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16 PM observed various naval operational manoeuvres and drills conducted during IFR

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30 Bilateral Consultation Mechanism between Lithuania & Pakistan established

Pakistan and Lithuania have expressed the resolve to work closely to strengthen the ties. Foreign Minister of Pakistan Bilawal Bhutto Zardari paid an official visit to Lithuania at the invitation of Gabrielius Landsbergis, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. This is the Pakistani Foreign Minister's first visit to the Baltic states.

50 Regional Connectivity Desk for Central Asia & Azerbaijan inaugurated at RCCI

The inauguration ceremony of the Regional Connectivity Desk for Central Asia and Azerbaijan was held at the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI). Mr. Saqib Rafiq, President, Leaders of RCCI, Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman of the Asian Institute of Eco-Civilization Research and Development, Ambassadors of Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, representatives of the business community and mass media took part in the inauguration ceremony.

54 China Takes the Lead in Promoting Regional Stability: Saudi Arabia and Iran Agree to Restore Diplomatic Ties

In a historic move towards peace and diplomacy, the People's Republic of China, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Islamic Republic of Iran have released a joint statement announcing an agreement to resume diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

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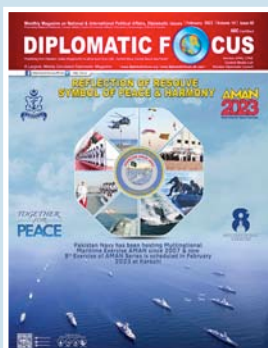
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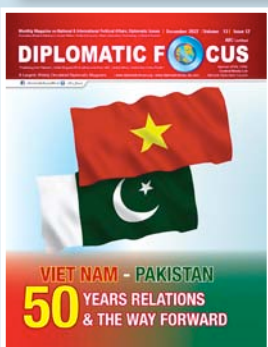
February 2023



January 2023



December 2022



October - November 2022



September 2022



Mian Fazal Elahi

Political instability and economic instability are intricately intertwined, and the same is true for stability in any country. Unfortunately, Pakistan's economy has suffered significantly due to political instability over the years. The uncertainty created by political instability has discouraged foreign investment, leading to a decline in economic growth and development. Moreover, political instability has resulted in a slowdown in economic growth, increased inflation, and rising unemployment.

In public rallies and statements, former Premier Imran Khan has been contradicting himself by criticizing his rival politicians while targeting the Pakistan Army and its former chief, using terms such as 'establishment' or 'neutrals'. Pakistan is currently facing multiple crises and challenges, including inflation, soaring commodity prices, energy shortages, lack of investment, a surge in the US dollar, an increase in oil prices, load shedding, and the inability of importers to open letters of credit (LCs) due to a lack of dollars. At this critical hour, the leaders of the government and opposition must come together and sign a charter of unity. Such an agreement is essential to pull the country out of the ongoing crises. Pakistan needs a stable political environment that promotes transparency, attracts foreign investment, and fosters sustainable economic growth. By taking bold steps towards stability, Pakistan can transform its economy and realize its full potential. Only by standing together and working towards a common goal can Pakistan overcome its current challenges and create a prosperous future for its citizens.

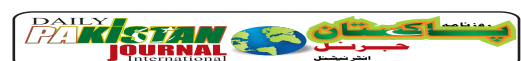
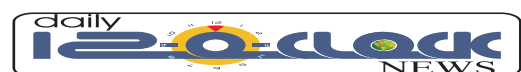
The recent earthquake that struck Türkiye has left us all deeply saddened. We are deeply saddened by the loss of life and injuries caused by the earthquake. We stand in solidarity with the people of Türkiye. We commend the bravery of the rescue teams and first responders who are working tirelessly to assist those in need. The loss of life and destruction of homes and infrastructure has created a dire need for immediate assistance from the international community. We must come forward and help our Turkish brothers and sisters during this time of crisis. The world must unite in providing the necessary aid to support the ongoing rescue and relief efforts and to help Türkiye in its long-term recovery and rebuilding process. The earthquake in Türkiye is a reminder of the unpredictable nature of natural disasters and the need for global cooperation in addressing them. Let us come together to provide the necessary aid and support to those affected by this tragedy.

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.

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Pakistan & Türkiye are like a family and our hearts beat together

PM Shehbaz urges int'l community to act fast to rescue quake-hit people

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Monitoring

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday held a meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and expressed his heartfelt condolences over the loss of precious human lives in the wake of massive earthquake.

The premier, who was in Türkiye on a two-day visit to express solidarity with the Turkish people, was received upon arrival at the Presidential Palace by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

During their tete-a-tete as well as during the delegation level talks, the Prime Minister extended heartfelt condolences to President Erdogan and the Turkish nation on the tragic loss of thousands of precious lives and massive damage to the infrastructure as a result of devastating earthquakes that hit Türkiye on 6 February 2023. Recalling the fraternal relations between Pakistan and Türkiye, the Prime Minister said that the people of Pakistan felt the same pain and anguish as their Turkish brothers and sisters. The Prime Minister added that the people of Pakistan will not rest until the last person in the earthquake affected areas has been fully rehabilitated.

President Erdogan thanked the Prime Minister for Pakistan's strong and steadfast support to Türkiye in the wake of the devastating earthquake. He reaffirmed that the resolute Turkish nation will emerge from this natural calamity with greater strength and determination than ever.



Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb, Special Assistant to the PM Tariq Fatemi, and National Disaster Management Authority Chairman Lt Gen. Inam Haider were accompanying the prime minister.

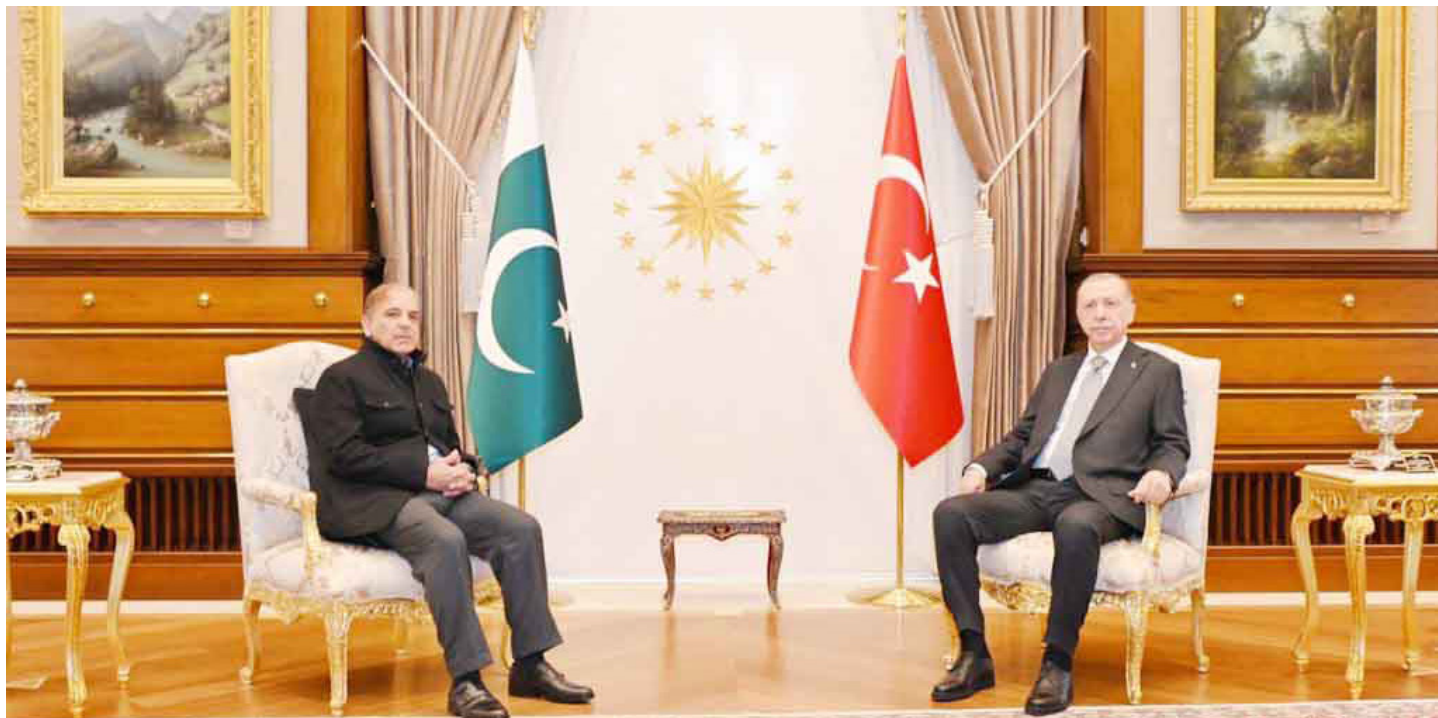
Earlier, PM Shehbaz in a tweet said: "I am leaving for Türkiye with a message of unwavering solidarity and support for our Turkish brothers and sisters from the people and Government of Pakistan."

"True to the spirit of one nation living in two

states, we consider their loss as ours," he added.

Reports said PM Shehbaz and Erdogan are also scheduled to have a joint visit to the affected region where he is supposed to meet the victims, as tens of thousands turned homeless amid extreme weather conditions. Millions of Turkish people left the southeast region, reports suggest as thousands of buildings become uninhabitable after the worst quakes.

Earlier this month, PM Shehbaz postponed his visit to quake-hit region and visited the Turkish



embassy in the country to condole huge loss. The premier also held telephonic conversations with Turkish and Syrian premiers.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said the OIC should immediately convene an emergency meeting to discuss and decide on an immediate relief package for the people of Türkiye.

In exclusive interview with Anadolu News Agency, he also urged the international community to come forward and play its role for the rehabilitation of Turkish people. He stressed that we must do everything we can for the well-being of the people of Türkiye.

The Prime Minister said the Turkish people raised nearly six billion dollars through an aid campaign that was broadcast on Turkish TV channels, calling it a remarkable example of generosity, philanthropy, kind-heartedness, and consideration. He said the Turkish people have earned highest respect, not only from the

people of Pakistan but globally.

Reaffirming Pakistan's solidarity and full support for the quake victims of Türkiye, the

President Erdogan reaffirmed that the resolute Turkish nation will emerge from this natural calamity with greater strength and determination than ever

Prime Minister said he will meet with tent manufacturers and task them to produce winterized tents as quickly as possible with the highest quality.

He hoped that by the end of this month, we will be able to send about thirteen hundred tons of relief goods. In March, another 1700 tons and in April, about 600 tons of relief goods to be sent, with the bulk of this being winterized tents.

Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan and Türkiye are like two souls and one heart, recalling that he immediately called Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan when he heard about the earthquakes to offer condolences and help. This devastation is beyond imagination. It is a colossal loss. So, no amount of aid would be enough.

The Prime Minister said Pakistan has so far been able to transport more than five hundred tons of relief goods for Turkish brothers, particularly those affected by these shocks in the south of Türkiye, in the form of winterized tents, blankets, and other relief items, as well as



rescue and medical teams. He said our rescue team was able to rescue at least fourteen people from the rubble.

Shehbaz Sharif Pakistan and Türkiye are like a family and our hearts beat together. We will live and die together. He said this is a unique relationship and Pakistan will stand by Türkiye in this hour of difficulty.

He recalled whenever Pakistan needed assistance, Türkiye went an extra mile to help their brothers and sisters, whether it was an earthquake in 2005, floods in 2010, or floods last year in Pakistan.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif left here for his homeland on completion of a two-day visit to Türkiye to convey condolences to the Turkish people after a strong earthquake caused massive loss of life and property.

Besides meeting Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the prime minister also visited the earthquake-ravaged city of Adiyaman where he interacted with the quake victims as well as the rescue workers.

At the airport, the prime minister was seen off by Turkish Trade Minister Mehmet Mus, Transport Minister Adil Karaismailoglu, Adiyaman Governor Mahmut Çuhadar, President of Türkiye Pakistan Friendship Group in Turkish Parliament Ali Shahin and Turkish diplomatic authorities.

PM sets up relief fund for Türkiye

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif set up a relief fund to help earthquake-hit people of Türkiye, appealing the people, particularly businessmen and philanthropists, to donate generously for the purpose. The decision was taken in the meeting of the Federal Cabinet, chaired by



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, which expressed condolences over the hundreds of quake-caused deaths in Türkiye and Syria, and offered Fateha for the departed souls. The Federal Cabinet announced to donate one month salary to the relief fund. It was also decided

had been at forefront to support the people of Pakistan after unprecedented floods hit the country in 2022. "The Pakistani nation would not leave their Turkish brethrens alone in this hour of ordeal. I am also leaving for Türkiye by Wednesday to visit the quake-ravaged areas of Türkiye," he said.

