs Luhut Binsar Panjaitan in Jakarta



Federal Minister for Human Rights Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada meets with Mr. Abdullah Fadil, UNICEF Country Representative in Pakistan.



Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq witnesses the signing of the G-20 DSSI agreement with JICA in Islamabad



Sialkot: Deputy Head of Mission, Ambassador De France in Pakistan Yves Manville visiting the residence of Allama Muhammad Iqbal.



Karachi: Ambassador of Germany H.E. Mr. Bernhard Stephan Schlagheck inaugurating first electric charging station.

#### KAHF International launches new Rolex boutique in Karachi



**DF** Report

AHF International and Rolex announced opening of a new boutique in Karachi, located at Mansoor Tower on Main Clifton Road. The new boutique offers professional expertise in an elegant setting, one that promotes a sense of harmony, discretion, and intimacy with the brand. The five-pointed crown glistens resolute, embodying the preeminent destination for luxury timepieces.

Managing partner of KAHF International Mr. Majeed said that having represented Rolex in Pakistan since 1948 and in Karachi for the past 43 years, we are proud to upgrade our Rolex point-of-sale to a boutique.

This will certainly enhance our ability to uphold the highest standards of quality and service and to showcase the timelessness and perfection of Rolex watches that are integral to both the brand and to our own business.

#### One boutique, a whole Rolex world

Every element of the interior design features the elegant Rolex aesthetic and radiates the values of the Rolex crown. Excellence, precision, and attention to detail emanate from the careful calibration of colours and patterns in the fittings and furnishings.

Sensitive lighting accentuates the beauty of a



selection of Rolex watches, which are displayed in refined showcases lined with beige leather and finished with bronze trims.

A striking emerald aqua wall highlights Rolex's rich heritage - its wave motif referencing the iconic Oyster, the world's first waterproof wristwatch.

This intense green is referred around the boutique, creating accents that harmonize a refreshed colour palette. The walls mix textures from walnut brown wood to beige-coloured

stone. The boutique introduces various distinct features that capture the essence of the world of Rolex.

#### **About KAHF International**

KAHF International is more than a name — it is a legacy; our lineage can be traced back to the year 1948, when the late Mr. Mohammad Saeed, a watchmaker by profession, established 'M Rahim Bux & Co', the first officially accredited Rolex outlet in Quetta. Presently, our official Rolex outlets are located in Islamabad and







Karachi.

For over 70 years, we have proudly been associated with the worldwide network of Official Rolex Retailers, allowed to sell and service Rolex watches.

At the heart of KAHF is our perpetual passion for horology, striving for excellence, upholding the highest standards of customer satisfaction, and staying abreast of the latest developments.

This meticulous determination has rendered KAHF synonymous with prestige and reliability, admired at home and internationally by all those who share a passion for timekeeping.

#### **About Rolex**

An unrivalled reputation for quality and expertise Rolex is an integrated and independent Swiss watch manufacture. Headquartered in Geneva, the brand is recognized the world over for its expertise and the quality of its products symbols of excellence, elegance and prestige.

The movements of its Oyster Perpetual and Cellini watches are certified by COSC, then tested in-house for their precision, performance and reliability.

The Superlative Chronometer certification, symbolized by the green seal, confirms that each watch has successfully undergone tests conducted by Rolex in its own laboratories according to its own criteria. These are periodically validated by an independent external organization.

The word 'Perpetual' is inscribed on every Rolex Oyster watch. But more than just a word on a dial, it is a philosophy that embodies the company's vision and values. Hans Wilsdorf, the founder of the company, instilled a notion of perpetual excellence that would drive the

company forward.

This led Rolex to pioneer the development of the wristwatch and numerous major watchmaking innovations, such as the Oyster, the first waterproof wristwatch, launched in 1926, and the perpetual rotor self-winding mechanism, invented in 1931. In the course of its history, Rolex has registered over 500 patents.

At its four sites in Switzerland, the brand designs, develops and produces the majority of its watch components, from the casting of the gold alloys to the machining, crafting, assembly and finishing of the movement, case, dial and bracelet.

Furthermore, the brand is actively involved in supporting the arts and culture, sport and exploration, as well as those who are devising solutions to preserve the planet.





#### PM extends support to Turkey on failed coup anniversary



akistan's leadership reaffirmed support and solidarity for Turkey as it marks Democracy and National Unity Day, remembering the people killed in the July 15, 2016, defeated coup.

In a statement, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said this day will always be remembered as an expression of the Turkish people's unwavering trust in the leadership of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

"It also reflects the Turkish nation's resolve to protect & uphold democracy. May the souls of the martyrs rest in peace," Sharif tweeted.

Foreign Office also reaffirmed its abiding solidarity and strong support for the people and government of Turkey on the occasion of the sixth Democracy and National Unity Day.

"The heroic struggle of the brave Turkish people against the treacherous coup attempt of 15 July 2016 shows that with unity, courage, resolve and commitment, nations can overcome all odds and challenges," said a statement.

The ministry also paid tribute to all those martyrs who laid down their lives in defense of Turkey's democracy and stability.

"The exceptional relations between our two peoples — embedded in a common religious, cultural, linguistic, and spiritual heritage - go back centuries and have withstood the test of times.

"With the strong resolve of the political leadership on both sides, the historic, multifaceted strategic relationship between the two countries will continue to grow from strength to strength," it added.

Siraj ul-Haq, head of the Jamaat-i-Islami party, also paid tribute to the people killed in the defeated coup attempt.

"The Pakistani nation always stood and continues to stand with our Turkish brothers and sisters in every difficult time," Haq said

He praised the leadership of Erdogan, saying he set an example of people's support for their elected governments.

2016 defeated coup

Ankara also accuses FETO of being behind a long-running campaign to overthrow the state through the infiltration of Turkish institutions, particularly the military, police, and judiciary.

The attempt by FETO to overthrow the government began around 10:00 pm local time (1900GMT) on July 15, 2016, and was thwarted by 8 a.m. the next day.

Standing against the threat, the Turkish people courageously showed the world that they would not tolerate any attempt to thwart their will as expressed through their democratically elected government.

#### Feto and 15 July coup attempt

What is the meaning of July 15"'? to Turkish People?

it was a long night. It was the night when Turkish democracy was protected by the Turkish people themselves. It was a night when the integrity of Turkiye in every sense was preserved.







That night was a night when the Republic of Turkiye was completely protected by the will of the Turkish people. In summary, it was a night when Turkey's existence was in danger and it was saved by the Turkish people under the leadership of the President himself. Alright, who was the enemy who attacked Turkiye? This enemy attacked in the night was FETO terrorist organization.

His disciples within the armed forces did not shy away from using lethal military force against innocent civilians, killing 251 and wounding thousands. They tried to assassinate the President of the Republic of Turkiye and attacked the Prime Minister's vehicle. They bombarded the Grand National Assembly. The Presidential Complex, the buildings of the National Intelligence Organization and Turkish National Police were attacked.

The Police Special Operations Center, the crucial counter-terrorism operational body, was bombed by fighter jets, killing 55 police officers and injuring hundreds on the spot. Hundreds of civilians protesting the coup attempt in Ankara and Istanbul were shot to death. The FETO coup plotters targeted public and private communication outlets, including TRT (state broadcasting channel) and CNN Turk. It was FETO, an organization that secretly worked in Turkey for 40 years to achieve what it aimed at that night. For 40 years, this organization has brainwashed the country's own children, brilliant minds and turned them against their own country.

In other words, it stole children from their parents, from its own people, from their own country, from us for 40 years and alienated them to their own home country.

#### How they did do it?

FETO opened institutions that train personnel for itself in the image of educational institutions. Schools... They opened schools at all levels, from kindergartens to universities. In fact, it all started under the guise of a charitable education effort back in the 1970s not only in Turkey, but all over the world, they opened schools with the money they collected from the people. At the peak of their power they controlled thousands of schools in Turkiye and more than eight hundred educational institutes worldwide.

We understand now that this was the first step of an infiltration campaign where kids and their parents were recruited with the seemingly innocent promise of better education and a good job. They turned into unquestioning soldiers of Fetullah Gulen who claimed to be the "Chosen One". Their main goal was to take control of the state, therefore, they should remain hidden until they achieve the goal.

The organization even gave "code" names to its



members apart from their real names to ensure secrecy. In this way, this is a unique and peculiar armed terrorist organization with a "cell-type structure", in which its lower-level members know each other only by their code names.

In order to infiltrate critical government posts, FETO-affiliated students were provided with the answers to the questions asked in entrance exams. including the Police Academy entrance tests, the Centralized Public Service Admission Tests, Military Schools and other government.

As civil servants or military personnel, FETO members' loyalty was not to the nation or to the state they served. They did not care about upholding of the country. Thus, the organization that disguised itself as an education movement gradually turned into a clandestine operational structure aiming to transform the society by taking control of the Turkish state from within.

As its strength grew, the organization began to claim a global messianic mission, depicting Fetullah Gulen as the "Imam of the Universe". In the meantime, it became a full-scale crime syndicate: financing was taken care of by holding companies and donations from business people. The organization also established media houses to shape public opinion for and against any person, group or idea. Many people in Turkiye who saw the organization for what it really is got lynched through these media houses.

These media houses became the focal point of actions taken against journalists, academics. bureaucrats and military officers who opposed them, or tried to expose them. Laundering enormous sums of money, arranging illegal transfers of cash and other financial crimes became business as usual.

FETO members infiltrating critical state posts used their power to eliminate whoever opposed the organization, by illegal wiretapping, fabricating evidence, unlawful arrests. thereby intimidating and blackmailing a large segment of the society including politicians, businessmen, journalists, even athletes and artists among many.

July 15th was plotted at a time when the government had discovered and listed most of the so-called military personnel who were actually recruits of FETO and thus was getting ready to dismiss them. In other words, July 15th was a desperate final move of Fetullah Gulen and his followers to keep their control and capture the state.

After July 15 2016 coup attempt:

The perpetrators of the 15th of July coup attempt have been brought to justice on the basis of rule of law and fundamental rights and freedoms. A number of judicial processes are still ongoing. FETO's organizational structure within governmental institutions has been unveiled. Administrative and judicial procedures have been initiated against its members.

There are currently many investigations into mass-scale exam cheating in Turkiye. The fight against FETO structures abroad is now among the top priorities of our country.

Our main objective is to demonstrate and prove the fact that FETO also poses a threat to the security of all countries where it remains active. We, therefore, continue to warn our friends against this structure. Indeed, we are satisfied with the rising awareness as a result.

Since FETO is present in around 160 countries, with thousands of schools, businesses, NGOs and media houses. Their modus operandi is the same all around the world. As they aim to infiltrate and enlarge their global economic and political influence, they constitute a direct security threat to all the countries where they operate.

Those countries that have investigated and monitored this group have often found FETO to be involved in an extensive list of crimes such as money laundering, bribery and passport/visa fraud.

countries and international organizations have declared FETO as a terrorist organization. In this context, FETO was declared as a terrorist organization in the 43rd session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC held on 19 October 2016; a similar resolution was passed during the Asian Parliamentary Assembly on 1 December 2016 and ratified on the 12th Conference of the Parliamentary Union of the OIC on 27 January 2017. In addition to the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the Supreme Court of Pakistan also declared FETO a terrorist organization with the verdict rendered on 28 December 2018.



#### Pakistan to partner SCO agenda for region's collective good: FM

#### SCO Foreign Ministers Council meeting held on July 29, 2022

**DF** Report

oreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said Pakistan would always be a strong partner in all endeavors of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) aimed at promoting collective good of the region.

Addressing the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting, he said SCO's contributions to regional security and stability as well as to the shaping of economic and information environment would continue to grow.

Vladimir Norov, Acting Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan, the foreign ministers of SCO member states, the Secretary General of SCO and Director SCO-RATS. Bilawal reaffirmed Pakistan's unflinching commitment to the goals and principles of the SCO Charter and the 'Shanghai Spirit.' He mentioned that SCO was a formidable trans-regional, multilateral Organization representing 41 percent of global population, 22 percent of world's landmass, and 23 percent of global GDP.

He said the world was facing planet, today, is facing an existential threat in the shape of climate change. The foreign minister said the overall economic, social and psychological impact of Covid-19 pandemic was yet to be fully grasped, let alone mitigated.

He mentioned the re-emergence of military conflict in different parts of the world and unprecedented hike of fuel and food prices as challenges taking a heavy toll on nations and citizens across the globe.

He said Pakistan believed that the best course in these turbulent times was to renew faith in the time-honored principles of inter-state relations and to reinforce the resilience of institutions." The centrality of the principles of non-use or threat of use of force, respect for sovereignty and territory integrity, pacific settlement of disputes, and equal security for all, cannot be stressed enough," he said. He said it was the considered view that peaceful coexistence and cooperation and not confrontation must be the key drivers of global politics.

On Afghanistan, he said after 40 years of conflict and instability, there was finally a prospect of forging sustainable peace and stability in Afghanistan.

"We acknowledge the steps taken to improve the security environment and fight the terrorist threat from Daesh," he said. Bilawal said

Pakistan had extended humanitarian relief assistance and continues to open up avenues for more trade, transit trade, cross-border facilitation, and connectivity.

He stressed it was equally important to Defreeze Afghanistan's financial assets. said the international community must also maintain constructive engagement practical cooperation with Afghanistan. Bilawal said the Afghan interim authorities, for their part, should take steps to address the international community's expectations about inclusivity, respect for the rights of all Afghans, including girls' education; and effective counterterrorism actions.

He said the SCO Afghanistan Contact Group was a useful platform that can also be utilized for enhanced outreach.

"For its part, Pakistan will remain strongly





committed to a peaceful, stable, sovereign, prosperous and connected Afghanistan and work with international partners to advance our shared objectives," he said.

He said terrorism was one of the major threats that the international community continued to face. He said the valiant people, armed forces, and law enforcement personnel had made tremendous sacrifices in Pakistan's determined fight to eliminate this scourge. "Pakistan condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including state-terrorism perpetrated against people living under foreign occupation in disputed territories," he said. He said the phenomenon of terrorism continued to evolve, the growing levels of intolerance, emergence of extremist and hegemonic ideologies and Islamophobic impulses have imparted a different level of lethality to this threat.

Bilawal said the growth and prosperity of SCO region was also dependent on critical drivers such as e-commerce, digitalization of businesses, innovation, and security of international supply chains.

He called for deepening interactions between the business communities through the SCO business council. The foreign minister said to advance this objective, Pakistan would be hosting an interaction between SCO businessmen and entrepreneurs by end 2022.

He said SCO region also faced an urgent need for a development funding mechanism. Bilawal emphasized the roadmap for a stage-wise development of national systems aimed at the use of national currencies is, therefore, an important initiative that we hope would lead to enhancing intra-SCO trade.

He stressed enhancing connectivity through



building rail, road, sea and air links remains critical for the realization of our shared vision. He proposed the 'Strategy for Developing Connectivity and Creating Efficient Transport Corridors.' He said Pakistan was actively working on the Trans-Afghan Railway (TAR) project with the brothers in Uzbekistan and Afghanistan.

"It will provide a crucial link from Central Asia to the seaports in Pakistan, providing a natural trans-shipment link to the SCO region," he said. He said Pakistan was keen to develop mutually beneficial arrangements for the SCO countries in the area of trans-shipment, warehousing, multi modal transportation and so on.

He said the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project of BRI, already served as a pivotal platform to help promote connectivity and regional prosperity.

He announced that Pakistan would also be hosting a virtual Conference on Transport Connectivity for Regional Prosperity later this year. He said Pakistan was endeavoring to

build the foundation for a strong e-commerce ecosystem. "This includes a sound regulatory environment, financial inclusion, and digitization through payment infrastructure," he said.

He said the government's policy was focused on empowering youth, women and SMEs to benefit from digitalization and to provide economic opportunities to over 130 million youth in Pakistan. He said towards this objective, Pakistan would be hosting the conference on Youth Empowerment through Digital Economy later this year.

He said ensuring food security in the face of severe climatic changes as well as volatility caused by conflicts is of critical importance for us all.

He mentioned that recent proposals to train farmers; exchange of technology and exhibitions were important initiatives to strengthen the capacity of our growers and farmers.



#### FM for close Pak-Iran cooperation on Afghanistan matters

DF Report

oreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has underscored the importance of close cooperation between Pakistan and Iran on matters relating to Afghanistan, including refugee management, regional security, and institutional mechanisms.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to a peaceful, stable, prosperous and connected Afghanistan. The Foreign Minister was talking to Iran's Special Representative to the President on Afghanistan, Hassan Kazemi Ghomi, who called on him here, a press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. He highlighted Pakistan's provision of humanitarian assistance

to Afghanistan, including recent relief efforts in wake of the devastating earthquake in eastern Afghanistan on 22 June 2022. The Foreign Minister also reiterated the importance of continued constructive engagement and practical cooperation with the Interim Afghan Government in order to promote the objective of sustainable peace and security in the region.

On bilateral ties, he expressed Pakistan's keen desire to further strengthen relations with Iran, which are rooted deep in common faith, shared history, and cultural affinities. The foreign minister highlighted the importance of regular exchanges to advance economic and trade relations, energy cooperation, regional

security and connectivity. Special Envoy Hassan Kazemi Ghomi noted that Iran associated high importance to its relations with Pakistan. He appreciated the constructive role played by Pakistan in Afghanistan and underscored that peace and stability in Afghanistan were essential pre-requisites for the region's longterm stability and prosperity. Earlier, the Iranian Special Representative met his Pakistani counterpart Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq, where both sides discussed the evolving situation in Afghanistan, highlighted the importance of pursuing continuous and practical engagement, and reviewed various trade and connectivity initiatives in the region.

#### Iran, Pakistan reiterate resolve to enhance bilateral cooperation

DF Report

ranian Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Seyyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini called on Federal Minister for Human Rights Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada. Both sides reiterated resolve to enhance bilateral cooperation in the field of human rights. Pirzada underscored cordial brethren relations of more than seven decades between the two countries based on cultural, religious and historical commonalities.

The Iranian Ambassador said that Iran was willing to enhance mutual cooperation in the field of Human Rights and particularly the judicial cooperation. Ambassador said that the special focus of Iranian government was on women rights and their empowerment. He stressed to have strong economic and business ties and the maximum cooperation in the exchange of prisoners. He further invited the minister on an official visit to Iran to attend a ceremony in August where sideline meeting would also be arranged to enhance bilateral cooperation in human rights.

He mentioned about two MoUs between the two governments on extradition/ exchange of prisoners and for protection and

promotion of human rights. He emphasized upon the need of cooperation among Muslim countries to confront the hype of Islamophobia and blasphemy incidents. He appreciated role of Pakistan on diplomatic fronts to successfully counter the menace of Islamophobia.

Minister for Human highlighted the tremendous opportunities for cooperation that exists between the two neighboring countries. He said that people of Pakistan have deep devotion and respect for Iran over the warmth and facilities that Iranian government have been proving for pilgrimages especially on Taftan Boarder.

While concluding, the Minister





said that we derive inspiration for who themselves committed severe human rights violations that human rights from the teachings can never be faded from the dark chapters of human history. He of our Holy Prophet (PBUH). But also congratulated Iranian government on its perseverance and now the world is governed by struggle in the face of decades long propaganda and economic those human rights promulgators sanctions imposed by the West and the US.



#### 95th Anniversary of the founding of Chinese People's Liberation Army commemorated at GHQ, Rawalpindi

eneral Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) was the Chief Guest on the Ambassador of China to Pakistan; His Excellency Mr Nong Rong, officials from Chinese Embassy & Officers from tri-services of Pakistan attended

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador of China thanked COAS for hosting reception on the eve of PLA's 95th Anniversary.

The Chinese Ambassador said that China & Pakistan are iron brothers, all-weather friends & strategic partners. The Chinese Ambassador said that the recent meeting of China- Pakistan Joint Committee of Cooperation held at China has setup an important platform military collaborations which will effectively for military-to-military serve relations between the two countries. COAS felicitated PLA and lauded PLA's role in China's defence, security & nation building.

Highlighting various facets of the deep rooted ties between the two states, militaries and the people, COAS said Pakistan China relationship is unique & robust that has proven its resilience in the face of challenges. COAS said PLA and Pakistan Army are brothers in arms & our relationship will continue to contribute towards safeguarding our collective interests, COAS concluded.

#### Sino-Pak FMs meetings demonstrate close ties: Zhao Lijian

hinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson said that three bilateral meetings ◆between Chinese State Councilor Wang Yi and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in a span of three months fully demonstrated the close ties between China and Pakistan. "You are rightly saying that.

This fully demonstrates the close ties between China and Pakistan," Zhao Lijian said during his regular briefing while responding to a question about the meeting between Wang Yi and Bilawal Bhutto on the sidelines of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) council of foreign ministers meeting held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan last week. He said that at the SCO foreign ministers meeting State Councilor Wang Yi met with Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto.

The two foreign ministers had an in-depth exchange of views on deepening our all-weather strategic cooperative partnership, advancing political cooperation, pursuing high quality Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) cooperation, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) cooperation and stepping up cooperation in various fields, including in multilateral occasions, he added.

The spokesperson said that during the meeting, Wang Yi stressed that the Chinese side would firmly support Pakistan in safeguarding sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, supporting Pakistan to exploring a development path suiting its national conditions to realize solidarity, stability, and prosperity. "We also support Pakistan's role in regional, international affairs and we will have in depth communication and jointly build a closer China-Pakistan community with a shared future in a new era," he added. He said that China supported Chinese business investment in Pakistan and the Chinese side was ready to import more good quality agricultural products. Both the countries agreed to they would resume and gradually expand air links and personnel exchanges in orderly manner. State Councilor Wang also stressed the need for Pakistani side to have the speedy investigation into the April 26 terrorist attack and hold the perpetrators accountable.

Foreign Minister Bilawal said that Pakistani side would always take Pak-China allweather strategic partnership and friendship as a cornerstone for its foreign policy and firmly stand with China in issues concerning Chinas core interests and major concerns. Pakistani side will also advance CPEC construction to show new Pakistan speed and they will also enhance the security work for CPEC, he added. The two foreign



discussed also international issues including the Afghan issue, he said. It may be mentioned that on May 22, the two leaders met in Guangzhou, the capital city of South Chinas Guangdong Province when Foreign Minister Bhutto Zardari visited China on the invitation of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. It was Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhuttos first official visit abroad since assuming office in April.

During the meeting, the two leaders held in-depth discussions to further deepen allround cooperation in areas such as energy, industry, agriculture, Information Technology and transportation infrastructure. On May 11, Wang Yi held a meeting with Bilawal Bhutto via video link. The meeting with the Chinese foreign minister was Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhuttos first official bilateral activity since taking office.

#### **UN commemorates Nelson Mandela's 'fight for a better world'**

#### World democracy and freedom under assault, Prince Harry tells UN

N Member States gathered in the General Assembly Hall to observe Nelson Mandela International Day, a celebration for everyone to take action and inspire change in their communities.

The first democratically-elected President of South Africa, and the country's first Black leader, died in December 2013 at age 95. The annual commemoration on 18 July, his birthday, recognizes his contribution to the culture of peace and freedom.

Mr. Mandela - affectionately known as "Madiba", his Xhosa clan name - fought against the racist apartheid system in his homeland, and for equality and freedom for all people.

Abdulla Shahid, President of the UN General Assembly, recalled that he also advocated for democracy, gender equality, the rights of children and young people, and for protecting the environment.

"Madiba's fight against apartheid, was in fact a fight for a better world, in which the freedom, justice and dignity of all were respected. He called for peace, social justice, equality and human understanding throughout his life," he

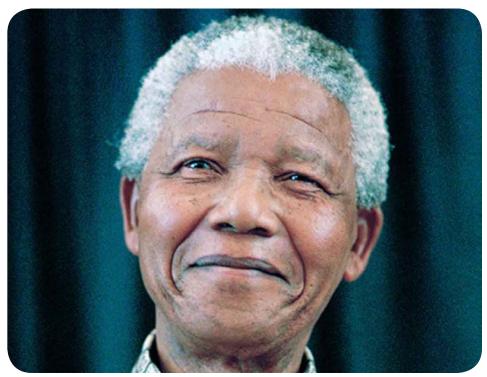
"Let's talk with our children about what he stood for. Let's seek out what we have in common, empower all people to reclaim our democracies, and harness the light of Mandela's memory to illuminate the way forward," he said.

Delivering the keynote address, Prince Harry, The Duke of Sussex, said the life and legacy of Mr. Mandela must be celebrated every day, particularly as younger generations may not be familiar with his leadership.

Britains Prince Harry told the UN that the overturning of constitutional rights in the United States was part of "a global assault on democracy and freedom."The Duke of Sussex addressed the United Nations General Assembly in New York at an event marking Nelson Mandela International Day.

"This has been a painful year in a painful decade," the royal told delegates. He cited the continuing fallout from the pandemic, climate change, disinformation and Russia's invasion of Ukraine before alluding to the Supreme Court's recent overturning of America's nationwide right to abortion."

And from the horrific war in Ukraine to the rolling back of constitutional rights here in



the United States, we are witnessing a global assault on democracy and freedom, the cause of Mandela's life," Harry said. The royal paid tribute to Mandela, South Africa's antiapartheid hero who spent 27 years in prison before being elected the country's first Black leader, as "not only a man of conscience" but "a man of action." Harry, 37, invoked that sentiment to urge leaders to tackle climate change, as his wife Meghan Markle looked on from the chamber."

As we sit here today, our world is on fire again,"

said the prince, adding that "historic weather events are no longer historic.""More and more, they are part of our daily lives. And this crisis will only grow worse unless our leaders lead."Unless the countries represented by the seats in this hallowed hall make the decisions, the daring, transformative decisions that our world needs to save humanity," he added.

The General Assembly designated July 18, Mandela's birthday, Nelson Mandela Day in 2009 to honor his life and legacy. Assembly president Abdulla Shahid and New York City





Mayor Eric Adams were among other delegates to make speeches. In a personal moment, Harry said a photograph of his mother Princess Diana with Mandela is "on my wall and in my heart every day."It was taken in Cape Town in 1997, a few months before Diana's death in a car crash in Paris." When I first looked at the photo, straightaway what jumped out was the joy on my mother's face. The playfulness, cheekiness even, the pure delight to be in communion with another soul so committed to serving humanity," said Harry.

Prince Harry attended the ceremony alongside his wife, Meghan, the Duchess of Sussex.

He shared that he treasures a photo of his late mother, Diana, Princess of Wales, and Mr. Mandela, which was given to him by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the anti-apartheid leader who died in December. In it, Mr. Mandela is beaming, despite having endured "the very worst of humanity, vicious racism and statesponsored brutality", and spending 27 years in prison.

Prince Harry said Mr. Mandela was still able to see the goodness in humanity, not because he was blind to the ugliness and injustices of the world, but because he knew we could overcome them.

"In our own time, a time of global uncertainty and division, when it's all too easy to look around and feel anger or despair, I've been inspired to go back to Mandela's writings for insight into how this could be - how he could experience so much darkness and always manage to find the light," he said.

Prince Harry listed some of the current global challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, the weaponization of lies and disinformation, and the "horrific" war in Ukraine, stating that "we are witnessing a global assault on democracy and freedom - the cause of Mandela's life."

Citing the non-profit Freedom House, he said the world has grown less free for more than a decade and a half, and the consequences are being felt most deeply in Africa.

The pandemic, the war, and inflation have left the continent mired in a fuel and food crisis, and a time when the Horn of Africa is enduring its longest drought in nearly half a century.

Describing this as a "pivotal moment", where multiple converging crises have generated endless injustices, people everywhere thus have a choice to make.

"We can grow apathetic, succumb to anger, or yield to despair, surrendering to the gravity of what we're up against. Or we can do what Mandela did, every single day inside that 7-by-9-foot prison cell on Robben Island - and every day outside of it, too," said Prince Harry.

"We can find meaning and purpose in the struggle. We can wear our principles as armour. Heed the advice Mandela once gave his son, to 'never give up the battle even in the darkest hour.' And find hope where we have the courage to seek it." Prince Harry also spoke about his special relationship with Africa, saying he has always found hope there.

"In fact, for most of my life, it has been my lifeline, a place where I have found peace and healing time and time again," he said. "It's where I've felt closest to my mother and sought solace after she died, and where I knew I had found a soulmate in my wife."

He said much of his work is based on the continent "because, despite continued hardship, there are people across Africa who embody Mandela's spirit and ideals - building on the progress he helped make possible."

At the ceremony, a Greek philanthropist who fights to end childhood cancer, and a Guinean senior official working to stamp out violence against women and girls in Africa,

were honoured for their service to humanity. Marianna Vardinoyannis and Dr. Morissanda Kouyaté are the recipients of the 2020 United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize.

The Prize is awarded every five years to one man and one woman, but presentation was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Vardinovannis is founder and president of an eponymous foundation dedicated to children, and the ELPIDA Friends' Association of Children with cancer. She has been a Goodwill Ambassador of the UN education and cultural organization, UNESCO, since 1999.

Dr. Kouyaté, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guinea, is Executive Director of the Inter-African Committee on Harmful Traditional Practices (IAC). He is a leading figure in efforts on ending violence against women, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed presented the Prize to the honourees. Ms. Vardinoyannis took part in the ceremony virtually, and Greece's Ambassador to the UN, Maria Theofili, accepted the award on her behalf.

Ms. Mohammed also delivered remarks on behalf of the UN Secretary-General who, in his message for the International Day, encouraged people to honour Mr. Mandela's legacy by speaking out against hate and standing up for human rights.

Speaking in her own capacity, Ms. Mohammed said Mr. Mandela has served as an inspiration ever since she was young and finding her path.

"I have taken to heart his profound lesson that we all have the ability - and responsibility - to take action. That there is no 'us' and 'them'. We are in this together, carrying a shared responsibility to preserve our common home and stand in solidarity with one another," she

#### **CPEC Phase-II & New Architecture of Regional Security**

By Dr Mehmood Ul Hasan Khan

eemingly, new world and new architecture of security is on the making. The EU imminent accession and ultimate inclusion of Ukraine in European Union, the US, UK, Australia, India and Japan sailing towards expected Asia NATO after already formed QUAD & AUKUS, further containment of China through misadventure postings in Taiwan, South Sea and last but not least, the consolidation of the EU Global Gateway and the US led Build Back Better World (so-called replicas of Chinese BRI) all strongly urge initiation of CPEC Phase-II in the country so that emerging socio-economic, geopolitical and geostrategic threats may be tackled jointly.