***The people of Pakistan
will not rest until the last
person in the earthquake
affected areas has been
fully rehabilitated: PM
Shehbaz***

He told the Cabinet members that besides relief goods, the rescue teams were immediately dispatched for Türkiye to support the relief activities. He assured that Pakistan would extend every possible support to the people of Türkiye and Syria as the whole Pakistani nation stood by the suffering people. The Cabinet meeting offered Fateha for peace of the departed souls and early recovery of the injured.

He told the meeting that the PIA and PAF flights as well as rescue teams, doctors and paramedics had been dispatched for Türkiye. Moreover, the supply of the relief goods will continue, he added.

that the Federal Government employees of grade 18 to 22 would donate one day salary for the distressed Turkish people. The Prime Minister told the Cabinet members that Türkiye





PM Shehbaz assures Turkish envoy of full support for quake victims

Says Pakistan will continue to support Turkish brethren till complete rehabilitation of victims

By Saeed Yousafzai

Prime Minister Shehbaz assured the Turkish envoy of full support for the victims of earthquake in his country.

During his visit to the Türkiye Embassy in Islamabad, the prime minister said Türkiye supported Pakistan during its worst-ever earthquake of October 8, 2005.

The Pakistani nation was in grief over the loss of thousands of lives in Türkiye, he said.

Talking to the Turkish envoy, Shehbaz said Pakistan will continue to support the Turkish brethren till complete rehabilitation of the victims.

Sharing an update about the aid supplies sent to Istanbul, the PM said Pakistan has been taking steps to support the earthquake victims and relief goods continued to be sent for Turkish



brothers and sisters. Earlier, Türkiye Ambassador Dr Mehmet Paçacı attended a coordination meeting hosted by NDMA Chairman Lt Gen

Inam Haider, that was also attended by Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal. The relief aid for Türkiye was discussed during the meeting.

FM Bilawal visits Syrian Embassy



Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited the Syrian Embassy in Islamabad and condoled with the Syrian Ambassador the death and destruction caused by the recent earthquake.

In his remarks, the Foreign Minister said Pakistan stands with the government and people of Syria in this hour of difficulty. On the occasion, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari also jotted down his impressions in the guestbook.

Government of Pakistan as well as **Pakistani** people stands with **Türkiye** in this testing time: Pakistani envoy



By Saeed Yousafzai

Ambassador of Pakistan to Türkiye Dr. Yousaf Junaid visited Governor Ankara Vasip Sahin at Ankara Governorate.

The purpose of the visit was to convey heartfelt condolences and handover relief items collected by the Pakistani Embassy staff.

While expressing Pakistan's solidarity with the brotherly people of Türkiye, Ambassador stated that the entire Pakistani nation is in distress over this catastrophe. Hearts of Pakistanis beat with hearts of Turkish people, he added.

Ambassador conveyed good wishes of the Prime Minister of Pakistan for the earthquake affectees and stated that the Prime Minister had established a special fund to ensure timely assistance to Turkish brethren undergoing the most challenging time of their lives. He underscored that the Government of Pakistan as well as Pakistani people stand with Türkiye in this testing time.

Ambassador informed the Governor that Pakistan Urban Search and Rescue teams are in Adiyaman, carrying out rescue operation

alongside Turkish teams. He assured all out support to Türkiye till normal life returns in the affected areas.

Ambassador Dr Yousaf Junaid also paid rich tribute to the Turkish government and the Great Turkish nation, who are dealing with this tragedy with courage and tenacity. He said that, like all previous challenging times, this time also Türkiye will emerge from this natural disaster stronger.

Governor Vasip Sahin thanked people and Government of Pakistan for their generous and timely support and said that Pakistan and Türkiye have always stood by each other through thick and thin. Türkiye is stronger with Pakistan, he added.

Ambassador of Pakistan to Türkiye Dr. Yousaf Junaid and staff of Pakistan Embassy Ankara visited collection points of Cankaya Beledyesi and Keçiören Beledyesi in Ankara to present and participate in the packing of the relief goods for earthquake affected areas of Türkiye.

Ambassador presented relief assistance goods on behalf of Pakistan Embassy Ankara and Pakistan Consulate Istanbul to Deputy

Mayor Merih Karayol of Keçiören Beledyesi and Deputy Mayor Muslim Tekin of Cankaya Beledyesi.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Junaid stated that Pakistan will do everything possible to support Turkish brothers in this hour of grief. We are like 'Two Hearts, One Soul', that makes us feel each other's pain. Ambassador highlighted that in Pakistan today, special prayers were held for Turkish brothers during Juma prayers.

'I am confident, that with traditional Turkish spirit of overcoming all obstacles and defeating all challenges, Turkish nation will emerge out of this catastrophe stronger than ever and you will always find people of Pakistan always standing with you', he added.

Ambassador also met Pakistani students studying in different European Universities, who have come to volunteer for earthquake relief operations in Türkiye. Dr. Yousaf Junaid appreciated Pakistani student volunteers and stated that it is an obligation on Pakistan to stand with Turkish brothers in these testing times.





We are here to help the Turkish nation: Pakistani rescue leader stands with quake victims

By Saeed Yousafzai

Rescuers from Pakistan in southern Turkey said they are ready to risk their lives in solidarity with victims of massive earthquakes that shook the region last week.

“We are here to help the Turkish nation. Their pain is our pain. Seeing this great disaster touched us deeply. We stand by them. We guarantee that we will go wherever they need help, and even put our lives at risk,” Ferhan Halid, the team’s leader, told Anadolu Agency.

The team of 85 experts from the Pakistan Army and Pakistan Search and Rescue unit came to Turkey on February 7, just a day after the two back-to-back earthquakes. They have managed to get 18 survivors out of the rubble in Adiyaman province, with some later going to Hatay province.

Pointing out that the destruction caused by the twin quakes was enormous, Halid said they were “working with full motivation and dedication” to help the Turkish nation.

No country can respond to an earthquake of this magnitude in so many cities at the same time, he said, adding that foreign aid and support were definitely needed to deal with

such a disaster.

Underlining that Pakistan and other nations stood by Turkey, he wished the Turkish nation to remain strong.

Prime Minister visited various parts of the Adiyaman city and interacted with Pakistani Search & Rescue teams who are carrying out search and rescue operations in the area. The Prime Minister praised their dedication and professionalism and stressed that Pakistan will continue playing an active part in rescue, relief and rehabilitation efforts.

According to the latest figures, over 36,100 people have been killed and over 108,000 others wounded after the two massive earthquakes struck southern Turkey within the space of just hours on February 6, affecting more than 13 million people.

The earthquakes were centred in Kahramanmaraş province and shook ten other provinces, namely Adana, Adiyaman, Diyarbakir, Elazig, Gaziantep, Hatay, Kilis, Malatya, Osmaniye, and Sanliurfa.

It was also felt in several countries in the region, including Syria, where the death toll has topped 3,600.





PM observed various naval operational manoeuvres and drills conducted during IFR

8TH MULTINATIONAL MARITIME EXERCISE AMAN-2023 CULMINATES WITH THE CONDUCT OF INTERNATIONAL FLEET REVIEW IN NORTH ARABIAN SEA

Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN-23 organised by Pakistan Navy culminated in the North Arabian Sea with a powerful conduct of International Fleet Review (IFR) followed by spectacular forming up of AMAN Formation comprising Pakistan Navy and foreign naval ships.

The Honourable Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

Upon arrival onboard Pakistan Navy Ship MOAWIN, the Honourable Prime Minister was received by Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi.

Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Mr. Rana Tanveer, SAPM to PM Mr. Fahad Hussain, Governor Sindh, Chief Minister Sindh, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Air Staff were also present on the occasion.

In addition, ambassadors, high commissioners, senior military officers, Defence & Naval Attaches from various countries also witnessed the fleet review.



The Chief Guest observed various naval operational manoeuvres and drills conducted during IFR. The Fleet Review also featured an impressive Fly Past by Pakistan Navy, Pakistan Air Force and participating foreign aircraft followed by Man & Cheership by participating ships. The mega exercise culminated with the participating ships forming up in traditional 'AMAN Formation' to signify collective resolve 'Together for Peace'.

The Prime Minister lauded Pakistan Navy for successfully hosting Exercise AMAN-23 for promoting peace and security in the region.

The Chief Guest thanked the participating regional and extra-regional navies for displaying their commitment to collaborative maritime security and joining hands for peaceful co-existence.

The Prime Minister emphasized that AMAN-23 will pave the way to make the region more peaceful and secure with combined efforts by all stakeholders.

The Chief of the Naval Staff thanked the honourable Prime Minister for gracing the International Fleet Review with his presence.

The Naval Chief assured that Pakistan Navy will continue to play a dynamic role in enhancing regional maritime security individually and in collaboration with partner navies.

Naval Chief also highlighted that successful conduct of PIMEC 23 held in tandem with Multinational Exercise Aman 23 is a manifestation of PN resolve to promote maritime potential of Pakistan.

During the exhibition around 20 MoUs, 01 Joint Venture and 01 sale/purchase agreement of export of iron ore were signed.

During Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN 2023, 50 countries participated in the exercise with their Naval warships, aircraft, Special Operation Forces and a large number of observers.





PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL MARITIME EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE (PIMEC) HELD IN TANDEM WITH 8TH MULTINATIONAL MARITIME EXERCISE AMAN 23 CULMINATES

The three days Pakistan International Maritime Exhibition and Conference (PIMEC) 23 culminated at Karachi. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Faisal Ali Sabzwari graced the closing session as Chief Guest while Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi was also present during the event.

Addressing the audience, the Chief Guest highlighted that Pakistan Navy has been the driving force to spearhead the dynamic initiatives in Maritime domain and has rendered invaluable services for the socio-economic uplift of Coastal areas.

The minister also underlined that Government is launching new projects for beneficial collaborations and valued exhibitors for maritime business partnerships.

The Chief Guest added that recommendations of the conference will provide guidelines to embark on profitable initiatives for accelerating development of maritime sector and conduct of next PIMEC in 2025.

Earlier, Commander Karachi Rear Admiral Mian Zakirullah Jan extended profound appreciations to the visiting delegates, scholars and experts on maritime affairs and valued exhibitors for their forthcoming participation and dynamic presence during the event.

He also emphasized that through PIMEC, Pakistan's ocean based industry will come together, exchange ideas and creates new avenues for prosperous future of Pakistan's Blue Economy.

The Admiral also praised the efforts of NIMA for successful conduct of International Maritime





Conference on the theme of 'Embracing Blue Economy - Challenges and Opportunities for Developing Countries' during the event.

During the last session of IMC, President MCE Rear Admiral Javaid Iqbal, Maritime Security Director MiDES Malaysia Capt Dr. Tay Yap Leong, Director of Waterlink Group of Companies Mr. Ahsan Malik and Regional

Strategy Manager Thales Middle East Mr. Louis Brayle contemplated upon the dynamic theme of 'Importance of Secure Oceans and Emerging Trends in Shipping & Port Operations'. The conference was attended by a large number of dignitaries from across the globe, Officers from Defence Forces of Pakistan and friendly countries, academia, media representatives and researchers from local and international

think tanks.

In tandem with various activities of the exercise AMAN 23, Maritime Counter Terrorism Demonstration was held at PNS QASIM Manora, Karachi. Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori graced the occasion as Chief Guest and appreciated the efforts of Pakistan Navy in conducting the Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN 2023 in



a befitting manner.

A large number of observers, foreign diplomats, personnel from the participating navies, Government officials/ civil dignitaries and senior officials of armed forces of Pakistan witnessed the Counter terrorism demonstration.

Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN-23 is being conducted under the slogan of "Together for Peace". The weeklong Exercise provides the forum to various participating nations to interact and promote Maritime cooperation.





CHIEF OF THE NAVAL STAFF VISITS FOREIGN SHIPS PARTICIPATING IN AMAN-2023 & INTERNATIONAL MARITIME CONFERENCE (IMC) HELD IN TANDEM WITH PIMEC

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi visited foreign ships of navies participating in 8th Multinational Naval Exercise AMAN-23.

Upon his arrival on board foreign visiting ships, the Naval Chief was warmly welcomed by Senior Officers/ Commanding Officers and was presented Guard of Honour by smartly dressed out contingents.

During the visits, the Naval Chief interacted with Senior Officers/ Commanding Officers and was given briefings on board ships. The Naval Chief highlighted that Pakistan is effectively contributing in peace and stability in the region.

AMAN Exercise demonstrates Pakistan's commitment to peace, reinforce regional maritime security and enhance interoperability between regional and extra regional navies.

The Admiral appreciated their participation in AMAN Exercise to fulfill common resolve of "Together for Peace".