The new government of Pakistan is striving hard to start China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) phase-II as soon as possible in the country. But unfortunately, the Western media and its sponsored puppets in the country are purposefully disseminating false and fake propaganda about so-called widening trust deficit between the political and military leadership in Islamabad on the issue of CPEC.

It is completely untrue, fabricated and manipulated. Nevertheless, the follies of former government are still acting as wandering soul in the development of CPEC which somehow was remained slow and sluggish.

Contrary to ongoing planned 5th generation hybrid war against Pakistan and its armed forces, the political and military leadership in Islamabad is fully abreast of evolving geopolitics in Asia Pacific and beyond. Both consider the CPEC as an economic game changer for both sides. Both term the CPEC as strategic balancing act in greater regional stability through not hegemonic designs but harmonious socioeconomic integration, not horrendous crimes but hopes of immense prosperity and last but not least not protectionism but through collective progressiveness. Thus immediate start of the CPEC Phase-II is the need of hour.

It is high time that Pakistan and Chinese leadership should pay special attention to promoting CPEC as socio-economic catalyst and game changer through forming corridor of knowledge in which The Center for South Asia & International Studies (CSAIS) would play an important role because it blesses with human will/capital, wisdom and vision, for projecting the soft image and national narratives of CPEC and of course both countries being custodian of socio-economic prosperity and guarantor of regional peace and stability.

The "Bajwa Doctrine" emphasizes the importance of restoring peace by putting down



various insurgencies, reviving economic growth and following holistic policies to reduce poverty and unemployment in the country and beyond. In this connection, the redefined, redrafted and rephrased version of Baiwa Doctrine "paradigm shift from geo-politics to geo-economy" has further strengthened the strategic role and utility of CPEC in the country which stands for greater regional connectivity and greater socioeconomic integration with Central Asia and beyond.

Even stalemate foreign policy of Pakistan has new imputes for greater regional connectivity and diversification. Now Pakistan's foreign policy is undergoing a major shift towards East after six decades of uneven relationships and military cooperation with Washington. In this context, China and Pakistan profoundly desire regional stability.

It is true in the context of Afghanistan, Central Asia, South East Asia and Middle East. The ongoing Chinese supported peace talks on Afghanistan demonstrate high level of resolve of both countries. Undoubtedly, the sincere efforts of armed forces of Pakistan to fight against enemies of peace and stability are commendable.

It seems that the CPEC is a crucial part in "China's String of Pearls Policy (CSPP)". The CPEC is a balancing act in the region which is economic development centric.

In this regard, Pakistan's ports and Chinese CSPP have direct correlation linking the South China Sea, South Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean.

Thus further development and complete functionality of Gwadar seaport is the need of

The growing strategic partnership between the United States and India are potential threats to regional countries. Thus CPEC may also be useful to protect vested interests of both the countries in deep waters of Indo-Pacific region in the days to come.

Truly, ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict has once again highlighted the importance of food & energy security in the world. That is why Beijing fears that during an international security crisis ships carrying energy resources could be interdicted by hostile naval forces i.e. US Navy or Indian Navy.

A disruption of these products could easily derail the economic growth on which the Chinese government pursues its great power ambitions. So, complete operationalization of Gwadar seaport has serious strategic orientations.

Gwadar is the lynchpin of CPEC. Geographically, it is close to the international maritime energy chokepoint, the Strait of Hormuz. Nearly 30 percent of the world's seaborne oil shipments pass through this 21 miles wide waterway. More than world oil supply of 90.1 million barrels per day, 17 million barrels per day of oil shipments passed through the Strait of Hormuz during 2017-2018.

Hopefully, Gwadar port will be used for transshipment, embarking and disembarking cargo to and from China, Pakistan, Africa, Middle East, Central Asia and Europe. Pakistan's Army Chief, during a visit to Balochistan the under construction roads at Balochistan in July 2015 termed Gwadar seaport as lifeline to blue economy of Pakistan in which CPEC would play an important role.

The Frontier Works Organisation (FWO) is working at five locations to provide road link to the port, and has already completed nearly 502 kilometres of the 870 kilometres roads.

Gwadar seaport has multidimensional socioeconomic, geopolitical and geostrategic befitting propositions and benefits for both the countries. It is estimated that once completed, the 3000 KM

long corridor will act as the central gateway for trade between China, the Middle East, Africa, Afghanistan and Central Asia.

Moreover, China's increasing energy imports from the Middle East could be offloaded at Gwadar and transported through Balochistan in Pakistan. It will further reduce the distance for the Chinese trade; the corridor will facilitate the development of underdeveloped areas too.

The construction of a deep sea port at Gwadar, road links, industrial parks, power projects, the rail links and fiber optics running all along the length from Balochistan to Xinjiang shall be a big economic stimulus for both regions.

Furthermore, Gwadar port and its associated facilities can provide Pakistan with estimated annual revenue of US \$40 billion, besides generating two million jobs. The CPEC through Gwadar will give China shortest access to the Middle East and Africa, where thousands of Chinese firms, employing tens of thousands of Chinese workers, are involved in development work.

The corridor also promises to open up remote, landlocked Xinjiang and create incentives for both state and private enterprises to expand economic activity and create jobs in this underdeveloped region.

The recent strides in Pak-Sino relationship, especially regarding holistic concept of CPEC, speak volumes about the constructive engagement between two sides. There is no doubt that actualisation of this concept will see both the countries progressing even further and maximizing the dividend of geostrategic relations as well as time tested friendship.

To conclude, CPEC Phase-II has multiplier effects. It is logical answer to the United States' Asia pivot and its growing support for New Delhi precisely through greater regional connectivity and immense socio-economic integration.

It fears that Indian Ocean will be a crucial battleground for the contest between opposing strategic partnerships, with the US and India on one side and China and Pakistan on the other. Sitting astride the all-important Strait of Hormuz, the Gwadar seaport underpins CPEC.

It seems that the United States Navy (USN), Indian Navy (IN), Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) Navy and Pakistan Navy (PN) will have vital roles to play in the unraveling maritime security environment in the region. Thus Gwdar seaport completion is the need of hour.

It estimates that completion of Gwadar will easily connect the oil and gas fields of the Middle East to the mega-cities of East Asia. Its coastline is becoming a crucial staging post for China's peaceful naval power, extending its reach from the Indian Ocean to the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea. The CPEC projects have been ensured by the Special Security Division (SSD) of Pak Army. Pakistan Army fully cognizant of the challenges has left no stone unturned to provide protection to this project of vital national importance.

Due to the diverse nature of threats to CPEC, Pakistan Army has raised SSD, dedicated primarily to the security of Chinese working on CPEC projects. The SSD has been raised and operationalized in a record time of less than two years and has taken over all the running projects of the CPEC. Due to raising and operationalization of SSD, Chinese government as well as CPEC management has gained confidence and assurance about security of Chinese working in Pakistan.

The government has deployed 15,000 military personnel, as part of the Special Security Division (SSD) and Maritime Security Force (MSF), to protect projects under the umbrella of the CPEC.

Both forces work under the interior ministry, in coordination with the provinces, to ensure the safety of locals and foreigners working on CPEC projects.

Moreover, the SSD is a force that will provide security to 34 CPEC related projects, while the MSF will safeguard the Gwadar port and other coastal areas of the country. The SSD had been deployed in six zones from Gwadar to Gilgit-Baltistan, including all four provinces and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK).

In addition, the SSD will also patrol different areas of the corridor, especially where roadbuilding projects are under way.

Unfortunately, wild chase power psych has put even national economy on flames which are now burning hopes of bright future and socioeconomic prosperity in the country. Constant mud-slugging and blame game syndrome have become one of the biggest threats to national economic stability.

Notwithstanding, in this doom and gloom the CPEC can play a key role as a 'game changer' for the national economy, especially for the development and prosperity of Balochistan. CPEC promises to open up new vistas of socioeconomic development and employment opportunities for the people of Balochistan.

The CPEC project will contribute to the development of the whole province and address various economic and social problems there. Hopefully, Gwadar will be transformed into an economic hub after the completion of several projects under CPEC.

Other cities like Qalat, Quetta and Zhob will also become more vibrant with the completion of the planned road network which will give a boost to economic activities and other development projects under CPEC. Balochistan has now become center of mega projects of CPEC. In this regard, various road and transport, energy, education and training, industrial and other socio-economic projects are also being carried out under CPEC.

Energy projects include a 320MW China Hub Coal Power Project, and 300MW Coal-Fired Power Project at Gwadar. Likewise, connectivity projects encompass the 19km four-lanes East Bay Expressway Gwadar which is near completion, linking the Makran Coastal Highway N-10 to the Gwadar Port.

Those under construction are Zhob-Quetta, Kuchlak (N-50), Khuzdar-Basima Road (N-30), Hoshab-Awaran Road Section (M-8), Nokundi-Mashkhel Road, Awaran-Khuzdar Road Section (M-8), up-gradation of DI Khan (Yarik)- Zhob, N-50 Phase-I, Mashkhel-Panjgur Road and Quetta Mass Transit.

Upgradation and development of fishing, boatmaking and maintenance services to protect and promote livelihoods of the local population is being carried out under the Gwadar Livelihood Project. As a matter of fact, CPEC will affect the province economically, commercially as well as geographically.

Ultimately. high levels of poverty, unemployment, energy & food security and last but not least, water shortage will be diminished in Balochistan.

The incumbent Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in his maiden speech in the National Assembly had said that his government would speed up the construction of CPEC. He termed it an ambitious blueprint to transform Pakistan into a major emerging economy.

It forecasts that CPEC would not only help and benefit Pakistan and China but the whole region, including Afghanistan, Iran, India, and the Central Asian Republics. Road, rail, and air linkages will lead to a win-win proposition and economic model for all and is considered a real hope for a better future with growth and development of the economy.

It is high time that Pakistan and Chinese leadership should pay special attention to promoting CPEC as socio-economic catalyst and game changer through forming corridor of knowledge in which The Center for South Asia & International Studies (CSAIS) would play an important role because it blesses with human will/capital, wisdom and vision, for projecting the soft image and national narratives of CPEC and of course both countries being custodian of socio-economic prosperity and guarantor of regional peace and stability.

There is an urgent need to showcase Chinese President Global Development Initiative in the country because it is directly attached to global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), shared prosperity and community development.

# Ministry of Foreign Affairs organizes mango festival as part of its 75th anniversary celebrations



he Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized a mango festival in Islamabad as a part of a series of activities to commemorate 75 years of Pakistan's independence. Addressing the occasion, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that mangoes have played an important role in Pakistan's diplomacy and the country is famous for its "mango diplomacy." The Foreign Minister underscored the fact that Pakistani mangoes

are popular in the world due to their superior quality as well as the huge number of varieties being grown in the country. "We believe that Pakistani mangoes are the best and sweetest mangoes in the world," Zardari said. He called on foreign diplomats and envoys to work together to promote the Pakistani mangoes and ensure that all the citizens of their respective countries have access to this treasure.

The Foreign Minister mentioned that he and his

family have their own mango farms in Pakistan's southern Sindh province, adding that he has gifted a pack of mangoes to all the foreign ministers of the countries having diplomatic relations with Pakistan.

The event focused on projecting Pakistan's culinary and agrarian richness linked to the production of more than 200 varieties of mangoes that are exported all over the world, according to the foreign ministry.







## Sino-Pak media outlets to join hands to project CPEC development: Wang Wenbin

DF Report

hinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin said that the media outlets from China and Pakistan could jointly project cooperation between the two countries by fact based reporting and counter false information by exposing lies aimed at making a greater contribution to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) development, socio economic growth and people to people exchanges.

We hope that the media outlets from both China and Pakistan can play the role as a bond, tell the story of cooperation between the two countries and combat false information so that they can make a greater contribution to CPEC development, socio economic development and the people to people exchange," he said during his regular briefing held here at International Press Center (IPC).

He said that the 7th CPEC media forum was jointly hosted by the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan-China Institute and China Economic Net (CEN) both offline and online.

The forum was attended by nearly 200 people, including high level officials from the both sides, diplomatic envoys, media and think tanks themed under strengthening the role of new media to present the CPEC.

The representatives shared their views on Global Development Initiative (GDIs), the promotion of media, Belt and Road Initiative and CPEC development and a fair and objective reporting of CPEC, he added.

Wang Wenbin said that during the forum, there was an inauguration ceremony of books on storytelling of CPEC and awarding ceremony of relevant media outlets.

Jointly organized by the Chinese Embassy, Pakistan China Institute and China Economic Net and after seven years of development, CPEC Media Forum has now grown into an indispensable exchange platform for the Chinese and Pakistani media with the biggest influence and most remarkable achievements.

Chinese side was represented by Pang Chunxue, Charge daffaires of the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, Zhao Zizhong, Vice President of Economic Daily, Tian Yuhong, Executive Secretary of the All-China Journalists Association, Yang Jianduo, Chairman of All Pakistan Chinese Enterprises Association, Yang Xun, Former Chief Reporter in Pakistan, International News Department of People's Daily, Li Yue, Vice President and Board Member of China Economic Information Service, and Wang Qianting, Deputy Director, Urdu Service, China Media Group.

While speakers from the Pakistani side included Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman Pakistan-China Institute, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Foreign Minister, Raja Pervez Ashraf, Speaker National Assembly, Moin ul Hague, Pakistan Ambassador to China, Liagat Ali Shah, Executive Director, Center of Excellence on CPEC, Ambreen Shah, Vice President Legal, Corporate Affairs, China Power Hub Generation Company, Najma Minhas, Editor-in-Chief, Global Village Space, Mustafa Hyder Sayed, Executive Director, Pakistan-China Institute. Hameed Haroon. Chief Executive Officer of the Dawn Media Group, and Nasim Zehra, Prominent analyst & Senior Anchor, Channel 24 News HD.

# Pakistan, China vow to boost defence, anti-terror cooperation



**DF Report** 

mid growing tensions between China and the West, military leadership of China and Pakistan on June 12 stepped up their cooperation building on what the official statement described "their strategic partnership" in the challenging times.

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa led a senior-level tri-service military delegation of Pakistan to China from June 9 to 12 where they held wide-ranging discussions with the senior military leadership and other government departments of China.

An apex meeting was held on Sunday wherein the Pakistani side was headed by COAS General Bajwa while the Chinese side was led by Vice Chairman Central Military Commission of China General Zhang Youxia, a statement issued by Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said.

The two sides discussed their perspectives on the international and regional security situation. They expressed satisfaction with the defence cooperation between the two countries, it added. Both sides, the statement said, discussed their perspectives on the

international and regional security situation, and expressed satisfaction with the defence cooperation between the two countries.

"Pakistan and China reaffirmed their strategic partnership in challenging times and agreed to continue regular exchange of perspectives on issues of mutual interest," the ISPR said, adding that both sides further vowed to enhance their training, technology and counterterrorism cooperation at the tri-service level.

Earlier this week, Chinese chargé d'affaires Pang Chunxue and Pakistani leaders met at the 7th CPEC Media Forum in Islamabad and warned of growing threats to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) from fake news and disinformation about the mega-development project and emphasised the need for cooperation in countering it.

"False propaganda and disinformation on CPEC are on the rise.

Hostile forces are trying to undermine the development of CPEC, as well as the unity and mutual trust between the two countries," Chinese chargé d'affaires Pang Chunxue said.

CPEC has been widely projected in Pakistan as a game-changer that would influence the region's geo-strategic, geo-economic and geopolitical dynamics; and as an answer to its infrastructure shortcomings.

But, at the same time, media reports spread scepticism about it by pointing to the possibility of Pakistan falling into China's debt trap, the alleged absence of transparency in the projects, and the environmental impact of the projects, especially coal-based power plants.

In that gathering, National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, in his keynote speech, underscored the importance of CPEC, saying it was the country's best bet for becoming the region's geo-economic hub, but regretted that it had been "a victim of the malicious disinformation campaign" carried out by the "detractors" of CPEC and China.

Pang also spoke of the seriousness of this challenge. "False propaganda and disinformation on CPEC are on the rise. Hostile forces are trying to undermine the development of CPEC, as well as the unity and mutual trust between the two countries," she maintained.

### China delivers 2nd Type 054 A/P frigate to Pakistan



DF Report

hina delivered the second of four powerful Type 054 A/P frigates to the ◆Pakistan Navy, highlighting the friendship between the two neighboring countries, which serves as a pillar of peace and stability in the region.

The PNS Taimur was commissioned at the Hudong-Zhonghua Shipyard in Shanghai, the Global Times learned from the Pakistan Navy.

The PNS Taimur is the second of four Type 054 A/P frigates China built for the Pakistan Navy. The first Type 054 A/P frigate, the PNS Tughril, joined the Pakistan Navy Fleet in January. The other two are under construction in China.

As a technologically advanced and highly capable sea asset, the PNS Taimur has high-tech weapons and sensors, and the latest combat management and electronic warfare systems to fight in multi-threat environments, according to a press release the Pakistan Navy sent to the Global Times.

The ships will give a sustainable boost to the combat capability of the Pakistan Navy and enable it to meet emerging challenges in the domain of maritime security and regional peace, read the press release.

Zhang Junshe, a senior research fellow at the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Naval Military Studies Research Institute, told the Global Times that the Type 054A, on which the Type 054A/P is based, is China's most advanced frigate.

The induction of state-of-the-art Type 054 A/P frigates will significantly enhance the Pakistan Navy's capabilities in strengthening the defense of sea frontiers, said Commodore Rashid Mehmood Sheikh, head of the Pakistan Navy Mission in China, who attended the commissioning ceremony as chief guest.

He praised the concerted efforts made by the Chinese shipbuilding industry and the PLA Navy for the landmark achievement of prompt delivery of the well-equipped and potent frigate. It was also highlighted in the ceremony that China and Pakistan are cognizant of the changing geopolitical environment and are taking effective measures to deal with the added responsibilities and evolving challenges together, and that friendship between the two countries is a pillar of peace and stability in the region, the press release said.

When the Pakistan Navy inducted the first Type 054A/P frigate, the President of Pakistan Dr Arif Alvi said that the Type 054A/P will not only serve to reinforce the security architecture of Pakistan's maritime zones across the country's maritime border, but also help safeguard the sea routes of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, the Chief of the Naval Staff, said at the time that the Pakistan Navy's responsibilities have grown manifold since the inception of the CPEC and the development of its associated maritime infrastructure and Gwadar Port.

# Korea enhances employment quota for Pakistani workers: Envoy

FTA is very important to boost economic relations between the two countries. he added. In reply to a question on a recently signed agreement with Pakistan under Economic **Development Cooperation** Fund (EDCF) worth USD 1 billion for five years from 2022 to 2026, he said that this would be a soft loan that would be returned in 30 to 40 years.

**DF** Report

mbassador of Korea to Pakistan H E Suh Sangpyo, has disclosed that Korea has decided to increase the employment quota for Pakistani workers from 1000 to 1500 per year under Employment Permit System (EPS).

In an exclusive interview, the Korean Ambassador said that the program was suspended during the pandemic period, but since last January, it had become operational again and more Pakistani workers would go to Korea on employment visas.

Presently, the envoy said that around 10,000 Pakistan workers in South Korea were performing their duties in different fields with full dedication and commitment.

The cooperation could be extended further, but for this, the Ambassador said both countries are also required to enter into a particular arrangement like and Free Trade Agreement (FTA), on which negations are underway but unfortunately, the process is slow and should be expedited.

Moreover, FTA is very important to boost economic relations between the two countries, he added. In reply to a question on a recently signed agreement with Pakistan under Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) worth USD 1 billion for five years from 2022 to 2026, he said that this would be a soft loan that would be returned in 30 to 40 years.



This soft loan will help Pakistan to establish IT Parks in Karachi by spending almost \$120 million and around \$80 million in Islamabad, he expressed. The Ambassador further added that Pakistan's Information Technology industry was booming and export to other countries were increasing day by day, but we found that the export from Pakistan was mainly in IT services.

It accomplished that the establishment of IT parks buildings in Islamabad and Karachi would enhance the scope of IT exports, he added.

Commenting on the electronics of Samsung, he said that the company had made an investment in Pakistan and established a mobile production unit in Karachi last year. But, the envoy said, taxes are too high in Pakistan on the import of electronic gadgets such as mobile phones.

Therefore, the production of mobiles had witnessed a decrease due to the difficulty of importing mobile parts in the current situation now, he said adding, the original plan to produce more than 3,000,000 units here in Karachi is complicated.

Kia and Hyundai also just started their business here and created their space in the vehicle industry of Pakistan, he told.

Ambassador Sangpyo said there are multiple projects underway between Pakistan and Korea as in the business sector, both countries partner in the automobile, transportation, hydropower, smartphones, and confectionaries production sectors. Talking about tourism and people-topeople exchange, the Ambassador said that Gandhara Buddhist heritage was a resource for Korean tourism. Moreover, in both countries, people-to-people exchanges are increasing gradually, and Education plays a significant role in boosting such exchange programs, he said.

Replying to a question on Education, Global Korea Scholarship (GKS) provides international students with opportunities to conduct advanced studies in undergraduate & graduate programs at higher educational institutions in the Republic of Korea to promote international exchanges in education and mutual friendship between countries.

The Ambassador said, "Around 1,500 Pakistani students are studying undergraduate and graduate programs in Korea. He said that the University level Cooperation included PMAS-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi and the Chungbuk National University memorandum of understanding (MOU). The institutions agreed to cooperate over a full spectrum of mutual interest with specific agreements on January 26, 2022, which included academic and technical staff Exchange for joint research, a joint publication of research papers, etc.

In defense, cooperation between both countries is also expanding, especially in training and capacity building, as military officers are doing six months or one-year courses from both sides.

Moreover, one country annually holds an exhibition event; in that case, Pakistan's highlevel military officers visit Korea.

### **Kyrgyz Ambassador** calls on Education **Minister to discuss** bilateral matters



**DF** Report

yrgyz Ambassador to Pakistan E Totuiaev Ulanbek Asankulovich on July 5 called on Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain and discussed matters pertaining to bilateral interests.

Welcoming the envoy, Rana Tanveer said Pakistan looked forward to taking its ties with the Kyrgyz Republic to the next level, said a news release. Secretary Education Naheed S. Durrani also attended the meeting.

The Minister said there existed immense potential to increase bilateral cooperation that would prove to be beneficial for the two countries, adding Pakistan and Kyrgyz Republic should take advantage of the opportunity

at hand and ensure maximum cooperation.

The Minister discussed ways and means for the exchange of expertise and knowledge in the field of vocational and technical training, adding, the two countries could benefit from the experience of each other. Rana Tanveer welcomed the idea of the exchange of teachers and students to further cooperation in the field of education. He said Pakistan could learn from the expertise of the Kyrgyz Republic in Engineering whereas the Kyrgyz Republic could learn from Pakistan concerning academic research.

The Minister said both the countries were enjoying cordial relations and had a great friendship, adding, the people of Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan had close cultural and spiritual ties.



# Kyrgyz republic keen to enhance multi-front relations with Pakistan

**DF** Report

he Ambassador of Republic of Kyrgyz H E Totuiaev Ulanbek Asankulovich said that his country had keen interest in enhancing relations with Pakistan on multiple fronts through enhancement of trade, investment and business.

The Ambassador, during a call on meeting with Finance Minister Miftah Ismail discussed mutual relationship between both the countries, according to press statement issued by Finance Ministry.

On the occasion, the finance minister shared that the government of Pakistan attached great importance to development of bilateral relations with friendly countries, it added.



He also apprised the Kyrgyz Ambassador about the potential investment avenues present in Pakistan. The Minister thanked the ambassador

and assured him of full support to enhance bilateral relations between both the countries in various sectors.

# Pak-Iran enjoy multi-dimensional relations: Asad Mahmood



Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Seved Muhammad Ali Hosseini said, Iran, Pakistan are bound in age old cultural, religious and linguistic similarities; trade and economic cooperation between the two brother countries need to be enhanced. Implementation of trade agreements will bring both the countries closer

ederal Minister for Communications and Postal Services Asad Mahmood said that Pakistan and Iran enjoy multidimensional relations which need to be further strengthened.

He expressed these views while meeting with newly-appointed Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Seyed Muhammad Ali Hosseini in Ministry of Communications. The Minister said that Pakistan highly values its friendly and brotherly relationship with neighboring country Iran which always stand time tested.

"We have complete trust, mutual understanding and convergence of views on all bilateral, regional and international issues," he added. Secretary Communications, Chairman National Highway Authority Capt (R) Muhammad Khuram Agha and other senior officers of Ministry and National Highway Authority were also present.

Asad Mahmood said, although current trade volume between the two countries was low to the tune of approx 1 million US\$. However, Pakistan was committed to take all possible measures to increase the bilateral trade volume to the level of US \$ 5 billion, he added.

He said that to increase the bilateral trade, an additional border crossing point at Gabd (near to Gwadar)-Reemdan was recently operationalized by Pakistan.

The Minister said that the purpose of agreement on international transport between Pakistan and Iran aims to facilitate trade traffic from Turkey to Pakistan through Iran, while Iranian goods and passengers can have access to China through Pakistan.

"Pakistan may have the benefits of access to other Central Asians Republics and Europe through Turkey with operationalization of this agreement," he added. The Minister stressed upon the need of making visa conditions easier to facilitate the Pakistani traders and Iranian Amhassador to Pakistan Seved Muhammad Ali Hosseini said, Iran, Pakistan are bound in age old cultural, religious and linguistic similarities, adding that trade and economic cooperation between the two brother countries need to be enhanced. He further said that the implementation of trade agreements will bring both the countries closer.

### Musadik, Turkmen envoy discuss Pakistan-Turkmenistan energy collaboration

**DF** Report

urkmen Ambassador to Pakistan H E Atadjan Molamov called on Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik and discussed ways and means to further collaboration in the energy sector.

The meeting was aimed at discussing various aspects of the flagship Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project, a Petroleum Division news release said. The minister reiterated Pakistan's commitment to the TAPI project and stressed the need to expedite it.

The envoy expressed the "same devotion to the "multi-lateral project." Dr Musadik expressed the resolve of the government of Pakistan for the early completion of the TAPI project as it needed additional supplies of natural gas to meet energy requirements.



## **Italian Defence Chief calls on CJCSC** to review defence relations



**DF Report** 

hief of Defence General Staff of Italian Armed Forces, Admiral Giuseppe Cavo Dragone, who is on an official visit to Pakistan, called on Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Nadeem Raza at the Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi.

According to a statement of Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), matters of mutual professional interests including further strengthening of security and defence cooperation, especially in the field of defence production were discussed during the meeting.

The CJCSC reiterated that Pakistan and Italy enjoy cordial relations, which are based on convergence on all important issues relating to peace, defence and security.

General Nadeem Raza said that there is enormous scope for expanding and deepening the existing relations with Italy in multiple

domains including defence cooperation.

Chief of the Defence Staff Italy lauded the professionalism of Pakistan s Armed Forces and acknowledged their sacrifices in the fight against terrorism.

Earlier, upon arrival at Joint Staff Headquarters, Admiral Giuseppe Cavo Dragone was presented with a guard of honor by a smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Armed Forces.

### **RCCI, PABF organize 4th Pakistan America Trade Summit at Serena Hotel Islamabad**



CCI with collaboration of Pakistan America Business Forum (PABF) organized 4TH Pakistan America Trade Summit at Serena Hotel Islamabad.

Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar was the Chief Guest, whereas Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi was Guest of Honor.

Mr. Riaz Hussain President (PABF), Mr. Abrar Hashmi Pakistan Consul General Houston, Mr. Aaron Fishman US Economic Counselor and USA Embassy Commercial Representatives were also present on the occasion followed by the Penal Discussions and Q&A Sessions on How to promote Pak USA Trade.

President RCCI Nadeem A Rauf, Group leader Mr. Sohail Altaf, Chairman Regional Trade Mr. Khurshid Berlas also address the summit and urged for the close cooperation and enhancing bilateral ties, people to people contacts & networking and Signing Character of Economy for the long term Economic Stability.

Senior Vice President, Asim Malik, Vice President Tallat Awan, Former Presidents, EC Members & other Distinguish members attended the Trade Summit.

MOU ceremony was also signed between RCCI and PABF followed by Memento distribution.



### Pakistan, Azerbaijan celebrate 30 years of diplomatic ties



Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with the Embassy Azerbaijan in Islamabad, organized a special event and a photo exhibition at the Foreign Office to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan.

Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood and Ambassador H E Khazarb Farhadov of Azerbaijan formally inaugurated the exhibition. The photographs on display had been carefully curated to showcase the rich history of leadership-level engagement between the two countries as well as important milestones in the bilateral relationship.

Speaking on the occasion, the Foreign Secretary said that Pakistan-Azerbaijan relations had evolved into a robust and multi-dimensional partnership since the formal establishment of bilateral ties in 1992. He highlighted that the two countries had a long-standing tradition of supporting each other on their issues of core interest.

The Foreign Secretary recalled Pakistan's support for Azerbaijan's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. He appreciated Azerbaijan's principled stance on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, noting that Azerbaijan had been a consistent advocate for the rights of the Kashmiri people as a member of the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir.

Ambassadors and senior diplomats from the Central Asian States as well as Turkey participated in the event. Members of the media and representatives from the Multicultural Center of Azerbaijan, which has recently been established at the National University of Modern Languages (NUML), were also in attendance.

Moreover, a special event dedicated to the 30th





Pakistan-Azerbaijan relations had evolved into a robust and multi-dimensional partnership since the formal establishment of bilateral ties in 1992. The two countries had a long-standing tradition of supporting each other on their issues of core interest

anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan was held at the Parliament House.

While addressing the gathering, Deputy Chairman Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi congratulated the government and the brotherly people of Azerbaijan on three decades of independence.

"What makes this moment special is that it also marks 30 years of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan," said deputy chairman Senate. This is indeed a milestone that will only further strengthen the friendly ties between our two nations, he added.

He said that Pakistan and Azerbaijan have always extended close cooperation in all areas and their frequent high-level parliamentary exchanges show that both nations greatly value this partnership.

He said that Pakistan stood shoulder to shoulder with Azerbaijan in its engagements with Armenia, and they would continue to lend their full support to Azerbaijan in other areas. He also commended President Ilham Aliyev's efforts in pushing for peace and mutual development.

Ambassador of Azerbaijan underscores need for more close collaboration between the two sides

He also called for working towards ease of business and tourism through collaboration between two governments.

Ambassador of Azerbaijan H E Khazar Farhadov underscored the need for more close collaboration between the two sides. He said that Pakistan was an important country. "We want to broaden the already strong fraternal ties in diverse sectors."

# Italy to invest \$1.5 million for olive cultivation in Pakistan, **Says Italian Ambassador**

mbassador of Italy to Pakistan Andreas Ferrarese said that Italy was investing in a project worth \$1.5 million for olive cultivation and growth in Pakistan.