The Senior Officers/ Commanding Officers of the respective ships highly acknowledged the persistent efforts of Pakistan Navy to bring global navies towards shared commitment of maritime peace, stability and lawful order at sea.

Besides, the Naval Chief also called on Cdr DJIBOUTI Navy and Coast Guard separately, Cdr Lebanese Navy, Flag Officer Commanding Naval Doctrine Command Nigerian Navy, Flag Officer Commanding Sri Lankan Naval Fleet and Cdr Tanzanian Navy.

On the side line of PIMEC, the three days International Maritime Conference (IMC) was organized on the theme of 'Embracing Blue Economy – Challenges and Opportunities for



Developing Countries' by National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) under the auspices of Pakistan Navy.

The conference is being held in tandem with Pakistan International Maritime Expo & Conference (PIMEC) and 8th Multinational Naval Exercise AMAN 2023.

Eminent international and national scholars from China, Germany, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Turkey, UK and USA are participating in the three days conference and will share their thoughts on the dynamic theme. Additionally, majority of international scholars are also joining the Conference online.

The second day of the IMC was divided into two Sessions (four sub-sessions). In the First Session, Dr. Anuar Liporado Bin Abdullah from Ocean Quest Global Malaysia, Dr. Zafar Ullah Jattak from LUAWMS Baluchistan, Engr Faisal Iftikhar, CEO Deep Blue Sea Food and Mr. Saeed Sarparah, CEO Baluchistan Board of Investment & Trade emphasized over various topics under the theme of 'Impact of Innovation on Sustainable Blue Economy'.

While, Dr. David Middlemiss from Wallingford Group UK, Mr. Jawed Iqbal CEO Shoib Shipping Agency, Mr. Usman Munir from KOTUG, Dr. Jian Ling from Southern University of Science & Technology China and Engr Captain (Retd) Ibrahim from AKSU deliberated on the theme 'Challenges to Marine Industries & Contemporary Scientific Developments'.

During the Second Session, Mr. Muhammad Irfan Tariq Former DG MoCC, Mr. Muhammad Amjad from Global Climate Change Impact Studies Centre, Mr. Mahmood Akhtar Cheema from Country Rep IUCM and Dr. Asif Inam from



BUKC pondered upon the theme of 'Impact of Climate Change on the Marine Environment'.

Besides, Dr. Josh L Breithaupt from Florida University USA, Dr. Abed El Rahman Hassoun from Germany, Dr. Ying Wu from China and Dr. Samina Kidwai DG NIO contemplated upon various aspects of 'Ocean Bio-Geo Sciences and Marine Technologies'.

The second Day of International Maritime

Conference was attended by a large number of dignitaries from across the globe, Officers from Defence Forces of Pakistan and friendly countries, academia, media representatives and researchers from local and international think tanks.

International Maritime Conference will continue till 12 Feb 23 and would cover the thoughts of distinguished International and National scholars.



8th MULTINATIONAL MARITIME EXERCISE AMAN- 2023 AND THE MEGA EVENT OF PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL MARITIME EXPO & CONFERENCE (PIMEC) KICKS OFF AT KARACHI



A remarkable and vibrant Flags Hoisting Ceremony was held at Pakistan Navy Dockyard, Karachi, to formally commence the proceedings of 8th Multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN-23. A large number of senior military representatives from participating countries, observers, diplomats and Pakistan Navy officials attended the ceremony. The opening of the Exercise was marked with simultaneous hoisting of flags of all the participating nations of AMAN-23.

The Message of Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi was read during the ceremony. In his message, the Naval Chief warmly welcomed the participants of Exercise AMAN-23. The Admiral underscored that the AMAN Exercise is a regular feature that involves regional and extra-regional navies to create a secure and favorable maritime environment for smooth and unhindered maritime activities in the region. The Naval Chief in his message further underlined that Pakistan Navy has been a forerunner in its quest for promoting collaborative maritime security in the region besides generating the camaraderie as highlighted under the Exercise motto "Together for Peace". The Admiral emphasized that this bond will continue to grow and bring us even closer to the cherished goals of realizing regional peace and shared prosperity.

Speaking on the occasion, Commander Pakistan Fleet, Vice Admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami warmly welcomed all the participants and thanked them for their wholehearted participation in the Exercise. He sought their cooperation in achieving the Exercise objectives and hoped that the Exercise would prove mutually rewarding for all. He also acknowledged the flags of participating countries from across the globe fluttering together as an embodiment of the Exercise motto, 'Together for Peace'.

AMAN-23, the 8th Exercise of the AMAN series is being held from 10-14 February 2023. The exercise is one of the major events of Pakistan Navy held biennially to signify the commitment towards making seas safer for positive human



activities while inviting regional and extra-regional navies. This year the AMAN Exercise is being attended by more than 50 countries with their ships, aircraft, Special Operation Forces and a large number of observers.

Besides, another mega event of Pakistan International Maritime Expo & Conference (PIMEC) commenced at Karachi Expo Center, a protruding initiative of Pakistan Navy under the patronage Ministry of Maritime Affairs aimed to raise awareness amongst national stakeholders and international fraternity about the huge untapped potential of Pakistan's Blue Economy. The opening ceremony of PIMEC was graced by Minister of Foreign Affairs Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Chief of the Naval Staff was also present during the event. Besides, a large number of civil military, foreign & local delegates attended the event.

Chief of the Naval Staff in his message of PIMEC highlighted that Pakistan Navy being the major stakeholder in shaping the maritime thought in the country is proactively playing its role in creating the requisite maritime awareness for exploitation of untapped potential of Blue Economy. The Naval Chief further underscored that this milestone event will bring together

international and national stakeholders, creating a marketplace for presenting innovative ideas while showcasing maritime potential and opportunities in this dynamic field. The Admiral further emphasized that PIMEC is a platform to reaffirm our commitment and resolve towards preserving and sustainable use of oceans and marine resources, exploiting natural resources and to spur growth for collective and shared prosperity.

In the background of PIMEC, International Maritime Conference has also been organized by National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA), under the auspices of Pakistan Navy from 10 to 12 February 2023. International Maritime Conference would cover the thoughts of distinguished International and National scholars on the theme of "Embracing Blue Economy challenges and opportunities for developing countries".

The maiden PIMEC has showcased overwhelming interest with the participation around 133 Exhibitors including foreign and local firms. The significant event PIMEC will continue till 12 February 23 as the mega propelling Pakistan's course towards realizing the blue economy goals.



Flag Hoisting Ceremony of Multinational Exercise AMAN-23





OPENING MEDIA BRIEF OF MULTINATIONAL EXERCISE AMAN 2023 HELD

Media brief of multinational Maritime Exercise AMAN-23 was held at PNS JAUHAR. Commander Pakistan Fleet Vice Admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami briefed media regarding Exercise details.

Pakistan Navy has been conducting AMAN series of multinational maritime exercise every two years since its beginning in 2007. Eighth edition of the exercise is scheduled to be held this year from 10-14 February, involving participation of over 50 countries with ships, aircrafts, Special Ops Forces/ EOD Marines teams and observers. The exercise is divided into two phases: harbour and sea.

Harbour phase involves activities such as seminars, operational discussions, professional demonstrations, international get togethers and pre-sail planning of evolutions at sea. The sea phase would include tactical maneuvers, exercises related to maritime security such as anti-piracy and counter terrorism, search and rescue, gunnery firings and air defence exercises.

Highlight of the sea phase will be the International Fleet Review, which will be witnessed by national and foreign dignitaries

As a maritime nation, Pakistan has substantial stakes in keeping our seas safe and secure. Our interests are based on three major factors.

Firstly, our extraordinary dependence on the seas for trade; secondly, operationalization of CPEC project and thirdly, our strategic location astride the global energy highway.

Cumulatively, these realities make maritime stability a vital national security interest. We realize the importance of maritime security not only for Pakistan but for all other countries whose prosperity and progress are tied to the seas.

While we talk of security and stability at sea, let us be mindful of the threats and challenges that we face in the maritime domain, ranging from piracy, terrorism, narco-arms trafficking to climate change.

However, vastness of the seas makes it



extremely difficult for any one nation to deal with these diverse challenges alone. This calls for collective effort to make sure the seas remain safe and secure for all of us to use and benefit from.

Pakistan Navy is therefore a firm believer in the concept of Collaborative Maritime Security and has been actively participating in Maritime Security and Counter Piracy Operations along with other partner navies since 2004.

Furthermore, since 2018, Pakistan Navy is undertaking Regional Maritime Security Patrols through which our ships maintain presence in vital sea areas in the Indian Ocean Region, to contribute towards maintaining good order at sea in accordance with our international commitments.

Exercise AMAN is thus the manifestation of this acknowledged reality of combating the maritime threats collectively through cooperation and mutual support and provides enormous opportunities to the participants for

shaping and rehearsing the contours of such a collective response.

Commander Pakistan Fleet emphasized that the principle purpose of this exercise is to provide a forum for understanding each other's maritime concepts and operational cultures, enhancing interoperability as well as identifying ways and means to combat common threats at sea. The occasion also helps foster friendships, bridging gaps and making it possible for countries from far and wide to operate together in pursuance of shared objectives.

He added that coverage of this event by the media would help project the true spirit of Exercise AMAN as reflected so aptly in its motto 'Together for Peace' besides the contributions of Pakistan Navy and Pakistan's image as a responsible maritime nation.

Earlier, Commander Pakistan Fleet expressed his condolences for the people of Turkiye and Syria who have been devastated during the recent earthquake.

PIMEC OPENING MEDIA BRIEF HELD AT KARACHI EXPO CENTER



Media Brief of Pakistan International Maritime Exhibition and Conference (PIMEC) was held at Karachi Expo Center today. Commander Karachi Rear Admiral Mian Zakirullah Jan alongwith additional secretary Ministry of Maritime Affairs (MOMA) Mr. Asad Rafi Chandna briefed media regarding PIMEC.

The maiden edition of Pakistan International Maritime Exhibition and Conference will be held from 10 – 12 Feb 2023 at Karachi Expo Center. 133 exhibitors including 21 international firms and 112 local firms/ international organizations are participating in the exhibition. In addition 37 x international delegations from 17 countries including Bahrain, KSA, Qatar, Oman, Turkiye, UK, Italy, Germany, Portugal, USA, Colombia, Sri Lanka Malaysia, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mauritius, Madagascar, Seychelles and Kazakhstan will also attend the event.

Another highlight of the event is active participation of Sindh and Baluchistan Governments which has established exclusive pavilions aimed at promoting investment in the maritime sector.

PIMEC will include maritime exhibition, business to business (B2B) and business to Govt (B2B) meetings, signing of MoUs and media interactions. The main objectives of PIMEC are to highlight Pakistan's potential for blue economy, provide opportunities to maritime Industry both in Public & Private sectors to display products at one forum. This will also provide a platform for interaction with international maritime industry for joint ventures, transfer of technology and research to provide importance to Pakistan's Maritime and Defence industries.

In parallel, the PIMEC's conference part i.e. International Maritime Conference – 2023 spearheaded by National Institute of Maritime Affairs, has also been organized on the theme 'Embracing Blue Economy – Challenges and Opportunities for Developing Countries'. The IMC, thematically distributed under 4 Sessions, will cover 27 papers by national and international speakers of repute.

Pakistan International Maritime Exhibition and Conference is being conducted in tandem with Multinational Exercise AMAN-23 which will

provide an opportunity to over 122 delegates from 50 participating navies to witness this event. This will also increase opportunities for local exhibitors to interact with international attendees of visiting Navies from across the globe.

Maritime sector is the heart of global trade and economy, existing value of global ocean economy is about US \$1.5 Tn per year which is expected to be doubled in size by the year 2030. It can therefore be construed that prosperity of a nation and economic growth are to a greater extent facilitated by maritime sector. Pakistan Navy therefore, in coordination with MoMA, took initiative of bringing national and international maritime stakeholders to enhance maritime awareness and bring to fore the largely untapped maritime sector of Pakistan.

It is believed that PN – MoMA joint initiative of holding first Pakistan International Maritime Exhibition and Conference will not only bolster Blue Economy but also become the harbinger of socio-economic development of the coastal belt of Pakistan.



Foreign Ships Arrival at AMAN-23 Navel Exercise



Weapon Display at AMAN-23 Navel Exercise



FM Bilawal warns West about threats of terrorism

Terrorism to move beyond Pakistan if Afghanistan does not rein in militants, says Bilawal

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari urged the international community to help build the capacity of the Afghan interim authorities to take on the threat of terrorism. This statement came during a panel discussion at the two-day Munich Security Conference to debate international security policy.

This of course comes at a time when Pakistan is experiencing a resurgence of the terror threat and the foreign minister's remarks are rightly making headlines given how rapidly militant groups are strengthening their presence in Afghanistan.