The Ambassador said that Italy had always played a vital role in helping Pakistan to develop olive cultivation and technical expertise. The "Olive Culture" project worth \$1.5 million shall be executed in 26 months in suitable areas by CIHEAM Bari in cooperation with the Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFS&R) through the Pakistan Oilseed Department.

It represents a continuum with all the work done by Italy in the past, with a holistic approach encompassing all stages and stakeholders. The Ambassador hosted an event to highlight Italy's contribution to the promotion of Olive and Olive Oil and its Value Chain in Pakistan, through the technical support of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation AICS in Pakistan.

He said that Pakistan had a lot of potential for olives and the country could earn foreign exchange by increasing olive production and using it for commercial purposes. He further said that fair trade was going on between the two countries at present. Pakistan's overall exports to Italy were worth \$ 763 million, its overall imports from the country were worth \$754 million.

Andreas Ferrarese said that Italian olives were the best in the world in terms of quality. Pakistan could import olives from Italy which were very good for human health, he said. He said that the Pakistani business community in Italy could play a very important role in that regard. Olives, he said, were an integral part of the entire Mediterranean civilization without which life and culture would be incomplete.

He said that olives were a special gift of our Mediterranean culture, which were a part of the culture of the region. Andreas Ferrarese said that olive is an important part of our food, weddings and festivals. Similarly, olives were of special importance in the Middle East and other regions and civilizations. He said that the importance of olives is also mentioned in the holy religious books Quran, Gospel and Bible. The Ambassador said that Italy had always supported Pakistan's journey in the field and "We are happy to continue with an aim to develop a sustainable, modern and rich olive culture in Pakistan."

He said that it would not only provide quality edible oil for the Pakistani people but also help reduce the import bill of the country. Rather, he said, we look forward to the times

The Ambassador said that Italy had always played a vital role in helping Pakistan to develop olive cultivation and technical expertise. The "Olive Culture" project worth \$1.5 million shall be executed in 26 months in suitable areas by CIHEAM Bari in cooperation with the Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFS&R) through the Pakistan Oilseed Department

when Pakistan would be among leading oliveproducing and exporting countries in the world.

Project Coordinator, CIHEAM Bari International Olive Culture, Marco Marchetti said that Italy would play an important role in the cultivation and processing of olives in Pakistan.



He said that there was a need to work more on the olive supply chain in Pakistan, the lack of which at present could not reap the benefits in Pakistan. He said that qualified human resources, technical assistance, quality and safety standards, reference laboratories for oil certification, and phytosanitary labs were much needed in Pakistan to establish a full value chain of safe and highly nutritious tasty food that improved health dramatically.

He said that Olive Culture was an inclusive project through gender and youth, agrotourism and culture. Marco said that olive contributed to mitigating climate change impact as a smart tree against soil erosion and water consumption, inducing a low carbon footprint. These were added value benefits for achieving the desired results in the sector in Pakistan, a country which had the potential to be a world leader in olive production, he said.

He said that Italian technical assistance for Pakistan in the olive growing sector started 40 years ago with adaptive research schemes to assess the viability for modern cultivation of the crop in Pakistan (in the 80s and 90s). It was followed by the launch of the first significant olive crop investment (2012-2015) through the Pakistan Italian Debt Swap Agreement (PIDSA), resulting in 2000 hectares of plantation in marginal and wastelands, he said.

He said that in 2016, olive cultivation was introduced in the Programme for Poverty Reduction sponsored by the Italian government and executed by the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF), through which three oil extraction units were being established on a public-private partnership basis with the farmer communities. More recently, in March 2022, a key project "Olive Culture Holistic and Multi-Professional Mechanism for a Pakistani Olive Oil Value Chain", has been launched. Marco said that the project was funded by the Italian government and implemented by the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari CIHEAM.

Director of AICS Office in Islamabad, Emanuela Benini, said that the building of a multiprofessional Olive and Olive Oil Value Chain (from soil to plate) shall ensure high quality the paramount condition to good income.

### Pak-Bangladesh trade to reach \$1 billion soon: HC



**DF** Report

ilateral trade between Pakistan and Bangladesh increases and the existing volume is likely to touch \$1 billion soon, which will be a major milestone.

This was stated by High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Pakistan, H E Rahul Alam Siddique while exchanging views with the business community during his visit to Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The diplomat said the quantum would be celebrated at Bangladesh High Commission in Islamabad and Deputy High Commission in Karachi. He said that the current bilateral trade volume between the two countries had increased to around \$900 million and it continued to rise at a faster pace.

Pakistan's exports to Bangladesh have risen by 48 percent while exports from Bangladesh to Pakistan were up by 14 percent which is a good sign, he said and hoped that the rising trend would continue in the days to come which would be very encouraging for the business communities of both countries.

Deputy High Commissioner of Bangladesh Mehboob Alam, General Secretary Businessmen Group in KCCI, A.Q. Khalil, former presidents KCCI Majid Aziz, Shamim Ahmed Firpo, KCCI Managing Committee members were also present. Bangladeshi High Commissioner highlighted the progress, development and achievements of Bangladesh during the last 50 years of its existence.

During the last 50 years, Bangladesh achieved

many goals under its Vision- 2021 programme and now the total exports of the country had

High Commissioner of Bangladesh said, we have to make extraordinary and collective efforts to improve regional trade and investment cooperation by effectively utilizing SAARC platform, he stressed adding that in today's inflationary era. regional ties had to be given special attention with a view to fulfill each other's needs as improved regional ties were the only way to bring down the cost of doing business

crossed \$50 billion. Bangladesh was number one country in jute production, second in readymade garments exports, 3rd in fish exports and 4th in rice production and tomato production in the world, he said.

He said Bangladesh had achieved the status of developing country from its previous level of least developed country. Bangladesh had also achieved remarkable progress in socioeconomic sectors and has been transformed into one of the vibrant economies of the world due to visionary leadership, resilience people and political stability.

General Secretary BMG AQ Khalil, in his remarks, appreciated the efforts being made by the Bangladeshi government towards improving trade and investment ties with Pakistan.

He was of the view that Pakistan must learn from the history and experience of Bangladesh. AQ Khalil further assured full cooperation to Bangladeshi High Commission in Islamabad and its Deputy High Commission in Karachi in all their endeavors focused on promoting trade, investment and business ties between the two countries.

We have to make extraordinary and collective efforts to improve regional trade and investment cooperation by effectively utilizing SAARC platform, he stressed adding that in today's inflationary era, regional ties had to be given special attention with a view to fulfill each other's needs as improved regional ties were the only way to bring down the cost of doing business.

# Mazari welcomes start of direct flights from Karachi to Almaty



Pakistan is a home to the world's second highest mountain in the world K-2 along with other high peaks, this could be a greatest attraction for mountaineers from Kazakhstan.

Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ehsan ur Rehman Mazari has welcomed the start of direct flights from Karachi to Almaty this year, saying it would boost people to people contact between the two friendly countries.

The Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan H E Yerzhan Kistafin called on the Minister and informed the him that initially two flights in a week would be started from Karachi to Almaty and the number will increase up to 5 in coming months.

In the meeting, the Ambassador proposed that there were various areas of cooperation between both brotherly countries specifically

in tourism and sports which could bring two nations even closer.

Yerzhan Kistafin informed the Minister that recently a large exhibition of Pakistan (Gilgit-Baltistan) products was arranged in the largest metropolis Almaty.

Moreover, various business groups, tourist groups visited Pakistan and Kazakhstan was keen to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) regarding tourism with Pakistan.

The Minister welcomed the proposals and said we were also looking forward to take these friendly relations to new heights specifically in sphere of sports involving youth from both the nations.

He said both nations enjoy 30 years of diplomatic relations and we have to work mutually for extending these beyond the current status.

The Minister said Pakistan was a home to the world's second highest mountain in the world K-2 along with other high peaks, this could be a greatest attraction for mountaineers from Kazakhstan.

Moreover, both agreed to work at their respective ends for enhancing the bilateral trade and expand its volume which is currently not very high.



Pak-Belarus ties moving forward to open new opportunities for cooperation

Ambassador of the Republic of Belarus H.E. Andrei Metelitsa

### Q: Your Excellency would you like to share your profile including your career and experience as a diplomat. And how you see Pakistan?

First of all, I would like to thank Diplomatic Focus Magazine for this great opportunity on the occasion of the Independence Day of Belarus to share with the esteemed readers information about Belarus and Belarusian-Pakistani bilateral relations.

As for my diplomatic career, I was posted in New-York and Belgrade. Before coming to Pakistan I held a position of the Director-General for Treaties and Legal Affairs in the MFA.

I arrived to Pakistan with my family in December 2020. Ever since I have started my mission, I feel comfortable in your country. Pakistani people are very kind, open and friendly. It worth mentioning warm welcome, hospitality not only during the official meetings with my colleagues at the Pakistani Foreign Ministry and other Governmental Offices, but also in my everyday life whether it is a walk with my family on the streets of Islamabad or study of gorgeous flora and fauna of the Margalla Hills.

I am also very lucky to discover other parts of Pakistan besides Islamabad since I visited the heart of Pakistan - the vibrant city of Lahore in Punjab and business capital – Karachi in Sindh. So I saw diverse culture and traditions, cultural heritage and scenery variety - mountains in the North and deserts in the South of the country, as well as cuisine with its spices.

Q: Pakistan was one of the first countries who recognized Belarus after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Both Belarus and Pakistan are enjoying good relations, which have developed to become a multifaceted partnership over a relatively short span of time. Could you illustrate historical perspectives of these

To begin with I want to stress that Belarus and Pakistan established diplomatic relations in 1994 and this year our countries mark the 28th Anniversary. It may not sound like much but during this time the relationship between Belarus and Pakistan has evolved significantly and today we work for its further development.

A reciprocal opening of our diplomatic missions, Belarus Embassy in Pakistan in 2014 and Pakistan Embassy in Belarus in 2015, was a logical step in the development of our cooperation and confirmation of a true interest to build closer ties between the countries.

The President of the Republic of Belarus visited Pakistan twice

in 2015 and 2016. The Prime Minister of Pakistan paid an official visit to Belarus in 2015 and the Belarusian Prime Minister visited



Pakistan in same year. Leaders regularly met (2017, 2019 and 2021) on the sidelines of SCO Summit as well.

During these visits and meetings Belarus and Pakistan defined the key areas of cooperation, set the visions for further development and growth, build an effective business to business

**Belarus** and Pakistan are closely cooperating on the international arena in addressing pressing issues of the global and regional agenda.

channels of communication.

Looking at our bilateral relations through the prism of the evolving situation in the international arena I can say that in our rapidly changing world any kind of cooperation is a positive factor. The stronger is mutually beneficial international cooperation - the stronger are countries and wellbeing of their people.

Belarus is located in Eastern Europe, but is part of the Eurasian Economic Union with Russia and other CIS states. Our country has an open export-oriented economy and is aimed at mutually beneficial cooperation with the

We consider Asia as a high priority of our foreign policy, and Pakistan is a perspective partner in this region. Pakistan plays an increasingly important role in the region, in international affairs and in global production and trade chains. It is an important market in which global players operate and compete. The ambitious project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor with investments of over \$ 60 billion has been launched.

Belarus and Pakistan both can offer opportunities for development of cooperation in different areas that display the success formula of our relations.

Q: Different high level delegations from Belarus and Pakistan visited both the countries and signed important agreements to boost bilateral cooperation. Would you like to shed light on the nature of these agreements as well as the implementation on accords? Moreover, kindly highlight the level of bilateral cooperation.

The effective mechanisms of bilateral cooperation have been established, including the Joint Commission on trade and economic cooperation, commissions on science and technology, military and military and technical cooperation, working groups on industrial cooperation, agriculture, education, and pharmaceuticals.

A solid legal base consisting of more than 80 treaties and MoUs has been formed in all areas from economy to culture and education.

Different official visits and experts' meetings are held on a regular basis, parliamentary



and interregional contacts between the two countries have been established, relationships between the business circles are expanding.

Considering the structure of the economies of Belarus and Pakistan, they are complementary since the growing agricultural, industrial and construction sectors of Pakistan require technologies, expertise and machinery, which Belarus can provide.

Industry is an important part of our bilateral cooperation and this message was reiterated by the Sides during the recent (third) Session of the Joint Belarusian-Pakistani Joint Working Group on Industrial cooperation that took place on June 8, 2021.

Another promising sphere of cooperation is agriculture. Our country can offer affordable and high quality agricultural products, as well as technologies and experience in establishing enterprises in Pakistan for the processing of dairy, meat, fruit and vegetable products. For instance, Belarusian experts and technologies could be used for the production of cheese and butter in Pakistan and selling them through a network of Pakistani companies.

We have been working on achieving resultoriented projects, that is why in June 2021 the Pakistani delegation headed by Federal Secretary of the Pakistani Ministry of National Food Security and Research, as well as local businessmen International visited

Exhibition "Belagro" in Minsk. At the end of July 2021, the Sides conducted the Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Agricultural cooperation.

Referring to the subject of cooperation in the field of healthcare and pharmaceuticals end of 2020 the Sides hold the first Session of the

Looking at our bilateral relations through the prism of the evolving situation in the international arena I can say that in our rapidly changing world any kind of cooperation is a positive factor. The stronger is mutually beneficial international cooperation – the stronger are countries and wellbeing of their people.

Joint working group. The results of this Session showed that our countries have good potential for cooperation in this field and it is mutually beneficial.

### Q: Would you like to highlight progress of Pakistan-Belarus Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation and what are future plans?

The Belarus-Pakistan Joint Commission on Trade and Economic Cooperation is one of the mechanisms of bilateral cooperation. Since Embassies were opened in 2014 and 2015 it has already held 5 Sessions of JMC on regular year basis. Unfortunately, due to COVID pandemic, the 6th round of Joint Commission was postponed for few years. Currently we are working with Pakistani officials to reboot one of the most efficient instruments for bilateral trade facilitation. Belarus Side is very keen to hold next Session of JMC this year.

Q: It is proven that people to people contacts always help boost relationships among nations as Belarus and Pakistani people are enjoying good relations. How these persisting ties can be further strengthened by employing more effective policies?

Some steps were taken for promoting people to people contacts in different spheres, as well as for raising public awareness about our countries

The Centers of the Belarusian language and culture were established at the National University of Modern Languages of Pakistan, the National Library of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the library of the University of Punjab. They are equipped with literature on the history, culture and nature of Belarus, information materials on the development of Belarusian statehood, political and socioeconomic structure of our society.

On the other hand the Department of Urdu language was opened in the Minsk State Linguistic University in November 2017.

We have laid legal foundation for cooperation between the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus and the Pakistan Academy of Sciences as well as the Institute of Information Technologies of Pakistan, Pakistan Academy of Letters and Pakistan Council for Agricultural Research. There are some joint projects underway.

CPEC initiative is a way for better economic cooperation and connectivity in the region, which will bring benefits for all sides and help to create süstainable economic growth as well as make Pakistan more developed.

Interregional cooperation is a significant part of the Belarus-Pakistan relationship. MoUs were signed between our regions. Belarus honorary consul in Lahore facilitates cooperation of Punjab with Belarus. We are now working on setting up an honorary consulates in Karachi and Peshawar for the promotion of cooperation with Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regions.