It is also a mature approach adopted by the foreign office given how Kabul has not been very cooperative when it comes to fulfilling its promise of clamping down on the TTP. According to media reports, Mr. Bilawal pointing out that if this threat is not taken





seriously; militant groups could conduct their activities from Afghanistan as had been witnessed recently from incidents in Pakistan.

The interim Afghan government does not have a counter-terrorism force or even a border force, not to mention the serious capacity issues.

The Taliban is already facing challenges when it comes to dealing with ISIS-K, so it has very little incentives to take on other groups that have established a presence in the country.

Therefore, it is crucial that there be global support to convince Kabul to take on the threat of terrorism. The threat is not just limited to Pakistan, but is also something that should concern the immediate neighbours of Afghanistan and the West.

The UN has already pointed out in its reports that al Qaeda has been steadily growing its presence and making a comeback in Afghanistan, which should be of serious concern given the transnational nature of the group.

But for any substantial steps to be taken, the world will have to continue its humanitarian support, unfreeze Afghanistan's assets, open up banking channels and engage with the Taliban, and the Afghan society and women. As Mr. Bilawal rightly said, women empowerment cannot be pursued through starvation.

Therefore, the current approach adopted by the West will have to change as it must act proactively rather than reactively.

At the same time, Kabul will also have to illustrate that it is serious in engaging with the international community as patience is wearing

thin with the Taliban government.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Saturday held meetings with foreign ministers and leaders of different countries at the Munich Security Council in Germany and discussed matters of mutual interest.

The minister met his Saudi counterpart Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud and the two pledged to increase cooperation of their countries in diverse fields.

Bilawal said Pakistan highly valued its brotherly relations with Saudi Arabia. He also held a meeting with Foreign Minister of Finland Pekka Haavisto.

The two sides agreed to take forward relations in sectors of education, trade and climate change. Bilawal welcomed the decision of Finland to re-open its embassy in Islamabad.

The minister met with Vice President and Foreign Minister of Jordan Ayman Al Safadi and they agreed to expand bilateral ties and high level contacts between Pakistan and Jordan.

He also met with Foreign Minister of Malta Dr Ian Borg and they expressed determination to promote relations in areas of information technology, health, tourism and start ups through the Joint Technical Commission.

He had a meeting with chief of International Crisis Group Dr Comfort Ero and they concurred to adopt a coordinated strategy to resolve issues facing the humanity.

The minister also held discussions with US Senator Lindsey Graham and other members of the Congress and they talked about issues of climate change and the challenges faced by humanity.





Bilateral Consultation Mechanism between Lithuania & Pakistan established

Bilawal Bhutto concludes the first-ever visit of any Pakistani FM to Baltic States

By Mian Mubeen Akhtar

Pakistan and Lithuania have expressed the resolve to work closely to strengthen the ties.

Foreign Minister of Pakistan Bilawal Bhutto Zardari paid an official visit to Lithuania at the invitation of Gabrielius Landsbergis, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. This is the Pakistani Foreign Minister's first visit to the Baltic states. According to Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, The Foreign Ministers' meeting focused on developing political dialogue, the international community's response to Russia's war against Ukraine and regional security issues in Europe and South Asia, including the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, the terrorist threat and strengthening cooperation between the European Union and Pakistan.

"Russia's war against Ukraine has caused a global food and energy crisis, affecting many developing countries in Asia.

Therefore, the efforts of all countries to stop Russian aggression are crucial," Landsbergis said, stressing that we were also concerned about regional security issues of particular importance to Pakistan, such as the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

"Ensuring stability in the South Asian region, fighting terrorism, protecting women's rights, and preventing irregular migration is also in the strategic interest of the European Union," Landsbergis said.

During the meeting, Landsbergis and Bilawal signed a Memorandum of Understanding





between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan on establishing a bilateral consultation mechanism.

The document confirms the commitment of the Foreign Ministries of Lithuania and Pakistan to hold regular consultations on bilateral and international issues.

Both Foreign Ministers stressed the need to tap into the potential of closer economic cooperation to promote the development of transport corridors and exports of Lithuanian agricultural production to Pakistan.

On this occasion, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said strengthening cooperation between the two countries would ensure global security. He said "taking advantage of each other's

economic potential is our common interest".

Landsbergis expressed his condolences to and solidarity with Pakistan over the victims and losses of the unprecedented floods in 2022.

***Taking advantage
of each other's
economic potential
is our common
interest: Bilawal
Bhutto Zardari***

The Foreign Minister noted that Lithuania provided humanitarian aid through the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in 2022.

During the official visit, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan also met with the Speaker of the Seimas (Parliament) Viktorija Čmilyte-Nielsen, and the Minister of Transport and Communications Marius Skuodis.

In addition, Zardari will participate in a wreath-laying ceremony in the Antakalnis cemetery, honouring Lithuania's freedom fighters. Pakistan recognised Lithuania's independence on 8 September 1991. The two countries established their diplomatic relations on 31 May 1994.





First-ever official visit of Pakistani FM to Hungary

Pakistan & Hungary will continue to work in strengthening bilateral ties: FM Bilawal

By M. Saeed Yousafzai

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari signed three Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with his Hungarian counterpart, consolidating cooperation in various areas including sports, diplomatic academies and education between Pakistan and Hungary.

In a series of Tweets, he said the MoU in education has made Pakistan the largest recipient of Hungry scholarships increasing it to 400 Pakistani students annually to study in Hungarian universities. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari stated he successfully concluded first-ever official visit as any Pakistani Foreign Minister to Budapest. He said it was due to excellent support from Team Pakistan in Hungary.

The Foreign Minister added Pakistan and Hungary will continue to work in strengthening bilateral ties. According to media reports, Although Hungary and Pakistan are geographically distant from each other, cooperation between the two countries is good in several areas, and the Hungarian government will double the number of university scholarships for Pakistani students to further improve relations, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó announced in Budapest. At a joint press conference with his Pakistani counterpart Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the Hungarian Minister stressed that both countries face serious security challenges in their neighborhoods.



"It is also clear for both of us that our foreign policy decisions have to be made in the context of great power expectations and friendly guidance, and despite this, both Hungary and Pakistan have been able to maintain their sovereign foreign policies in recent years," Péter Szijjártó said. He also pointed out that the parties have learned from their histories and locations that the channels of communication must always be kept open.

The Foreign Minister added that Hungary has learned the lesson that if east and west come into conflict with each other, Central Europe will only lose out.

Szjijártó also touched on the issue of increasing migratory pressures, stressing that the root

causes are worsening, such as the threat of terrorism and the rise of extremist ideologies. He expressed his appreciation for Pakistan's role in curbing illegal migration and fighting terrorism.

On economic issues, he said that Hungarian oil and gas company MOL is now virtually the only Western energy company that has not withdrawn from South Asia, but continues to invest in Pakistan, contributing to security of supply and providing jobs for more than 800 people. Finally, he announced that the number of scholarship places for Pakistani students in Hungarian higher education would be increased from 200 to 400 per year, in response to the huge interest and 12,557 applications received this year.



Diplomatic missions in Islamabad briefed on situation in IIOJK

By Saeed Yousafzai

Acting Foreign Secretary Muhammad Syrus Qazi briefed the representatives of the Diplomatic Missions in Islamabad on the situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

The Acting Foreign Secretary highlighted the egregious human rights violations in IIOJK and India's illegal attempts to change the demographic structure of the occupied territory.

Acting Foreign Secretary called upon the international community to urge India to stop human rights violations in IIOJK; reverse its illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019; and implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions so that the Kashmiris could realize their inalienable right to self-determination.

He emphasized that durable peace in South Asia remained contingent upon peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute.

The Acting Foreign Secretary called upon the international community to urge India to stop human rights violations in IIOJK; reverse its illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019; and implement the relevant UN Security Council



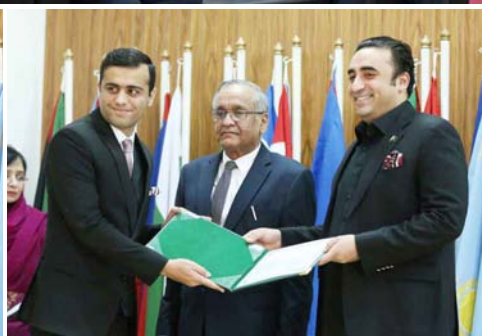
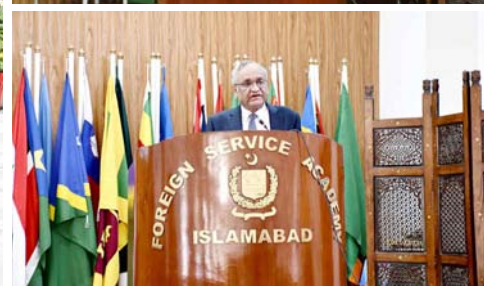
resolutions so that the Kashmiris could realize their inalienable right to self-determination.

The Foreign Secretary's briefing was part of

Pakistan's regular diplomatic outreach to keep the international community apprised of the developments relating to IIOJK and the region.



Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari graced the passing out ceremony of 42nd Specialized Diplomatic Course as Chief Guest and awarded certificates to 21 graduating diplomats of Pakistan. The Foreign Minister congratulated the graduating diplomats and urged them to work with honour, dedication and commitment for Islamic Republic of Pakistan.





Four-weeks long training of the 29th Advanced Diplomatic Course commenced at the Foreign Service Academy on February 20, 2023. Amb. Dr. Mazhar Javed, Director General FSA, welcomed and briefed the diplomats about the academy and the course.



Pakistan COAS, UAE president discuss bilateral ties



Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and discussed bilateral ties with President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Emirati state news agency WAM reported.

UAE President Sheikh Mohamed received the army chief at Qasr Al Shati Palace in Abu Dhabi, according to the report.

Gen Asim extended his heartfelt condolences

to the UAE president on the passing of his mother-in-law Sheikh Maryam bint Abdullah bin Sulayem Al Falasi.

The army chief also offered condolences on behalf of President Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the statement added.

The two sides held discussions on bilateral relations and ways to deepen cooperation in defence affairs "for the mutual benefit of their nations".

The meeting was attended by several high-level officials from both countries.

This is the second visit of Gen Asim to the UAE since becoming the army chief in November last year. The army chief paid a maiden visit to the UAE on January 10.

The COAS and the UAE leader had discussed the regional situation and ways to increase bilateral cooperation and partnership between the two countries.

The Embassy of UAE in Islamabad and the Consulate General in Karachi launch "Winter Clothing" campaign to support orphaned children and needy families in different areas of Sindh Province with the support and funding of the Emirates Red Crescent.



PM for making Pak-US partnership diverse, multidimensional

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Monitoring

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif highlighting the significance of long-standing cooperation between Pakistan and the United States underscored the need to make this partnership diverse and multidimensional.

He underlined that parliamentary exchanges between the two countries, as vibrant democracies, were vital to promoting understanding of each other's perspectives at the political level.

The prime minister expressed these views while welcoming a six-member U.S. Senate delegation from the Democratic Party, which led by Senate Majority Leader Senator Chuck Schumer called on him here.

Other members of the delegation included Senators Maria Cantwell, Amy Klobuchar, Gary Peters, Catherine Cortez Masto, and Peter Welch.

The prime minister highlighted that Pakistan and U.S. celebrated 75 years of diplomatic relations last year, and that this diplomatic milestone presented an ideal opportunity to chart future course for Pak-US bilateral ties.

Pointing to the unrealized potential in the trade, investment and technology realms, he emphasized the importance of forging a



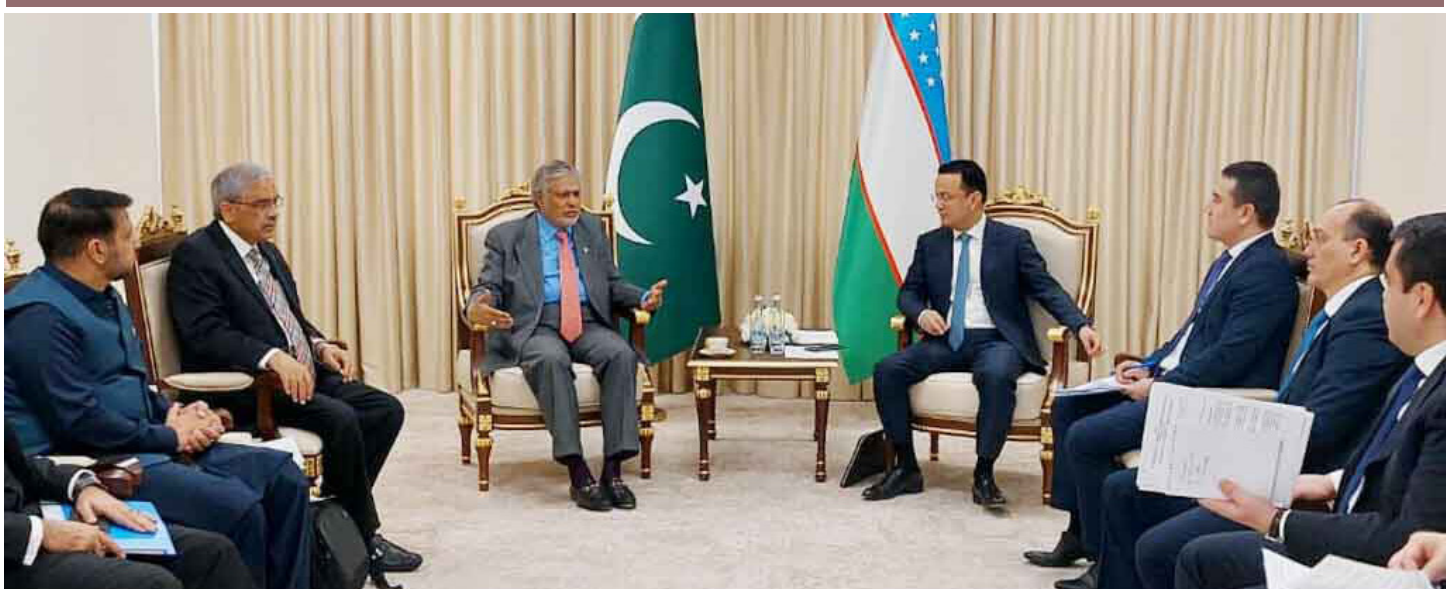
more robust and mutually beneficial bilateral economic partnership.

The prime minister recognized the important role that the vibrant Pakistani community played in serving as an important bridge between the two countries.

He thanked the U.S. for its support and solidarity with the people of Pakistan during the 2022 floods and its participation in the International

Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan.

A number of issues of mutual interest and importance including the situation in Afghanistan, and deteriorating human rights situation and growing repression in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) were also discussed during the meeting.



Pakistan, Uzbekistan sign \$1bn trade deal

Pakistan and Uzbekistan signed a \$1 billion deal to increase bilateral trade, a statement from Pakistan's Ministry of Economic Affairs said.

The deal was sealed at the 8th meeting of the Pakistan-Uzbekistan Inter-governmental Commission on Trade-Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation (IGC) held in Tashkent.

Both countries signed the agreement to encourage the exchange of goods and services, the ministry said in its statement.

"The 8th meeting of Pak-Uzbek Inter-governmental Commission on Trade-Economic and Scientific-Technical Cooperation was held in Tashkent today," it said.

"Both countries signed a one billion dollar trade

agreement to encourage exchange of goods and services."

Pakistan's Finance Minister Ishaq Dar was leading the delegation to thrash out the trade agreements, which cover cooperation in fields including trade, banking, industries, energy and agriculture, the ministry added.



Defence Minister emphasizes need to further diversify Pak-US relations



By Mian Fazal Elahi, Agency

Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif has emphasized the need to further diversify Pak-US relations in the realm of defence.

He was talking to US Ambassador Donald Blome who called on him in Islamabad.

The Minister called for enhanced defence cooperation framework between the two countries with a broader outlook ranging from counter-terrorism to conventional defence.

He highlighted the successful interaction with the US government to government fora.

Both sides discussed mutual interest and bilateral cooperation in the fields of defence,



energy and infrastructure development.

Khawaja Asif highlighted the importance of stable and prosperous Afghanistan for region as a whole and for Pakistan in particular.

The two sides were of the view that national and regional security was an important and common concern.

US values ties with Pakistan, says State Dept official

By Monitoring

United States State Department spokesperson refrained from commenting on former Prime Minister Imran Khan's statement absolving the Biden administration of involvement in any conspiracy to oust him from power, saying the U.S. values its long-standing relationship with Pakistan.

"I'm just not going to comment on the evolution of the blame game, as you say," Spokesman Ned Price said in a response to a question from a private Pakistani television channel's correspondent about Khan's latest U-turn from his previous position of blaming his overthrow on the U.S.

"We have spoken clearly about this ever since these erroneous allegations surfaced. We've consistently said there is no truth to these allegations," Price added.

"We value our long-standing cooperation with Pakistan. We've always viewed a prosperous and democratic Pakistan as critical to our



interests. That very much remains unchanged. Whether it has come to an end or not, we don't let propaganda, misinformation, disinformation get in the way of any bilateral relationship," the spokesperson told reporters at his daily press briefing.

"That, of course, includes our valued bilateral

relationship with Pakistan. When it comes to various political players inside of Pakistan, we don't have a position on one political candidate or party versus another. We support, as we do around the world, the peaceful upholding of democratic, constitutional, and legal principles," Price said.

14th Round of Pakistan-France Bilateral Political Consultations Held in Paris



By Mian Fazal Elahi

The 14th round of Pakistan-France Bilateral Political Consultations was held in Paris today. Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan led the Pakistan side while Secretary-General of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Ms. Anne-Marie Descôtes led the French side. Ambassador of Pakistan to France, Mr. Asim Iftikhar Ahmad and other senior officials assisted the Foreign Secretary.

With shared desire and commitment to reinforce ties, Pakistan and France signed on this occasion, the 'Roadmap for Bilateral Cooperation' that envisages deepening relations in all fields of mutual interest including high level exchanges and cooperation in political, economic, development, science & technology, education, culture, tourism, defence, security and counter-terrorism, migration, climate change and multilateral domains.

The two sides had a comprehensive exchange of views on bilateral cooperation, and regional and multilateral issues. The Foreign Secretary conveyed Pakistan's profound appreciation for President Macron's participation in the Geneva Conference on 9 January 2023 and strong support pledged by France for resilient reconstruction of flood affected areas of Pakistan.

Noting that the meeting between President Macron and Prime Minister Sharif in New York on the sidelines of the UNGA in September 2022 had imparted fresh momentum, the Foreign Secretary stressed the importance of regular high-level political contacts to provide guidance and impetus for enhancing broad-based mutually beneficial partnership between the two countries. The two sides also highlighted



the importance of parliamentary contacts in deepening political ties and advancing multi-dimensional relations.

While underscoring the priority attached to economic, trade and investment relations, the two sides agreed to enhance cooperation in energy, IT, agriculture and livestock, tourism and other sectors. They discussed arranging dedicated trade events and exchange of business delegations to sustain the positive trajectory of bilateral trade and investment in recent years. The Foreign Secretary underscored the importance of GSP Plus as a trade promotion and development tool, which has been beneficial for both Pakistan and the European Union. He also appreciated French Development Agency (Afd)'s cooperation in renewable energy, urban development, mass transport and preservation of national heritage in Pakistan, noting the potential for further expansion of Afd's portfolio in the country in

areas of mutual interest.

The two sides took stock of the current bilateral defence and security cooperation. They agreed to maintain and further nurture long-standing defence ties and reinforce cooperation on counter-terrorism. They also exchanged views on UN Peacekeeping in the context of multilateral action for maintenance of international peace and security.

Foreign Secretary briefed his French counterpart on the regional situation and the challenges related to maintenance of peace and security in the region. They exchanged views on the situation in Afghanistan. The Foreign Secretary also stressed that resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and wishes of the Kashmiri people was fundamental for lasting peace and stability in South Asia.

The two sides agreed to hold the 15th round of BPC in Islamabad next year.

Turkmenistan joins the Group of Friends for Sustainable Urbanization to advance the Arkadag city project through multilateral platforms



Turkmenistan joins the Group of Friends of UN-Habitat for Sustainable Urbanization and the New Urban Agenda.

The Group is chaired by Poland and Zimbabwe and it was formed in June 2022 to serve as a political intermediary between the General Assembly and the United Nations Secretariat in New York.

Currently, more than 30 countries have joined the Group.

Turkmenistan's membership in the Group will open new opportunities in the following fields:

- To advance the Arkadag city project through multilateral platforms;
- To exchange the experience in urban legislation, study of legal methodologies and mechanisms that contribute to the sustainable development of cities;
- Promotion of international activities aimed

at ensuring the good quality of housing and sustainable urban development;

- Intensification of cooperation in order to improve the public management in urban economy;
- Implementation of global programs and strategies in the field of development of high-tech, environmentally friendly, disaster-resistant, socially adapted cities.

Pakistan, Italy agree to strengthen bilateral ties

Pakistan and Italy have agreed to enhance people-to-people contacts and strengthen bilateral ties between the two countries.

The understanding came during a meeting between Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani and Italian Ambassador to Pakistan Andreas Ferrarese in Islamabad. The two sides discussed a wide range of issues of mutual interest, including bilateral relations, economic cooperation, and regional security. The Chairman appreciated the positive role of Italy in promoting peace and stability in the region and expressed the hope for greater collaboration between the two countries. The Italian Ambassador expressed his country's keen interest in further enhancing economic and trade ties with Pakistan. He also reiterated Italy's support in Pakistan's efforts to achieve sustainable economic growth and development.





By Tariq Khalil

Ever since the partition of India as long as Nehru family and later on the Congress continued to rule India the facade of secularism was presented to the world. Gradual decay in the governance of Congress. Later, during coalition governments Congress gradually lost the semblance of secularism. After the murder of Gandhi by Rss man, now a hero, RSS remain banned in India, revived gradually it continued to work at the grassroots level to convert Hindu population towards Hindutva.

The ideology mooring of India is now getting converted into the mode of Hindutva as part of long term RSS agenda. It is attracting the young men in the rural and urban masses. There is no doubt that Congress while projecting the facade of secularism always promoted the basic concepts of Hindutva. Even before partition when Congress was in power after 1936 elections, they introduced all Hindu rituals in the schools even for the Muslims. Bande Matram song was introduced even for the school children. The text books in the school were changed. When Congress resigned from the government as protest, the Muslim League and the Muslims of India offered a deliverance day.

Interestingly Modi government is trying to establish that India is the land of Hindus based on the premise of Hindu religion. It is an entirely false premise, even educated in the India believe so. Nirad C Choudhry way back in 1940s completely rejected that there is anything called Hindu religion comparable to Christians or Muslims. There's no association of Hinduism with religion. This concept crept into when European orientalist started examining the religion of India. They concluded Hindus had no other name option for whole complex religious beliefs prevalent in India. What Indians worship is a jumble of different ideas, creeds, rituals and practices. British named it Hindu in 1876 census.

Marginalised Indian Muslims

Though renowned professor Pandit Shiv Kissan Kaul fail to authenticate what is Hinduism. The Pakistan was the result of complete intolerance by the Hindus vis a vis Muslim existence in India. In spite of the fact Muslim ruled subcontinent for 1200 years till 1857 they never persecuted the Hindus. When the British came in the subcontinent, to perpetuate the rule, they found the whip of the religion easy way to divide and rule communities in India. For them it was a successful policy.

Now, in the 21st century India under BJP and shadow of RSS has started a new campaign to marginalize Indian Muslims. In the last decades Congress practiced the Hindutva under the façade of secularism. BJP under the RSS philosophy believed in violence and elimination of Muslims by force. The mosque were demolished and later series of such actions continued. Mosques are being raised to ground to erect Hindu temples.

The cow slaughtering is totally banned. Anyone who violated the ban were not only prosecuted but lynched by the mobs. All this coercion failed. Recently Modi government has changed the policy. They are subjected to lot of criticism internationally after passing the registration act as well as revocation of article 370 in Kashmir followed by intense human rights violations. Although Liaquat Nehru Pact empowers Pakistan to seek explanation from the Indian government, the treatment of Muslim minorities. Our weakness Pakistan failed to raise this issue.

Today the Muslim population in India is almost 16% yet in the hierarchy of the government and in other areas of employment even two percent Muslims are not given jobs. We have Amit Shah's statement on record, bizarre, the employment of Muslims for jobs are never restricted, yet one can understand when you talk of jobs these are not the government jobs. In civil services and in defence services the Muslims have been gradually marginalized and are less than 1%.

Therefore, BJP has come out with a new strategy to use multiple tools to marginalize the Muslim in the Indian society which is predominantly Hinduism. Firstly, they have already organized MRM a Muslim body within RSS. Apparently Muslim' but it is controlled by the Hindu hierarchy within RSS. It is the soft face of RSS. Earlier it was not possible for Muslims who were barred to get even an apartment on rent in reasonable posh area of any big city. Castigation and threats are the common methodology of the RSS. Internally RSS and earlier Congress had examined the elimination of Muslims from Spain. Fortunate for Muslims, they are large

minority and cannot be eliminated in modern time. Answer, marginalize them and make them irrelevant with the body of India, politically and socially. The policy is different in different regions. In Kashmir, Israeli model is adopted. In central India BJP and RSS leadership new fond love is visible. In south, Muslims are relatively better off. And atmosphere is created that with Muslim rising population is pitched against Dalits that they are in danger. This is an effort to create clash between the two communities to achieve RSS goal. It will also be possible to win away Dalit's embracing Islam. Thus, a pliant strategy is adopted to ensure clash of Dalits and the Muslims. Ironically BJP has frozen the constitution to achieve their own ends.