I am glad to say that taking into account friendly nature of the relationship between our countries and as a gesture of goodwill the Belarusian Side granted to the Pakistani citizens free visa entry to Belarus for a period of 30 days

on the conditions that they have valid multipleentry Schengen visa.

The President of Belarus endorsed the relevant decree on September 14th, 2021 which entered into force on October 17th, 2021. We trust that this initiative will give impetus for promotion people to people and business contacts, tourism and cultural exchanges, interregional cooperation and become a true bridge of friendship that will make our countries much closer together.

Q: Your Excellency would you like to inform about level of trade, cultural, and student exchange programs as well as defence ties between Belarus and Pakistan?

The volume of bilateral trade with Pakistan has varied from 50 to 120 million US Dollars over the past 15 years. Belarus traditionally exports to Pakistan tractors, potash fertilizers, tyres. Moreover, acrylic fibers, baby food, milk, whey powder and medicines are being exported in recent years. Pakistan exports to Belarus basmati rice, textiles, medical instruments, fruits, vegetables, sugar cane confectionaries, leather and sport goods.

Despite COVID pandemic in 2020 and 2021 bilateral trade results were very positive. According to our statistics bilateral turnover has slightly increased for the last two years from 50 to 93 million USD, Belarus exports reached 78 million and Pakistan exports to Belarus -15 million. Despite of all difficulties this year is promising to bring more or less same trade results.

Education is one of the important aspects of our relationship. Belarus and Pakistan have indicated interest in implementing joint projects in the sphere of education. Among them is exchange of students and academicians, holding joint conferences and joint research.

There are more than 15 MoUs signed between leading higher education institutions of Belarus and Pakistan. Some Pakistani graduates from Belarusian universities have built successful professional careers here mainly in medical sphere. Around 30 students from Pakistan are studying in Belarus at the moment.

Of course, in order to promote bilateral tourists exchanges a lot of joint work from both Sides is still required. That is why as an important initial step Belarus and Pakistan initiated creation of the necessary legal framework to develop cooperation between tourist agents of two countries.

In order to foster the cooperation in this area in 2019 our Minister of Sports and Tourism Mr Sergei Kovalchuk has invited to Minsk his counterpart, Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination of Pakistan. We hope that her visit to our country, postponed earlier



due to the COVID pandemic, will eventually take place. During this visit both Ministers will be able to elaborate practical steps on the implementation of the provisions laid down in the said MoU.

An important step in this direction will be the signing of an MoU between the Ministry of Sports and Tourism of Belarus and the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination of Pakistan. We believe that cooperation between the ministries and travel agencies of both countries will facilitate a more active tourist flow.

Belarus builds its cooperation with Pakistan in all spheres and defense is not the exception. Our countries opened a new page of cooperation after the first official visit of the Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Zubair Hayat to Belarus in December 2018.

For now, we have all necessary tools for the development of partnership in this field including necessary channels of communication and instruments covering full range of bilateral military and military-technical cooperation.

These include consultations mechanism between the Armed Forces of Belarus and Pakistan so called "Staff talks" and Intergovernmental Commission on Military-Technical cooperation, joint participation in the military exercises and competitions and of course exchange of different levels delegations. For example, from June 23 to June 26, 2021

Belarus conducted the 10th military Exhibition MILEX where the Federal Minister for Defense Production of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (H.E. Ms. Zobaida Jalal) took part.

I would like to note that speaking about promising areas of cooperation we fully take into account the economic interests of both the Belarusian and Pakistani Sides. Here we proceed from a simple postulate: cooperation is a twoway street which is organized on the basis of mutual respect, equality and observance of the interests of each Side.

#### Q: What opportunities or facilities are available there for Pakistani businessmen?

From all among opportunities I would like to underline the next which can be used efficiently by the Pakistani businessmen:

- 1. Direct access to the market of the Eurasian Union (182 million consumers);
- 2. Preferential investment regimes and terms of taxation: Free economic zones (0% profit tax for 5 years; 10% VAT); High-Tech Park (0% profit tax for 15 years; 0% VAT); Industrial Park (0% profit tax for 10 years, 50% discount during the subsequent 10 years); Small and medium towns, rural areas (0% profit tax for 7 years);
- 3. Developed transport and logistics infrastructure (Annually over 100 million tons of cargo cross Belarus' territory);
- 4. Highly qualified workforce (90% of the population have a higher, secondary or basic education).

### Q: Belarus is a beautiful country comprising all sorts of natural beauty, as you know tourism industry is very

important for the development of any country. Would you express key factors, which your government adopting to flourish tourism industry?

In the Middles Ages, the lands now known as Belarus were called the Country of Castles. Today it is more often called "blue-eyed", the country of thousands of lakes. And thanks to forests, which occupy more than third of the territory of the country, and the unique bog complexes it is also called the "lungs of Europe".

In the last few years the Belarusian healthcare system improved its position in the international medical community thanks to accomplishments in the area of maternity and child welfare

Despite numerous wars and territory partition throughout its centuries-old history, Belarus managed to preserve a rich cultural heritage. Castles and extraordinary nature reserves, old family estates and churches, ethnographic villages, unique landmarks can be found in each of the six regions of the country.

One of the key factors for flourishing tourism industry in Belarus was a decision was taken in 2017 to open visa-free staying doors for business and tourism' travelers from more than 76 countries. I am glad to say that taking into account friendly nature of the relationship between our countries and as a gesture of goodwill the Belarusian Side granted to the Pakistani citizens free visa entry to Belarus for a period of 30 days on the conditions that they

have valid multiple-entry Schengen visa. The President of Belarus endorsed the relevant decree on September 14th, 2021 which entered into force on October 17th, 2021. We trust that this initiative will give impetus for promotion people to people and business contacts, tourism and cultural exchanges, interregional cooperation and become a true bridge of friendship that will make our countries closer together.

Pakistani travelers can use this option if they have a valid multiple-entry visa of member states of the European Union or member states of the Schengen area with a mark of entry into the territory of a member state of the European Union or a member state of the Schengen area, as well as air tickets with confirmation of departure dates.

Belarus has a lot to offer to tourists. During the hottest season in Pakistan - in summer - the Pakistani friends could find the pleasant cool in Belarusian sanatoriums, health resorts and agro-touristic farms located in the picturesque places near the lakes and rivers. At the same time tourist can visit different sport facilities and to discover the city life in Minsk and other Belarusian cities.

Q: Excellency, People of Pakistan definitely want to know about the distinguishing traits and accomplishments of Belarus particularly in healthcare, science, education and other fields? Kindly elaborate some of them.

In the last few years the Belarusian healthcare system improved its position in the international medical community thanks to accomplishments in the area of maternity and child welfare, thanks to results of high-technology interventions in transplantology, cardiac surgery, traumatology,

neurosurgery, ophthalmology, oncology and oncohematology, thanks to the development and introduction of innovative methods to treat diseases, thanks to investment projects in the pharmaceutical industry that help present new Belarusian medications on the home market.

As an example, out of 188 countries on the Human Development Index, Belarus is ranked 53rd and is in the list of countries with very high HDI. Life expectancy for the last 10 years increased from 70.4 years to 74.5 years.

Belarus is also proud of its world-class scientific schools that specialize in a number of fundamental areas, including optics, quantum electronics and photonics, mathematics, thermal physics and energy, materials science, mechanical engineering, geology, genetics and cytology, bio-organic chemistry, agricultural and social sciences.

There are many others examples from different spheres, but I always say "It is better once



to see rather hundred times to hear". That is why I kindly invite business circles of Pakistan to visit Belarus and find out new opportunity and prospects for business, leisure activities, health, education and etc.

#### Q: What is your planning regarding enhancement of relations between **Belarus and Pakistan?**

The Embassy's main responsibility is to open new opportunities for cooperation on a wide spectrum of issues. Of course, economic cooperation is a key priority because it contributes to the wellbeing of each nation. Thus, the Diplomatic Mission is a door and a destination point for every interested in my country person whether it is a businessman or a tourist applying for a visa.

The Embassy makes efforts for maintaining regular political dialogue at different levels, as well as facilitates joint projects in different spheres.

### Q: Islamophobia has become a menace, which affecting the peace of entire world, what are your remarks?

Belarus and Pakistan are closely cooperating on the international arena in addressing pressing issues of the global and regional agenda.

As you know, UN's General Assembly declared 15 March as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia and Belarus were among those countries-supporters of this resolution. For the last decades Islamophobia became one of the biggest illness of the world society, it has emerged as a new form of racism that includes, among others, discriminatory travel bans, hate speech and the targeting of girls and women for their dress.

Belarus as multireligious country is realized sensitivity and importance of this topic well. And I am pretty sure that designation of an international day is an important way to counter Islamophobia and its negative trends, which will definitively push other countries to be more patient towards others religions and cultures.

### Q: Afghanistan has an important position in the region and without political stability Afghanistan regional integration cannot be possible. How you see this whole scenario?

Each state focuses on improving well-being of its citizens. And of course, the vital part in this process is closer cooperation and ties with its neighboring countries.

We hope that all involved Sides supporting the Afghan peace process will succeed and it will bring better connectivity and development in the region, in particular to Pakistan.

Pakistan has historically close ties with its neighbor Afghanistan. At the same time Belarus has traditionally well-developed economic and other ties with the Central Asian Republics.

Hopefully the situation in Afghanistan will be continually improving for the prosperity and better connectivity in the Central and South

### Q: What is your opinion regarding CPEC? Do you think this will change the entire economic situation of the region?

Belarus is a part of the "One Belt, One Road" initiative and we have established together with our Chinese partners "Great Stone Industrial Park", a special economic zone in Belarus with more than 70 residents.

This industrial park contributes to the economic wellbeing of Belarus and facilitates the economic cooperation in the Eurasian region.

Similarly, our understanding is that the CPEC initiative is a way for better economic cooperation and connectivity in the region, which will bring benefits for all sides and help to create sustainable economic growth as well as make Pakistan more developed.

### Q: Excellency kindly give your message for Pakistani people especially for youth.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to invite all interested in cooperation with Belarus to contact the Embassy and we will be ready to assist in strengthening the existing and establishing new partnerships.

I wish prosperity and progress to Pakistan, strong health, well-being to its people and to Belarusian-Pakistani relationship further development and growth.

Thank You Excellency



### Indonesian govt paying special attention to increase supply of Palm oil to Pakistan: Indonesia's Envoy

mbassador of Indonesia to Pakistan H E Adam Mulawarman Tugio said that Indonesia lifted the global ban on palm oil export and now palm oil supply in Pakistan would be improved.

Indonesia is the largest supplier of palm oil to Pakistan as the palm oil would now be available in the local markets, Ambassador Adam Mulawarman Tugio said. In this regard, the Indonesian government is paying a special attention to increase supply of Palm oil into Pakistani markets.

He acknowledged that due to the ban on exports of palm oil, people and traders of Pakistan had faced difficulties. For that matter, the Indonesian embassy in Islamabad will fully cooperate with the local market, said the Ambassador.

The Ambassador said that in early May, 2022, the Indonesian government temporarily banned global exports of palm oil for local market regulation and stabilization. Moreover, Ambassador apprised that considering the global trade dynamics and the global supply chain, the decision was made on palm oil exports, which would improve price stability in Indonesia's domestic market.

The Ambassador said, with the arrival of holy month of Ramzan, edible oil consumption in Indonesia also increased and it becomes difficult to provide edible oil to the local Indonesian market of 270 million people with global exports.

Replying to a question, he said that the global consumption of palm oil worldwide was currently 70 MT, of which 33 MT was produced in Indonesia.

Similarly, Indonesia is the world's largest exporter of palm oil, which also impacts the local Indonesian market and has to be adjusted according to its prices, he said. In response to another question, he said that Pakistan was a big consumer of Indonesian palm oil as Islamabad was exporting \$2.8 billion worth of palm oil annually from Indonesia. Adam M. Tugio said the policy was designed to meet the demand for palm oil in the local market in Indonesia, both at domestic and industrial level.

Meanwhile, Amir Waheed, former president of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and Palm Oil Exporter from Indonesia, appreciated the resumption of palm oil exports by the Indonesian government. Amir Waheed



said that there would be a stabilization in ghee and edible oil prices in the local market.

He said that the ban on palm oil export from Indonesia has an impact on both industrial and domestic levels in Pakistan. He said that due to demand and supply, local prices of edible oil had increased.

Senior business leader and former president, ICCI Atif Ikram, said that the Indonesian government has taken a good step by restoring palm oil supply to Pakistan.

According to the data issued here by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the palm oil import surged by 46.74 percent during the first three quarters of the current fiscal year as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

The palm oil import during July-March (2021-22) was recorded at \$2,730.668 million against the imports of \$1,860.934 million in July-March (2020-21), the data said.

On the other hand, the soybean import also went up by 113.73 percent to \$103.283 million as compared to the import of \$48.325 million during last fiscal year. On a year on year basis,

the palm oil import witnessed an increase of 5.43 percent during March 2022 as compared to the same month of last year. The palm oil import during March 2022 was recorded at \$290.524 million against the import of \$275.549 million in March 2021), according to PBS data.

The soybean import during the month under review also increased by 100 percent to \$11.750 million as compared to the zero import of the same month of last year. Meanwhile, on a month to month basis, the palm oil import declined by 6.21 percent in March 2022 as compared to the import of \$309.766 million in February 2022.

The import of soybean, however, went up by 27.7 percent in March 2022 as compared to the imports of \$16.772 in February 2022. It is pertinent to mention here that 'Edible Oil' prices have gone following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The two countries produced about 71% of the world's sunflower oil, and the recent absence of exports had caused demand for substitutes, including palm oil, to spike.

### Indonesian Embassy Organizes Cultural Exhibition at Lok Virsa

he Embassy of the Republic of Indonesian and Lok Virsa organised a four-day photo exhibition to show the culture of each other countries titled 'A Night at Lok Virsa Museum.' Addressing the participants, the Indonesian Ambassador H E Adam Tugio said,"Indonesia and Pakistan are home to one of the oldest civilizations in the world." Pakistan and Indonesia are blessed with

rich cultural heritage and traditions carrying interesting and attractive similarities which play an important role in keeping the brother ties stronger, he added. A Night at Lok Virsa Museum', aims to highlight fresh perspectives into historical connections, and religious backgrounds, and to strengthen the cultural ties between Muslim brotherly countries.

The event was attended by the Diplomatic the business community, corps, government officials, prominent media personalities, and the Indonesian Diaspora. The audience enjoyed the fusion and commixture of Indonesian and Pakistani music in the blend of the local piquancy while the Pakistani artists performed their expertise on Tabla, flute, and 'Rabab'.























### Pakistani, American diplomats for closer Islamabad-Washington ties



akistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan discussed with Uzra Zeya, a senior State Department official, strengthening of US-Pakistan relations "in diverse areas through frequent exchanges on issues of mutual interest", according to a Pakistani embassy press release.

The ambassador was received "warmly" at the State Department by Ms Zeya, who is the Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights, the press release said.

After the meeting, Under Secretary Zeya tweeted that she had a constructive conversation with Ambassador Khan to discuss human rights and Pakistan's support for Afghan relocation efforts and refugees.

"I look forward to our close partnership", she

Ambassador Masood Khan reciprocated the sentiment, saying the two sides would work to promote Pak-US dialogue and cooperation to forge closer ties between the two countries.

At the meeting, the Pakistani envoy also thanked the US official Under Secretary for her visit to Pakistan; and welcomed OIC-State Department's dialogue on 23-24 May, in Washington DC, to promote dialogue between the United States and OIC nations.