Indian leadership including all parties are quite aware that India is an unnatural entity. This was stated by a scholar Ramachandra many decades back. It is still true. Will India survive as a natural one state in spite of its economic growth and financial might. The answer is no, USSR was much bigger in entity but not survived because it was also an unnatural entity. Similar is the case with the earlier empires. RSS, three prong strategy is adopted, one, woo the Muslims especially clergy and influential Muslim leaders.. Interfaith dialogue and marriages are encouraged. RSS to support downtrodden Muslim segments. Two, rewrite the history of India. Hindu warriors who fought against Muslims are projected winners. A special RSS cell is working from last may years. The impact is visible on Facebook and other social media. Three, names of the cities on Muslim names are being changed to Hindu names. Even big cities are not spared, like Allahabad. With passage of time, next generation will know what rewritten history tell the youth.

The external diplomacy by India is on its optimum, to depict Pakistan on the brink of breakup, economically, socially, ethnically and militarily. This to force Indian Muslims look inwards. As they will be better off economically, socially. Geo strategic reality, Peace is only possible in subcontinent with strong Pakistan. It must forge alliances with Bangladesh and other neighbouring countries to ensure these are not engulfed by Hindutva. Unfortunately, Pakistan is deep slumber, politically polarized and failing in the austerity and management required at this moment to get out of the mess it has landed itself in. Pakistan has potential to be engine of growth and peace regionally and internationally.

The author, a retired Brigadier, is a decorated veteran of 1965 and 1971 wars and is a senior TV analyst and opinion writer. Courtesy to Pakistan Observer.

Indonesian Embassy Stall Attracted Mass Audience at Gandhara Civilization Festival 2023

By Mian Fazal Elahi, Agency

The Embassy of Indonesia in Islamabad is participating in a seven-day Gandhara Civilization Festival 2023, which commenced in Taxila and is ongoing in Rawalpindi starting from 29th January 2023 to 4th February 2023. The week-long festival is organized by the Rawalpindi Arts Council (RAC) which aims at promoting Pakistan as a custodian of the Gandhara Civilisation to encourage religious tourism as a global symbol of peace and harmony.

The opening ceremony was attended by the Indonesian Ambassador Mr. Adam Tugio, senior government officials, the media community, International and nationally renowned artists, folk musicians, and people from all walks of life. More than 30 stalls are set up which includes sculpture, stone carving, gemstones, handmade paintings, and Gandhara art to highlight the heritage of the existence of Gandhara civilization in Pakistan.

Ambassador Tugio appreciated RAC's efforts in hosting the festival, which will boost Pakistan's soft image among Buddhist nations and promotes religious tourism in Pakistan. He also stated that Pakistan has a rich heritage and history of the Gandhara civilization. The Indonesian Embassy displayed a vibrant stall that attracted a mass audience. It also featured a 3D model of Borobudur temple which is the largest Buddhist temple in the world, as well as an exquisite collection of traditional Indonesian batik and Pakistani Ajrak designs to highlight the cultural similarities between Indonesia and Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, Director General Punjab Arts Council, Mr. Muhammad Mehboob Alam said, "The main objective of the festival is to highlight the old civilization of the region and to inform the young generation about the country's history of art and culture." Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Mr. Liaqat Ali Chatta stated, "The word "Gandhara" means "land of fragrances." We shall spread the fragrance of tolerance in our country through these gestures, which will stand out as a message of peace and love for humanity. The event brought together a display of Gandhara artifacts in Pakistan, a screening of the documentary on Buddhist heritage, book fair, traditional folk dances and musical performances, a Sufi night, and a display of Buddhist artifacts.





PAKISTAN'S FIRST-EVER DIGITAL CENSUS LAUNCHED WITH GREAT SUCCESS

By Saeed Yousafzai, Agency

Pakistan Bureau of Statistics started the 7th Housing and Population census process on February 20, 2023, with an option to self-enumerate through the specially designed <https://self.pbs.gov.pk> portal. The response from the public has been great with over 4 million people visiting the portal in just a few days. The self-enumeration option will continue till March 3, 2023, while the field enumeration will start on March 1, 2023.

While speaking at a press conference held in Islamabad, Official Spokesperson of PBS and Member (Support Services/Resource Management), Mr. Muhammad Sarwar Gondal shared that “Pakistan is making history with the first-ever digital census and Pakistan Bureau of Statistics shares with great pride that the people are participating actively and stakeholders are appreciating and supporting the exercise.”

He said that as with any first-time technology initiative, there are some minor issues that are being reported, which have been communicated to NADRA, who is taking care of the technology solutions behind the census. Mr Gondal was grateful for the positive feedback as it is helping NADRA improve their systems.

Responding to a question regarding concerns being raised on the process from Sindh, in particular Karachi, Balochistan and a few other quarters, Mr Sarwar Gondal, Member SSRM, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics shared that prior to the census extensive and intensive consultations were held at levels, especially with provincial stakeholders to explain the



complete digital process. The apprehensions being raised are due to a lack of understanding of what the census process entails. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics is once again engaging with the stakeholders to explain the facts and clear all misunderstandings to ensure that the census is being held in a transparent manner, counting each and every one living in Pakistan, at the location they are living in. It is for this reason that a digitized methodology was chosen for this census.

Further explaining the census objective, Mr Gondal shared that “as per the General Statistics Reorganization Act 2011 and UN Conventions, census is a national duty to inform policymaking, future planning and development for the progress of the country. Participation in the census is mandatory and providing reliable information is a civic duty for everyone living in Pakistan.”

Member SSRM, Mr Muhammad Sarwar

Gondal, emphasized that spreading fake news or misinformation for any purpose is a criminal offence, or politicising it or using it for agenda setting is dishonesty to the country and to the people. Census is our national duty and together we have to make this first-ever digital census a global success.

He said that “we urge each and every one to actively participate in the census either through self-enumeration at <https://self.pbs.gov.pk> or with the help of enumerators who will be visiting door to door from March 1, 2023.”

Staying true to the principles of honesty and integrity, fulfilling its main mandate and the decision of the Council of Common Interest (CCI), Pakistan Bureau of Statistics is conducting the first-ever digital census with the objective of providing credible, transparent and timely data for decision-making. The digitization of the census guarantees transparency, accountability and efficiency.

Pakistan's first Artificial Intelligence Summit concluded

Pakistan's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) Summit organized by a leading end-to-end digital services company 10Pearls concluded at the Pak-China Friendship Center.

The event was a massive success, with more than 1500 registrations, comprising professionals, students, enthusiasts and entrepreneurs.

The AI Summit, first launched in 2019, aims to 'explore the transformative world of AI', share the latest developments in AI, recognize innovations by emerging AI entrepreneurs, power conversations with leading international

and local AI experts, and provide hands-on knowledge about various AI tools, technologies, and techniques.

The 2023 edition of AI Summit, held at the ITCN Asia, featured 30-plus eminent speakers who conducted enlightening tech talks, stimulating panel discussions, and engaging fireside chats. The Summit also hosted hands-on workshops and showcased demos of new innovations by emerging AI start-ups.

Syeda Sana Hussain, Senior Director of People and Programs, 10Pearls said that the AI Summit

2023 was a huge success! It garnered massive footfall; the conference track and workshops were fully packed with a super-charged and enthusiastic audience.

All the emerging AI start-ups that showcased their products received phenomenal response, attracting the interest of potential investors and the public alike. This is the incredible success of AI Summit 2023 shows the transformative role AI can play in addressing the complex challenges of today's world, and 10Pearls is thrilled to be at the forefront of leading in innovation."





By Amb. Naghmana A Hashmi

The US-China controversy over the shooting down of a Chinese weather balloon over US territory continues to feature prominently in world news media and once again shows growing US-China tension.

The saga captivated the public provoking fevered debate on social media as the United States described it as a brazen act of espionage and China as a misdirected meteorological mission.

The saga began with a suspected Chinese weather balloon that drifted across the United States and was shot down by the US military off the coast of South Carolina on 04 February 2023, further ratcheting geopolitical tension between the United States and China.

According to China, it lost control of a research balloon used mostly for meteorology research over the Pacific. Beijing maintained that its balloon was a civilian research vessel mistakenly blown off course, and that Washington overreacted.

But according to Pentagon spokesperson, the balloon was carrying sensitive technology to conduct surveillance over the United States.

Chinese government clearly stated that it was “firmly opposed” to the balloon being shot down, and intended to “take countermeasures against relevant US entities that has undermined our sovereignty and security.”

It was not specified what those countermeasures could include or what US entities would be targeted. However, a US balloon was shot down by China in its territory and accused the US of “illegally” flying balloons into its airspace and charged that US high altitude balloons flew over its Xinjiang and Tibet regions.

China’s Foreign Ministry said that it was “common” for US balloons to illegally enter the airspace of other nations and that US high-altitude balloons had flown over China without permission more than 10 times since last year.

The US has obviously denied the claim. The US has already taken some steps against China

Balloon saga

for the stray balloon, which it maintains was used for surveillance, issuing sanctions against six Chinese tech and aviation companies and passing a House resolution that formally condemned the Chinese government for deploying the balloon and called it “a brazen violation of United States sovereignty.”

According to reports, Chinese weather balloons have passed through US airspace before at least three times during the Trump Administration and once earlier during the Biden Administration.

However, they did not become an international incident as the American general public did not see them, but this time the balloon was sighted by the public causing panic and speculation and compromised the scheduled meeting between the US A and China at the foreign ministers level.

Both China and the US were hoping that the visit of Blinkin to Beijing would consolidate a recent thaw in tension following the November 2022 meeting in Bali between Presidents Biden and President Xi.

It is important for both parties to talk in order to tackle important and highly sensitive issues such as Taiwan and China’s support for Russia over the war in Ukraine among others that not only affect peace and security of the world in general.

The disruption that this heightened tension and competition is causing to world trade and economic interests is another worrisome matter for the international community.

Following the tension on House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visit to Taiwan, the balloon saga clearly demonstrates that China-US competition is here to stay and has the potential to undermine peace and stability particularly in the Asia Pacific region.

The United States has substantially expanded its defence budgets incorporating new technologies in its already massive defence capabilities.

In the Pacific, Australia at the behest of the US and as member of QUAD is now predominantly focusing on the Pacific Islands, Japan, situated off the eastern coast of China with difficult bilateral relations with China, after almost 80 years is being encouraged to expand its defence budget gradually coursing it to abandon its peaceful orientation.

In the North East of China we see South Korea clearly demonstrated its preference for the United States in case of any confrontation while India has been chosen to be the strategic

partner of the US in the Indian Ocean Region continues to heighten tension with China and Pakistan, the all-weather strategic cooperative partner of China.

On the other hand, security tension between the United States and its allies and partners, and China also display signs of escalation. All these political moves by the US clearly betray its desire to encircle China to, if not stop, at least to retard the political and economic rise of China.

This balloon saga is another demonstration of the growing fear of China’s phenomenal rise and the imminent possibility of China emerging as the most powerful state in the world economically, politically and strategically.

It also manifests the insatiable desire of the US to continuously have an enemy to fight against. When there is none, they ensure one is created, in this case China.

Last year the House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s visit heightened the possibility of the dormant war theatre opening in the Straits of Taiwan, destabilizing the entire region and beyond. Now the controversy over a weather balloon has further made the China-US relationship completely unpredictable, unstable and volatile.

In a similar incident 22 years ago when an American spy plane and a Chinese fighter collided 70 miles off the Southern coast of China near the Hainan Island the sides agreed that they would improve their crisis management.

The balloon incident has however, exposed the deterioration of communication between Washington and Beijing on crises management. In order to avoid unnecessary controversy and tension it would be proper to agree to standard SOPs.

Any military conflict between the US and China would be disastrous as China is now almost at par with the US and is a far more formidable military adversary than before.

It is also a fact that such a confrontation would throw up challenges for countries that are already situated in turbulent region and are desirous of maintaining good and stable relations with both the US and China.

It is, therefore, in the interest of humanity that such a devastating conflict is avoided by both sides. Maintenance of peace and security is the collective responsibility of all parties.