Under Secretary Zeya visited Islamabad in late March to represent the United States at the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers Conference.

On that occasion, she underlined the enduring ties and partnership between Pakistan and the US. She had also commended Pakistan for offering dignity and safety to Afghan refugees for over 40 years.



### **US** envoy for robust economic cooperation with Pakistan



Ambassador Blome on his first visit to Karachi, while highlighting 75 years of Pak-US friendly relations and partnership desired that bilateral relations should be centered on robust economic cooperation aimed at sustainable and equitable economic growth of both the nations.

Agriculture, sustainable energy production, telecommunication equipment and services, waste-management and healthcare sectors were the major sectors where the economic cooperation could be expanded, he said this while speaking at a gong striking ceremony at Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) here.

He said Pak-US trade figured nearly nine billion dollars in 2021, up by more than 60 percent from that of 2016, and was increasing year-onyear. US was Pakistan's largest export market, and there was great potential to expand this commercial relationship.

US was also one of the largest sources of foreign investment in Pakistan. United States affiliated businesses were among Pakistan's largest employers and paid a large chunk of its taxes, he said. He expressed pleasure that many of those firms were listed here on Pakistan Stock Exchange and hoped that the number would continue to grow as more US firms were willing to launch operations here. US companies already operating in Pakistan recognized the potential to increase their sales in a market of over 200 million people.

The companies could also play a key role in encouraging wider adoption of global standards on corporate governance, environment, and social issues - which, in the long run, would help pave the way for more US and other international companies to succeed in the market attracting even more investment. Pakistan was an attractive and potential venue for trade and investment.

He mentioned some of the sectors having great

possibility for expanding economic partnership between the two countries included agriculture, sustainable energy production, telecommunication equipment and services, waste-management, and healthcare. In these areas, US companies provided world-class products and unparalleled service.

The possibilities were endless, he continued, that is why he was looking forward to learning more during his visit to Karachi, which he recognized as full of energy and dynamic city where much of the action was in Pakistan's economy.

US Ambassador underlined the need for focusing the diplomatic efforts on ensuring that the strong economic partnership continued to flourish and where we can work together to facilitate broad-based, equitable, and sustainable economic growth for both of our nations.Donald Blome was accompanied by US Consul General in Karachi Mark Stroh and his team. The guests were welcomed by PSX Chairperson, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar and Managing Director/CEO, Farrukh H. Khan. PSX Board Members, senior management of the exchange and senior business community members were also present. On this occasion, Gong (big bell) was stroke by the Ambassador along with his team to mark start of the daily trading at the exchange. PSX's MD and CEO, Farrukh H. Khan, in his welcome address. described the US team's visit as a big opportunity for fruitful dialogue with them to find ways for generating greater interest of US investors in Pakistan's capital market. Since the market was opened to international investors in 1991, US institutional investors had been regular and important participants in the market. PSX was continuing on the path of progress, introducing innovative products and offerings for investors. Our regulatory, operational and accounting disclosure standards met global standards and, in many cases, were better than other Asian markets, he said. He said despite the current economic challenges impacting the global

economy in general and Pakistan's economy in particular, there were attractive valuations and potential for high returns for long term investors. PSX will continue to work to attract more investors and portfolio managers from US and we look forward to the Ambassadors support in this regard, he remarked.

The US delegation expressed the commitment to further strengthen Pak-US economic partnership. They commended the role of PSX in development of Pakistan's capital market and expressed confidence that it would aid to greater cooperation between US and Pakistan in trade, industry and investment. Chairperson, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, thanked the US team for their visit and expressed confidence in greater cooperation between Pakistan and US in investment, financial and economic spheres in the future. She shared her experience and contribution for strengthening Pak-US relations while working with United Nations mission. United States (U.S) Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome earlier said that Pakistan and U.S have a long-standing partnership and rich history of relations. According to a video message issued by Ambassador Donald Blome's on Twitter, he said We are proud of our long-standing partnership with Pakistan. Our relationship began 75 years ago, very shortly after Pakistan gained its independence. He said, we live today in a world full of challenges. We can address those challenges most effectively by working together, side by side. Ambassador further stated "he looks forward to deepening the connections between the Pakistani and American people, which have a rich history, and an even brighter future."

He also expressed his interest in exploring Pakistan, from Karachi to Lahore, Peshawar to Gilgit-Baltistan, and all places in between. He had first encounter with Pakistan's historic jingle trucks and learned about the art and the artists who have made this a distinct and characteristic art form in Pakistan.



# Pakistan safe, peaceful country

mbassador of Denmark to Pakistan H E Lis Rosenholm said that Pakistan is a safe and peaceful country for investment. She was addressing a meeting of the Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PHMEA).

She said that Denmark was ready to export modern technology for the textile sector of Pakistan, especially the knitwear sector to cut the cost of production and improve quality of products.

The Ambassador said that joint ventures with large-scale Danish companies would be encouraged. She said that the aim of her visit to PHMEA was to promote bilateral trade relations between the two countries, adding that she would motivate the Danish business community to visit Pakistan.

Earlier. Chairman Pakistan Hosierv Manufacturing Association (North Zone) Mian Kashif Zia said that although many Danish companies were doing good business in Pakistan, both countries were reluctant to get benefits of trade opportunities.

Danish Ambassador to Pakistan H E Lis Rosenholm said that Pakistan and Denmark were enjoying good bilateral relations.

She expressed these views while talking to media during her visit to a mango pulp plant in the Multan's suburbs. She said that both the countries were working together to strengthen the ties further and supporting each other to address the mutual issues and challenges.

Danish Ambassador further said that they were working with companies in Pakistan with an objective to providing solutions to diabetes, mental health and production of electricity through wind energy.

She said that food wastage was a global challenge and hailed the efforts of Pakistan in reducing the food wastage. She said that initiatives meant to plug chances of food crop wastage would leave a good impact on Pakistan economy. She admired the taste of aromatic Multani mangoes for its natural aroma and sweetness.

The Ambassador further said that they were working for women empowerment with the goal of creating equal opportunities for girls and boys in sight. She said that 20 percent Pakistani women were working in labour force but the contributions from women were needed to be increased which would fortify the economy.

She said that Multan was a beautiful city, and hospitality of the Multani people amazed her.

Earlier, Lis Roseholm visited various parts of the mango pulp plant and planted a sapling there. She appreciated the pulp plant administration for creating opportunities for female workers there.

Chairman of the mango pulp plant Ali Mubashir Kazmi, during a briefing to the ambassador, said, they were working on the slogan of no food waste. He said, 40 percent of mango crop is wasted every year, which, if utilized, could fetch one billion US dollar.

He informed that the natural life of fresh fruit was seven days but pulp processing can extend it to two years.



### British envoy, HR Minister, Punjab Governor discuss matters of mutual interest

ritish High Commissioner to Pakistan Dr. Christian Turner along with Antonia Murray Second Secretary Human Rights of British High Commission met with Federal Minister for Human Rights Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada.

Secretary Human Rights Afzal Latif and other senior officers of the ministry also participated in this meeting. Both sides discussed various subjects of mutual interest especially those pertinent to human rights. Minster for Human Rights mentioned about strong long-standing people-to-people linkages grounded in historic connections between Pakistan and UK. He also expressed his deep desire to extend these bilateral relations in all spheres. While enumerating his priorities, Minister said that issues of Baluchistan would be his top priority where poor people are being exploited in the hands of hostile neighbour, India. He stressed that international community must counsel India on its aggression and severe human rights violation in Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK). He further stated that the West and the US squeeze us on our internal issues but allegedly ignore human rights situation in IIOJK.

British High Commissioner responded that they care about the relationships with Pakistan and encourage their extension. He said that they are eager to work with Pakistan in the strengthening of system through bottomup approach and particularly desire to bring about certain reforms in the subjects that lies under human rights such as freedom of media, freedom of faith and minority rights. He added that issues like forced conversions, child marriages, misuse of blasphemy laws, women education, domestic violence and gender based issues need more attention. Minister for Human Rights also expressed that ethnic diversity is a distinct feature of Pakistani society. We are more tolerant to one another as compared to any western society where incidents of racial killings are reported every other day. In Pakistan, Afghan refugees enjoy utmost freedom and we have a docile and adjustable society where element of extremism and intolerance penetrated after Afghan War. We are paying heavy price of war of our allies but still we do not get adequate recognition for our countless sacrifices largely in the war on terror.

In response to the point raised on misuse of blasphemy laws against minorities, DG Legal Aid and Justice Authority quoted that in previous year, total 32 cases of blasphemy





were reported where 28 were against Muslims and only 4 were against people from minority communities. Further, he apprised that sufficient legal work has been done on National Policy for the protection of minorities' rights, after Peshawar church incident in 2014.

In his concluding remarks, Minister said that Ministry of Human Rights is persistently taking up cases of human rights violations, reported in the media, with law enforcement agencies. We are much sensitized about freedom of expression, minorities' and women rights. Moreover, British High Commissioner to Pakistan Christian Turner held a meeting with Punjab Governor Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman, at Governor House to discuss further development of investment and trade relations with Pakistan.

During the meeting, emphasis was laid on strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries and expanding cooperation in various fields, including education and trade. The British High Commissioner said that climate change is a major issue facing the whole world.

Talking on the occasion, the Governor said that trade associations and various chambers of commerce would have to come forward to enhance trade relations between Pakistan and the United Kingdom. "The United Kingdom has long been a development partner of Pakistan and ties are getting stronger with the time," he said, adding: "The United Kingdom had a major role to play in accelerating economic growth in Pakistan and it was gratifying that the bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and the United Kingdom was steadily increasing."

The Governor said that suggestions have been sought from the Vice Chancellors and environment departments regarding environmental issues and in the light of these suggestions joint efforts would be made regarding environmental issues.

He also said that the present government was taking concrete steps to promote higher education in the country and bring it up to international standards. He said that the United Kingdom's support in the field of education was commendable and thousands of students were pursuing higher education in the UK.

It may be added that Punjab Chief Minister Hamza Shahbaz attended Queen Elizabeth's birthday party as a special guest at a local hotel. Britain's Queen's birthday cake was cut; CM Hamza Shahbaz wished the Queen well and paid tribute to her public and democratic services.

### Outgoing Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan H E Benedict de Cerjat hosts farewell reception at his residence



Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Islamabad holds 2022 K-pop Festival. Participants compete in vocal and performance categories. People enjoyed the enthusiastic stages of the outstanding participants during the festival.





### Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan railway project is anchor for regional peace: Uzbek Ambassador

### Says Pak-Uzbekistan bilateral trade to increase upto US\$1 billion

DF Report

mbassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan H E Aybek Arif Usmanov said that Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan's trilateral railway project will soon be materialized, thus making regional re-connectivity possible.

Transit Trade Agreement (TTA) between Pakistan and Uzbekistan will allow the regional countries to expand their trade and transit horizons. Over the past 30 years, Pakistan and Uzbekistan have diversified relations and made a substantial contribution toward regional peace and stability.

Ambassador made these remarks during the roundtable on the 30 Years of Pakistan and Uzbekistan Diplomatic relations and chairmanship of Uzbekistan in SCO hosted by the Centre for Central Asia and Eurasian Studies-Institute of Peace and Diplomatic Studies in collaboration with Embassy of Uzbekistan to Pakistan and Riphah Institute of Public Policy, Riphah International University.

Both countries have developed stronger and deeper ties in trade and economics, health, security, agriculture, and information technology. The cooperation between the two countries is building further with each passing

There are growing investments from each other's sides where people-to-people ties have been diversified. There is ever deeper and close cooperation in political, economic, and security

fields, he added. Speaking from Tashkent, Kabuljon Sabirov, Director, SCO Centre for Public Diplomacy in Uzbekistan, highlighted how strong people-to-people ties are building between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, especially at the level of SCO.

Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, Aybek Arif Usmanov said the Pakistan and Uzbekistan intend to increase the bilateral trade volume upto US\$1 billion in the coming two years.

The current bilateral trade between the two countries is \$180 million, which is expected to reach \$1 billion in the next two years by the

In response to a question, he said that the implementation of Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) between Pakistan and Uzbekistan is going on and bilateral trade will get development through it.

The Ambassador said that negotiations will be held every year to review the PTA between the two countries to make it further more productive for both sides.

He further said that the two countries used to have online discussions in this regard, in which the process of discussion on Terrif rationalization continues.

He said that at this time mutual trade barriers and customs issues were major issues in both countries and for resolving these issues both of the countries are working on a mechanism? In response to another question, he said that

a transit trade agreement has been signed between Pakistan and Uzbekistan in this last year, which has a very important role in promoting mutual trade.

Related to this, the transport and logistics sector is also important, in which the governments of the two countries are in negotiate for improvement.

The Ambassador said that on March 28 of the same year, a tripartite transport and logistic conference was held in Uzbekistan in which the transport and communication ministers of Pakistan, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan participated and many problems were resolved through mutual discussions.

In this conference, Uzbekistan announced the establishment of International Temiz Cargo Center, which will provide benefits and trade facilities to the traders of the three countries, he added.

He said that the governments of both the countries are implementing a comprehensive plan for the increase of mutual trade in the two countries and for the promotion of mutual trade in the future.

Which includes working on rail and road network for regional economic and trade integration and connecting the countries of the region including China, Central Asia and South Asian countries in terms of trade and promoting economic relations with Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)countries.

Ambassador Arif Usmanov said that road and rail links are very important for the promotion of mutual trade between the Central Asian states, especially Uzbekistan, China, Pakistan and Afghanistan, and this work has been started.

He said that work has been started on China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan railway line.

This railway line should be connected to Jalalabad and Peshawar railway line from Termiz of Uzbekistan, which will establish economic and trade relations with the countries of the region, including China, a major economic power.

He said that the role of the third party Afghanistan will be very important in any kind of mutual trade agreement between Pakistan and Uzbekistan and enough work has been done in the three countries.

Replying to another question, he said that Uzbekistan, as the chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization annual summit 2022 of the SCO Heads of State Council, was hoisting on September 15-16 in Samarkand.

The Uzbek Ambassador said that Pakistan and Uzbekistan have a very important role to play in providing trade and economic integration to the SCO member countries, which will usher in a new era of economic integration in all member countries.

He said that SCO member Countries could play a key role in global and regional economic and trade integration in the current scenario.

The SCO has important member countries in terms of geo-economic and geopolitical position, including developed economies, which can play an important role in the development of global and regional economies through this organizational platform, he said.

The Ambassador said that technology, information technology and renewable energy would be the major topics at the SCO summit this year which would help in reshaping trade and economic relations between the member countries.

There will also be sessions on telemedicine at the Summit this year, which has led to the introduction of many facets in the medical field after Covid-19, which could open up new avenues for economic cooperation in the member states, he said.

He said that at the same time, member states

are likely to sign agreements on renewable

The Ambassador said that the leadership of the SCO countries, including the Central Asian countries, is now fully committed to the economic and trade integration of the member countries and increase in bilateral trade and economic activities.

Ambassador Usmanov said that facilities and road and rail links are very important in bilateral and transit trade which will increase economic activities in SCO countries. In response to a question, he said that apart from agreements between Pakistan and Uzbekistan at the national level, consideration is now being given to enhancing bilateral economic and trade relations between the provinces and major cities.