The writer is Former Ambassador of Pakistan to the People’s Republic of China, European Union and Ireland



Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the occasion of the

31st anniversary of the Khojaly genocide

February 26, 2023 marks the 31st anniversary of the horrible genocide committed by the armed forces of Armenia in Khojaly. During the decades-long aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, one of the gravest crimes committed against the civilian population and one of the most tragic pages of Azerbaijan's history was the genocide against the population of Khojaly town, where more than 7,000 people lived before the conflict. Within the framework of Armenia's occupation policy, as a part of premediated plan, before the Khojaly genocide, Azerbaijanis were killed with special cruelty and massacres were committed against them in settlements such as Baganis Ayrim, Garadagli, Meshali, Karkijahan, Malibeyli and Garadaghli.

From October 1991, town of Khojaly was completely surrounded by Armenia's armed forces. Over the night of 25-26 February 1992, following massive artillery bombardment, Armenia's armed forces with the help of the former USSR's 366th Motorized Rifle Regiment, mostly comprised of Armenians, occupied Khojaly.

As a result of the occupation, 5,379 inhabitants of the town were forcefully expelled. 613 people, including 63 children, 106 women and 70 elderly citizens, were brutally murdered. 1,275 were captured and taken hostage and were tortured, and 487 were injured. The fate of 150 of those captured, including 68 women and 26 children still remains unknown. The actions of the Armenian armed forces tore families apart. 8 families were completely wiped out. 130 children lost 1 parent and 25 children lost both parents. The Khojaly genocide, the

indiscriminate killing of the civilian population, was part of the policy of ethnic hatred, racial discrimination and systematic violence carried out by Armenia against Azerbaijan for many years at the state level. The Khojaly genocide and other crimes committed by Armenia during its aggression against the Republic of Azerbaijan, including war crimes and crimes against humanity, constitute serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. These include violations of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and others.

So far, the national legislative bodies of 18 countries, as well as 24 States of the USA, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Organization of Turkic States have adopted a number of resolutions and decisions condemning the massacre of civilians in Khojaly and characterizing it as a crime against humanity and an act of genocide. In its judgment of 22 April 2010, the European Court of Human Rights arrived at an important conclusion with respect to the crimes committed in Khojaly, denouncing the behavior of those carrying out the atrocities as "acts of particular gravity which may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity".

Under international law, states have a responsibility to investigate atrocities such as those committed by Armenian forces at Khojaly and prosecute the perpetrators. However, to date none of those responsible for the crimes committed at Khojaly have been prosecuted by

Armenia.

In a telling admission of culpability, Armenia's then Defence Minister and ex-President, Serzh Sargsyan, was quoted by the British journalist Thomas de Waal, as saying, "before Khojaly, the Azerbaijanis thought that ... the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against the civilian population. We were able to break that [stereotype]" (Thomas de Waal, *Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War* (New York and London, New York University Press, 2003), p. 172).

Deliberate targeting of the Azerbaijani civilian population continued during military operations conducted by Armenia from September 27 to November 10, 2020. Purposefully targeting the civilian population and civilian infrastructure of Azerbaijani cities such as Ganja, Barda, Terter, which are located at a considerable distance from the war zone, Armenia resorted to the same terror tactics as they had in 1992. This time with the use of multiple launch rocket systems and cluster munitions, Armenia once again unlawfully targeted and killed peaceful Azerbaijani civilians. The Republic of Azerbaijan believes that continuous measures taken at the national level as well as under international law, will serve to end impunity and bring to justice those responsible for serious crimes committed during Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan.

There have to be a legal assessment on the Khojaly genocide and those who committed this terrible tragedy should receive its proper punishment. We engrave the victims of the Khojaly tragedy in our national memory and honor their reminiscence. Rest in Peace!

In conjunction with Innovation Month, UAE Embassy in Islamabad organizes “Future Builder Ideas Contest 2023” in cooperation with PM Youth Program, in presence of H.E. Attaullah Tarer and H.E. Shaza Fatima, SAPM for Youth Affairs, participated by number of universities & start-ups. Mr. Rashid Abdul Rehman AlZamar, Chargé d'affaires of UAE Embassy awarded the participants.



Mr. Rashid Abdul Rehman Al Zamar, Chargé d'Affairs of the UAE Embassy in Islamabad, receives H.E Arif Usmanov the Ambassador of Uzbekistan, as regional issues of common interest and ways to enhance cooperation were discussed.



Mr. Rashid Abdul Rehman AlZamar, Chargé d'Affairs at the UAE Embassy in Islamabad, participated in the Punjab Food Exhibition organized by the Punjab Food Authority in Lahore & briefed on the major Pakistani food companies and investment opportunities in this field.



Embassy of United Arab Emirates, Islamabad in coordination with National University of Science and Technology has conducted a two session for the students of Sheikh Zayed International Academy by the name of “Young Innovators Program”





Regional Connectivity Desk for Central Asia & Azerbaijan inaugurated at RCCI

By M. Saeed Yousafzai

On 20th February 2023, the inauguration ceremony of the Regional Connectivity Desk for Central Asia and Azerbaijan was held at the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI).

Mr. Saqib Rafiq, President, Leaders of RCCI, Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman of the Asian Institute of Eco-Civilization Research and Development, Ambassadors of Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan,

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, representatives of the business community and mass media took part in the inauguration ceremony.

Speakers of the event advocated the enhancement of trade-economic cooperation in the region through regional connectivity and networking at the chamber of commerce and industry level.

For this purpose, a specific Desk was established in the RCCI that will facilitate business-to-

business contacts in the region to promote trade, economic, and investment ties.

At the exhibition Stand of the Desk, along with demonstrated materials regarding regional countries, there were also displayed magazines about Neutral Turkmenistan, its positive foreign policy, international significant events taking place in the country, as well as brochures on Turkmen state and private companies.





China, Pakistan strongly committed to reviving CPEC in letters, spirit: Ahsan

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Federal Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiates Ahsan Iqbal said that China and Pakistan are strongly committed to reviving the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in letters and spirit.

He said this while chairing a high-level meeting to review the progress of the ongoing CPEC projects, said a press release issued here.

Project Director CPEC Dr Nadeem Javed, representatives from the Ministry of Foreign

projects.

It was decided that the concerned authorities and departments from China and Pakistan would actively pursue their part furnishing all needful to ensure there is no further delay to cause a slowdown.

The meeting was also briefed about the current status of Allama Iqbal Industrial City, Rashakai, Bostan, and Dhabeji SEZs and Gwadar Port Authority, and Gwadar Free Zone. Meanwhile, the representatives of the Balochistan government apprised the participants of the water supply schemes, precision training complex, and situation of electricity supply, Gwadar University, maintenance, dredging, and 3000 solar system installation in Gwadar.

Ahsan Iqbal said that the cooperation would be further expanded to more sectors.

The minister maintained that Gwadar and its inhabitants have been the top priority among the entire portfolio of the CPEC and even today the government is committed to salvaging the problems this city and its citizen are facing.

He instructed the concerned authorities to make sure no further delays are witnessed in completing the water supply schemes and the projects related to energy and education. He believed that Gwadar had the potential to emerge as one of the world's top port cities duly

equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure, a modernized and technologically advanced port with enhanced capacity, and all necessary ingredients of socio-economic well-being.

To avoid the overlapping of courses and skills offered at three vocational training institutes in Gwadar, Ahsan Iqbal directed the concerned

Gwadar had the potential to emerge as one of the world's top port cities: Ahsan Iqbal

The cooperation would be further expanded to more sectors: Ahsan Iqbal

Affairs, line ministries, Board of Investment, Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing, National Highway Authority, provincial governments of Sindh and Punjab, LESCO, CPPAG, and KPEZDMC, Peshawar attended the meeting.

The Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing briefed the participants on the status of ML-1 and KCR

stakeholders to chalk out a comprehensive plan, clearly defining the roles and skills offered at these institutes and eventually linking them to the Gwadar authority.

To ensure this non-overlapping of offered skills, an integrated plan was directed by the minister for enhanced productivity.

Ahsan Iqbal also directed the concerned departments to convene meetings of the Joint Working Groups on Energy and Infrastructure so that the work on projects related to these domains could be expedited.

Implementation on CPEC projects to be expedited

By Mian Fazal Elahi

Pakistan and China reiterated to further expedite the successful implementation of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects for mutual benefits of the two countries.

The reiteration was made during a call on meeting of Charge'd Affairs, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Ms. Pang Chunxue with Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, according to press statement issued by finance ministry.

The two sides also discussed the progress on CPEC projects and resolved to accelerate and enhance mutual cooperation.

They discussed about further deepening these ties in economic as well as financial sectors, the statement added.

On the occasion, the Finance Minister highlighted the long-standing and deep-rooted brotherly ties between both countries and shared that China and Pakistan have strong bilateral relations in a number of



economic avenues.

He commended the support of Chinese leadership to Pakistan in its challenging times and shared various economic measures taken by the government to bring the economy on progressive path.

Ms. Pang Chunxue appreciated the policy steps

taken by the government for sustaining and boosting the fiscal and monetary stability.

She shared good will gestures and assured the continuous support of Chinese government to Pakistan and added that her government stands with people of Pakistan and is willing to provide every possible assistance.



Shenzhen to build 10,000 5G base stations in 2023

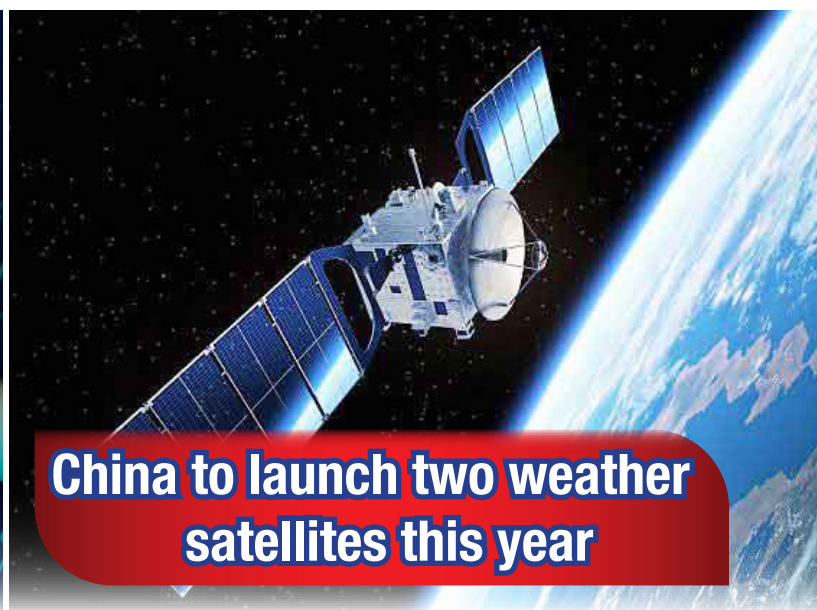
By Monitoring

China's southern metropolis of Shenzhen will build 10,000 5G base stations in 2023, local authorities have said.

By the end of 2023, the 5G base stations will be distributed at a density of 42 per 10,000 people and 37 per square km in the city, according to an action plan issued by the municipal industry and information technology bureau.

Since 2019, Shenzhen has constructed over 65,000 5G base stations, with over 10 million 5G users, said the plan.

As a frontrunner in China's high-tech industrial development, Shenzhen boasts a host of Chinese startups and tech heavyweights, including Huawei and Tencent.



China to launch two weather satellites this year

By M. Saeed Yousafzai

China will launch the Fengyun 3F and Fengyun 3G weather satellites this year, according to the China Meteorological Administration.

The Fengyun 3F is expected to be launched in August. It will focus on making imaging observations of the Earth's surface, which are mainly used for weather forecasting, environmental research and disaster monitoring.

The Fengyun 3G is scheduled to take off in April and will help monitor heavy precipitation in severe weather systems, ecns.cn reported.

China has so far launched 19 Fengyun meteorological satellites, seven of which are currently in orbit. They provide data and services to 126 countries and regions around the world.



Pak-China naval drills contributing to safeguarding sea lines, CPEC

By Mian Fazal Elahi

The Pakistan-China multinational maritime exercise in Karachi is expected to enhance the participants' interoperability against instabilities and threats in the Indian Ocean region and safeguard vital international sea lines of communication and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

A grand opening ceremony for the five-day AMAN-23 exercise was held on Friday morning at the Pakistan Navy Dockyard, in front of the PNS Taimur, a Type 054A/P guided missile frigate that China built for Pakistan. Honor guards raised the participating countries' national flags, while balloons and pigeons representing peace were released into the skies. Under the motto "Together for Peace", this is the eighth edition of the AMAN exercises since 2007. It is divided into two phases: harbor and sea.