In which agreements have been reached between the province of Punjab of Pakistan and the province of Namangan of Uzbekistan,

Similarly, agreements have been reached with the Pakistani cities of Lahore and Peshawar and the Uzbek cities of Samarkand and Surkhandarva to increase economic cooperation.

## Vietnam's envoy takes charge as Chairman ACI

**DF** Report

mbassador of Vietnam to Pakistan H E Nguyen Tien Phong took charge as Chairman of Association of SouthEast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Committee Islamabad.

At the embassy of Vietnam in Islamabad, the ACI Chairmanship handing-over Ceremony took place, Ambassador of Vietnam Nguyen Tien Phong assumed the ACI Chairmanship from Ambassador of Thailand Chakkrid Krachaiwong.

The meeting also discussed the issues of strengthening ASEAN- Pakistan relations in all fields and sectors.

Expressing his best wishes, the ambassador of Vietnam said that there are wider opportunities for increasing mutual economic and trade relations between ASEAM countries and Pakistan.

The Ambassador said that as the chairman of ACI, he should play a full role with the ambassadors of other ASEAN countries to promote the relations of ASEAN countries with Pakistan.

Vietnam Ambassador to Pakistan said that Pakistan has huge trade and investment opportunities in Association of SouthEast Asian Nations (ASEAN's) US\$ 3 trillion economy for



increasing the bilateral trade and economic ties. With ASEAN's US\$ 3 trillion economic power and a large market of 650 million people in the region, the mutual US\$7 billion trade between ASEAN and Pakistan is far below its potential, the Ambassador said.

He said that Pakistan is a huge market with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$300 billion and a population of 230 million, where there are huge opportunities for ASEAN countries as

Regarding multilateral trade in Association of



He said that at present there is a bilateral trade of about USD \$7 billion between the Pakistan and ASEAN countries, which is far below its potential.

Nguyen Tien Phong said that Pakistan also has good trade and economic relations with ASEAN countries, which need to be further enhanced.



### **Steel Cutting Ceremony of Pakistan Navy Offshore Patrol Vessel Held in Romania**

Ceremony Cutting Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV-II) being constructed for Pakistan Navy was held at M/s DAMEN Shipyard Galati, Romania. Ambassador of Pakistan to Romania Dr Zafar Iqbal graced the event as Chief Guest. Owning to the satisfactory performance of 1st Batch of OPVs (PNS YARMOOK & PNS TABUK) in Pakistan Navy; contract for 2nd Batch of OPVs was held with M/s DAMEN.

These vessels are multi-purpose and highly adaptive platforms; equipped with state-ofthe-art electronic warfare, anti-ship, anti-air weapons/ sensors along with modern selfprotection and terminal defence systems. While addressing at the ceremony, the Ambassador of Pakistan underscored the importance of OPVs in the maritime domain.

He emphasized that these platforms will act as force multipliers in enhancing PN capability of safeguarding maritime frontiers and would offer flexibility in conduct of Pakistan Navy's initiative of independent Regional Maritime Security Patrols in the Indian Ocean Region. He applauded that Pakistan Navy has been successfully playing its role in providing secure sea environment not only to ourselves but also to the world community. He also appreciated the professionalism of M/s DAMEN Shipyards and cooperation in delivering cutting edge technologies to Pakistan Navy in the form of Offshore Patrol Vessel. The steel cutting ceremony was attended by Chief Naval Overseer (Romania), senior management of M/s DAMEN Shipyards, Gorinchem & Galati and officials of Pakistan Navy.



Steel Cutting Ceremony of Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV-II) being constructed for Pakistan Navy held at M/s. DAMEN Shipyard Galati, Romania.



Group photo of Ambassador of Pakistan to Romania and Chief Naval Overseers (Romania) along with officials of Pakistan Navy and M/s. DAMEN shipyard during Steel Cutting Ceremony of Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV-II) being constructed for Pakistan Navy held at M/s. DAMEN Shipyard Galati, Romania.

### China, Pakistan, CPEC – History, Background, **Challenges and Way Forward**

By Ahmad Jawad

akistan is one of the most important countries, population-wise, in Asia. It is considered the sixth most populous country in the world, with an estimated population of almost 220 million people. Most of the people reside in the four provinces of Khyber Pakhtunwala (KPK), Punjab, Sindh, and Baluchistan. It will be the fourth most populous country by the year 2050 in the world.

A famous Chinese saying is, "To understand today, one needs to know the history; and to know the future, one needs to review the past."

#### **BALUCHISTAN IS MOST IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF CPEC**

Baluchistan is the most deprived province of Pakistan. It is located at the eastern edge of the Iran. It is geographically the largest of the four provinces with 347,190 sq km and equates to 42 percent of the total land area of Pakistan. The population density is very low due to the hilly territory and insufficiency of water and other human resources. It has 26 districts and the approximate population of Baluchistan is about 15 million.

Baluchistan is rich in natural resources. The economy is largely based on the production of natural gas, coal, and minerals. The province's natural resources significantly help to meet the energy needs of Pakistan as a whole. Limited farming in the east and fishing along the Arabian Sea coastline are other forms of income and sustenance for the local population.

Baluchistan is very poor in basic education. It is expected that 2.0 million people are expected to move to Gwadar within a span of 30 years.

The port is not yet functioning, but noticeable signs of progress have been seen. Similarly, new residential areas, hotels, buildings, schools, hospitals, and roads are indicative of modern trends. It also is expected to have a positive impact on the rest of the province, which has been neglected for a long time.

Gwadar Port is a mega project of CPEC and a vast amount of investment is anticipated in both its infrastructure and extensions.

#### **HISTORY OF CPEC:**

The CPEC is an important agreement in improving regional connectivity as "strategic partners." The idea became a reality in 2013 through the visit of Chinese Premier Li Kegiang to Pakistan.

The historic memorandum of understanding between the two countries on CPEC was signed on July 5, 2013. In the same year, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited China and signed eight agreements. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited China again and 19 more agreements were signed in 2016.

The CPEC is an important part of One Belt One Road (OBOR).It is a package of infrastructure and energy projects, Its specific purpose is to upgrade and expand Pakistani infrastructure, linking China's western province of Kashgar with Pakistan's Gwadar Port on the Indian

Pakistan is a developing country; the CPEC is a great opportunity to enhance its economy. Through this mega project (CPEC), Pakistan's population can reduce its poverty and achieve a higher standard of living.

In April 2015, Chinese president Xi Jinping visited Pakistan. During his visit, approximately 51 agreements were signed between China and Pakistan with a total worth of \$46 billion, which also included the development of the CPEC.

The original \$46 billion that China invested in Pakistan under the CPEC has now expanded to approximately \$54 billion. This amount exceeds all foreign direct investment. The result is that, over the last several years, Pakistan has received considerably more aid than it has received from the United States.

#### **Benefits of CPEC:**

#### 1. Economic Boost:

The CPEC will show a major increase in Pakistan's economy by increasing trade with China, Central Asia, Russia, Middle East and Europe. Even within the construction phase and completion of the CPEC there will be a visible economic growth in Pakistan by about 3 percent because of increase in industrial development due to the availability of resources.

#### 2. Real Estate:

Between the construction phase of the CPEC and after the completion of CPEC route the value of the land surrounding is improving significantly and is providing many commercial opportunities to owners and developers of the land.

#### 3. Agricultural Growth:

Due to increase in the agricultural production Pakistan will observe a significant agricultural growth with cooperation of China and sharing modern technology and strategies along with our feasible weather conditions.

#### 4. Foreign Investment:

CPEC will promote foreign investment in Pakistan, which will ultimately show increase in our economic growth rate.

#### 5. Great opportunities of Import and Export:

Another major advantage would be increase in the trade from which revenue will be generated, which will be earned from transiting goods to and from other countries.

#### 6. Employment Opportunities:

CPEC would create employment opportunities for the local people to an extent of about two to three million which will contribute towards economic conditions of the Pakistan.

#### 7. Tourism Development and Promotion:

The CPEC would provide for ideal tourism conditions in Pakistan, facilitating the flourishing of the tourism and hotel industry of Pakistan by providing a safe route and attractive commercial activity around Gawadar city.

#### 8. Pakistan's International role will be more prominent:

Many regional and extra-regional countries will be joining CPEC; this will improve Pakistan's international stature, our contacts and will create an aura of peace and stability in the region.

#### 9. Opportunity to develop and improve Relationship with other regional Countries:

South Asian countries will also prefer CPEC lead geo-economics over geopolitics and resolving major disputes like Jammu & Kashmir will get easier and peace will be achieved successfully. This would also facilitate South Asia's interconnectivity and its connectivity with China, Central Asia, West Asia and Russia.

#### 10. Defence Support:

CPEC will definitely bring vast strategic and economic advantages to Pakistan and regions surrounding it. Not only will CPEC will be beneficial for the country but the citizen of Pakistan will also be able to bear fruits of its development on individual level.

#### **WAY FORWARD**

PMLN Govt in alliance with PPP, is putting the CPEC on track with a high speed. Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and Minister of Planning and development Ahsan Iqbal are expected to take CPEC to new heights in the coming months.

Armed Forces of Pakistan are taking extra ordinary measures to provide security to CPEC projects and Chinese nationals working in Pakistan.People of Pakistan are emotionally connected to CPEC and China. Public support in Pakistan will always be long term security of

In future, OBOR will be a global connection and CPEC will be the founding stone of OBOR.

### PAKISTAN TO ORGANIZE FIRST INTERNATIONAL **MARITIME EXPO & CONFERENCE 2023**



oft launch of premier edition of Pakistan International Maritime Expo & Conference (PIMEC) was held at Islamabad. Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif was the Chief Guest at the Launching ceremony of the exhibition. PIMEC is scheduled to be held at Karachi Expo Centre from 10-12 February 2023.

While addressing at the ceremony, the Defence Minister appreciated Pakistan Navy for taking the initiative to exhibit potential of Pakistan's Maritime Sector through PIMEC. He said that Pakistan offers enormous opportunities for profitable investments, joint ventures and trade in the maritime sector.

He highlighted that oceans bring the nations closer and therefore the need to make them a safer place through collaborative efforts of all stakeholders. Pakistan as a responsible state is committed to play its role for international peace, stability and order.

The Defence Minister dilated upon Pakistan Maritime Potential that can contribute enormously to our national economy.

Development of efficient ship-breaking industry, trans-shipment ports, fisheries industry, coastal tourism, water sports and aqua culture are few of the areas which deserve special focus. The Chief Guest emphasized on the integration of public - private partnership amongst maritime industry to achieve optimum results.

He further added that the potential of academic and R&D organizations must be incorporated for enhancing efficiency and productivity of our maritime sector.

He assured that Government will continue to create business and investment friendly environment. Towards the end, the Chief Guest hoped that avenues generated through PIMEC will grow and bring Pakistan closer to the

cherished goals of realizing regional peace and shared prosperity through collaborative efforts.

Earlier, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi acknowledged the dynamic participation of guests that added great value to the event.





Naval Chief appraised that PIMEC will be the flagship event of Pakistan and is planned to be held biennially for demonstrating latest technology of national and international maritime industry.

The exhibition will serve as one of the international gathering of entrepreneurs, R&D specialists, financial experts and top level policy makers to boost cooperation, share knowledge and support ventures in the maritime field.

The Admiral expressed his gratitude and hoped that with zeal & zest, meticulous planning and cooperation from all the stakeholders, PIMEC-2023 will prove to boon our national economy and help raise our international stature.

The ceremony was attended by Federal Ministers, Ambassadors, military officials, Academia, Media Fraternity and distinguished guests from all walks of society.













### 124th Anniversary of the Philippine Independence celebrated

hilippine community living in Pakistan presented cultural performances on the 124 Anniversary of the Philippine Independence Day. The flag hoisting ceremony

was also performed ahead of the cultural performances. The Charge d Affaires of the Philippine embassy and military officials of Philippine and audiences witnessed the

ceremony. Maria Agnes M. Cervantes' the Charge d' Affaires of the Embassy spoke to the audience and highlighted the significance of the event.



### Charge d Affaires of Malaysia H E Deddy Faisal hosts farewell reception in honor of Deputy Head of Mission/Minister Plenipotentiary Embassy of Jordan Dr Maen Khareasat

























# Dean of Diplomatic Corps HE Mr Atadjan Movlamov hosts farewell reception in the honor of outgoing ambassadors at Marriott Hotel, Islamabad





### The British Council in collaboration with Patakha Pictures and the Scottish Documentary Institute organised a film screening event 'Pakistan Stories'



akistan Stories sought to support a new generation of female Pakistani documentary filmmakers to enable them to create engaging films that reflect on their society, and Pakistan's 75 years of independence. The event celebrated the journey of the ten selected filmmakers through the programme who worked in pairs over a period of eight weeks and were mentored by experts in Pakistan and Scotland to develop and finance their

creative skills, said a news release on Saturday. Themes of the documentaries were early and forced marriages, the rights of transgender, women and disability, women in education and the feminist movement in Pakistan. The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Christian Turner said, on this event, film was a brilliant vehicle for telling stories and giving women voice.





















### HE Dr Tarek Dahroug Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan hosts reception to mark National Day of Arab Republic of Egypt at Serena Hotel, Islamabad









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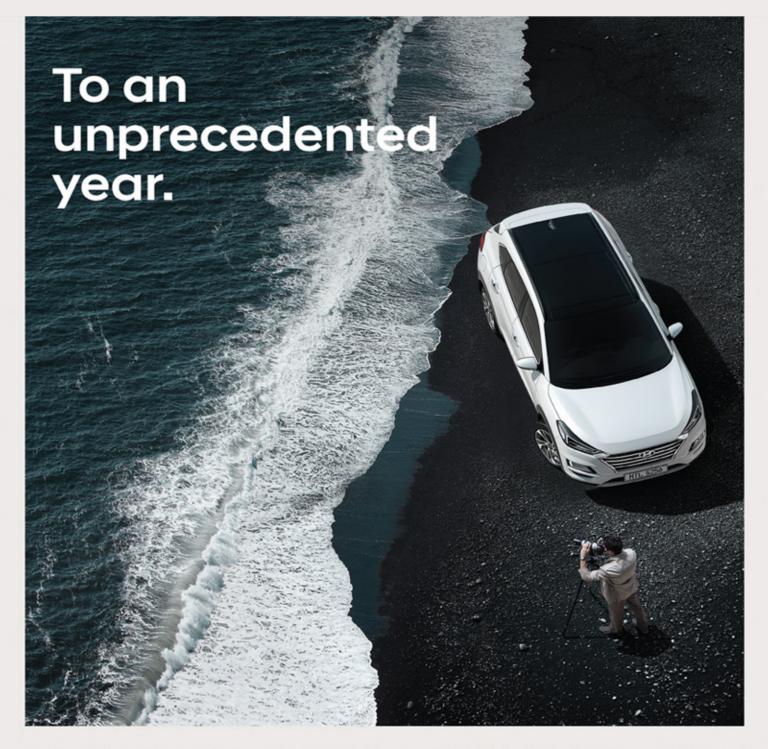












Hyundai would like to end the unprecedented year that has been 2020 with a message of thanks, Thank you Pakistan for showing us ever growing love and support since we arrived. We thank the Pakistani people for making the launch of the TUCSON highly successful, Thank you for your spirit, for not backing down in the face of the pandemic's many challenges and allowing us to host the first ever digital launch of a new car in Pakistan.

Your spirit and passion inspires us every day and fills us with hope for the future. Our aim is to deliver, over and above our promise. Brace yourselves for an exciting and ever happening year in 2021.

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