The harbor phase involves seminars, operational discussions, and professional demonstrations among other preparations, and the sea phase includes tactical maneuvers, anti-piracy, counterterrorism, search and rescue, live-fire shooting as well as air defense exercises, and will be followed by an international fleet review.

AMAN is a message of peace and of being together with our friends and partners from all over the world, including China, Vice Admiral Ovais Ahmed Bilgrami, Commander of the Pakistan Fleet, told the Global Times on the sidelines at the opening ceremony. "We want to build mutual capacities and mutual understandings so that we can all work together to ensure peace and security at sea," he said.

"China has been our greatest friend. There's

no doubt that whatever the future holds for us at sea, it would not be possible without China. The China and Pakistan friendship is going to prosper further at sea," said Commodore Sohail Ahmed Azmie, Commander of the Auxiliary and Mine Squadron of the Pakistan Navy.

He told the Global Times at the event that the Pakistan Navy has been operating with the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy,

Initiated by the Pakistan Navy, PIMEC aims to showcase the potential of Pakistan's maritime sector and draw attention to the contribution that the maritime industry can make to the development of the blue economy

and in the future, this trend is going to be enhanced.

The participating vessel from China is the Nanning, a Type 052D guided missile destroyer that is part of the PLA Navy's 43rd escort task force to the Gulf of Aden and waters off Somalia, which set out from a naval port in Zhanjiang, South China's Guangdong Province on January 10.

It is the Nanning's first time participating in such a mission. The domestically developed warship has received an upgraded propulsion

system among many other modifications, the PLA Navy said in a press release at the time.

The Nanning arrived at Karachi, and was met with a warm welcome from the host country.

Admiral M Amjad Khan Niazi, Chief of the Naval Staff of the Pakistan Navy, told the Global Times in an exclusive interview prior to the exercise that there are a number of non-traditional threats that prevail in the wider Indian Ocean region such as terrorism, piracy, drug smuggling, and arms trafficking.

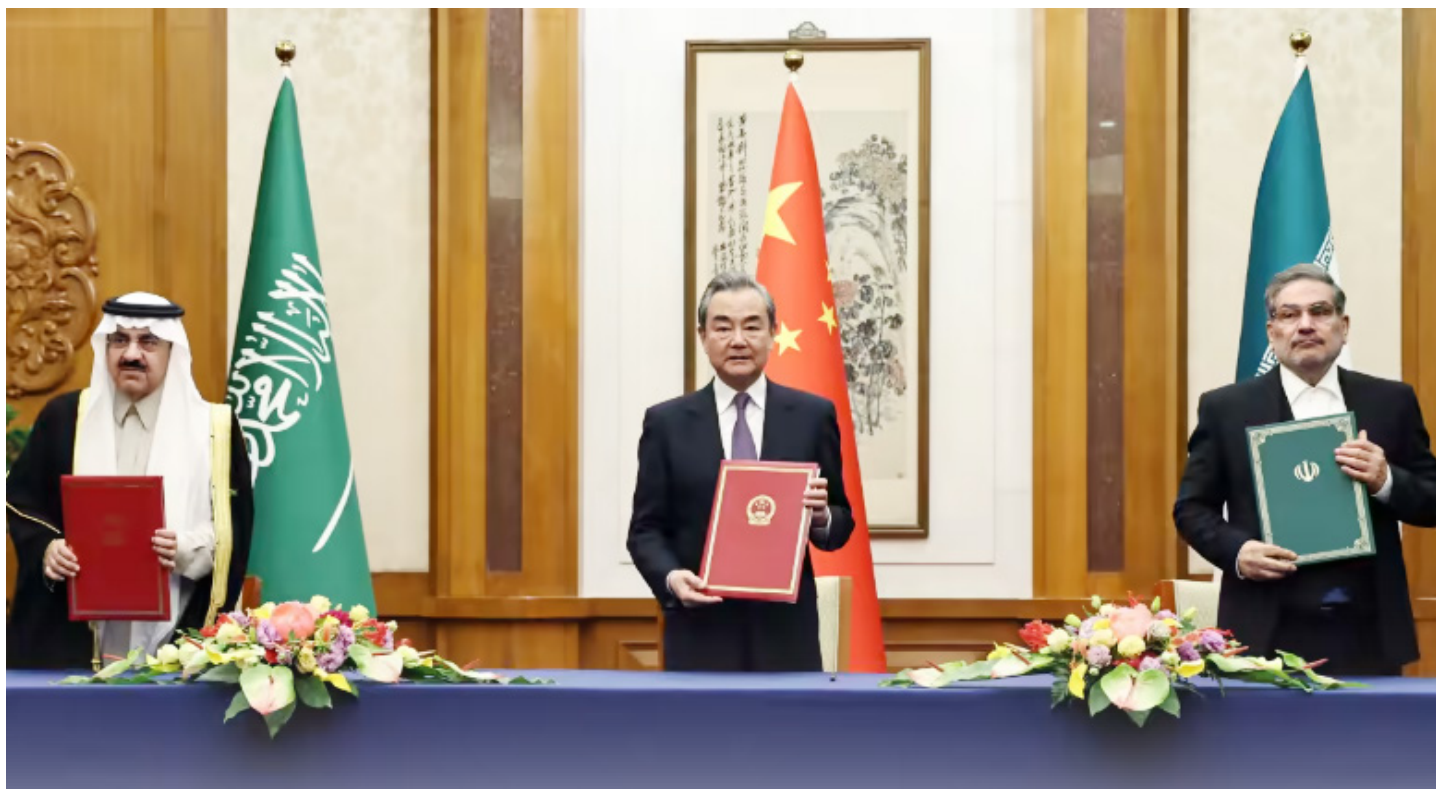
The vastness of the oceans makes the maritime arena an attractive avenue for illegal activities, and no country has the capability to singlehandedly counter these challenges.

The exercise is conducted with the aim of developing synergy between participating naval units to tackle maritime security challenges by enhancing interoperability between regional and extra-regional navies at different levels of technological prowess, he said.

As a maritime nation, Pakistan has substantial stakes in keeping its seas safe and secure, including the operationalization of the CPEC project and the global energy highway, the Global Times learned at the exercise.

The first edition of the Pakistan International Maritime Expo and Conference (PIMEC) was also launched in Karachi, concurrently with the AMAN-23 exercises.

Initiated by the Pakistan Navy, PIMEC aims to showcase the potential of Pakistan's maritime sector and draw attention to the contribution that the maritime industry can make to the development of the blue economy.



China Takes the Lead in Promoting Regional Stability: Saudi Arabia and Iran Agree to Restore Diplomatic Ties

By Mian Fazal Elahi

In a historic move towards peace and diplomacy, the People's Republic of China, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Islamic Republic of Iran have released a joint statement announcing an agreement to resume diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The following is the full text of a joint statement released by the People's Republic of China, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

According to Joint Trilateral Statement by the People's Republic of China, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Islamic Republic of Iran:

In response to the noble initiative of His Excellency President Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, of China's support for developing good neighborly relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran;

And based on the agreement between His Excellency President Xi Jinping and the leaderships of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran, whereby the People's Republic of China would host and sponsor talks between the Kingdom of Saudi





Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran;

Proceeding from their shared desire to resolve the disagreements between them through dialogue and diplomacy, and in light of their brotherly ties;

Adhering to the principles and objectives of the Charters of the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and international conventions and norms;

The delegations from the two countries held talks on 6-10 March 2023 in Beijing - the delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia headed by His Excellency Dr. Musaad bin Mohammed Al-Aiban, Minister of State, Member of the Council of Ministers, and National Security Advisor, and the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran headed by His Excellency Admiral Ali Shamkhani, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Saudi and Iranian sides expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the Republic of Iraq and the Sultanate of Oman for hosting rounds of dialogue that took place between both sides during the years 2021-2022.

The two sides also expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the leadership and government of the People's Republic of China for hosting and sponsoring the talks, and

the efforts they placed towards its success.

The three countries announce that an agreement has been reached between the

The two sides expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the leadership and government of the People's Republic of China for hosting and sponsoring the talks, and the efforts they placed towards its success.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran, that includes an agreement to resume diplomatic relations between them and re-open their embassies and missions within a period not exceeding two months, and the agreement includes their affirmation of the respect for the sovereignty of states and the non-interference in internal affairs of states.

They also agreed that the ministers of

foreign affairs of both countries shall meet to implement this, arrange for the return of their ambassadors, and discuss means of enhancing bilateral relations.

They also agreed to implement the Security Cooperation Agreement between them, which was signed on 22/1/1422 (H), corresponding to 17/4/2001, and the General Agreement for Cooperation in the Fields of Economy, Trade, Investment, Technology, Science, Culture, Sports, and Youth, which was signed on 2/2/1419 (H), corresponding to 27/5/1998.

The three countries expressed their keenness to exert all efforts towards enhancing regional and international peace and security.

The statement was co-signed by Representative for the People's Republic of China Wang Yi, Member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and Director of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee, Representative for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Musaad bin Mohammed Al-Aiban, Minister of State, Member of the Council of Ministers, and National Security Advisor, and Representative for the Islamic Republic of Iran Ali Shamkhani, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council.



UAE Embassy organizes 10km Eco-Friendly Marathon

By M. Saeed Yousafzai

The UAE Embassy in Islamabad, in coordination with the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, organized an eco-friendly 10km Marathon to highlight the importance of Mainstreaming Sustainable Development and Climate Resilience for Collective Action.

A large number of athletes from different nationalities, officials, ambassadors and representatives of the diplomatic community participated in this healthy and eco-friendly 10 km run on Saturday 25th February 2023 at Constitution Avenue, Islamabad.

Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Al Zaabi, the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the occasion said that the Marathon and remarkable participations from all walks of life reflects the longstanding brotherhood, partnerships, and shared values between the two brotherly countries. Ambassador Al Zaabi added, that as the UAE is hosting the largest UN Conference COP28 this year, the UAE will focus on building bridges to advance international efforts that will support the Global South and countries that are most

vulnerable to climate change such as the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and finding practical solutions that ensure energy security while reducing emissions. The Ambassador stressed on economic development and conservation of environment as the UAE will focus at COP28 on ensuring inclusive sustainable progress that protects communities most impacted by climate change, and appealed the civil society to play its role in driving "Climate Action" across

key sectors to reduce emissions and build resilience.

He extended his thanks to the Government of Pakistan, Prime Minister Youth Program, Islamabad Administration and Gerry's Visa for the coordination and facilitations extended for the successful organization of the Marathon, and to Islamabad Running Club, Pakistan Red Crescent and SOS Children's village for their active participation in this Marathon.



Kyrgyz Envoy met with PM of Pakistan

President of Kyrgyz Republic can visit Pakistan before July 2023

By Monitoring

The President of the Kyrgyz Republic Sadyr Zhaparov is likely to visit from Pakistan in the first half of this year.

H.E. Ulanbek Totuiaev Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan announced this during his meeting with the met with the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif.

He added, during the meeting, the parties considered a wide range of topical issues of Kyrgyz-Pakistani bilateral cooperation, paying special attention to qualitative organizing upcoming visits and events at the highest and high levels, strengthening military-technical, trade-economic and cultural-humanitarian cooperation between the two countries, as well as the implementation of important regional projects, such as CASA-1000.

Ulanbek Totuiaev informed the Pakistani side about the interest of the Kyrgyz Republic in



the comprehensive development of interstate cooperation and proposed to intensify work on political contacts, increase the volume of mutual trade, intensify investment cooperation

and establish effective logistics routes between Central and South Asia.

The leader of the Kyrgyz Republic can visit Pakistan before July 2023.



Kazakh President to visit Pakistan after 20 years

The President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev will visit Pakistan this year, which will start a new chapter of trade and economic relations between the two countries. This was said by HE Yerzhan Kistafin, Ambassador of Kazakhstan while addressing the business community during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI).

The envoy said that the President of Kazakhstan is visiting Pakistan after 20 years, which will be a historic visit as 20 MoUs would be signed during his visit to further strengthen the bilateral cooperation in multiple fields between Kazakhstan and Pakistan.

He said that Kazakhstan is launching direct flights between Almaty and Lahore from April and Almaty and Karachi from May this year that would help promote B2B and P2P relations.

He invited the ICCI delegation to visit Kazakhstan to join the launch of direct flights. He appreciated the role of Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI for first-ever direct flights between the two countries.

He said a delegation of businesswomen of Pakistan would also visit Kazakhstan to explore business cooperation with Kazakh counterparts. He said that Kazakhstan intends to sign a transit trade agreement and agreement between the banking sectors of both countries that would

provide a legal framework to the business communities of both sides for bilateral trade promotion. He said that Kazakhstan provides Pakistan easy access to Eurasian and Central Asian markets and Pakistan should take advantage of this potential.

He said that a number of delegations from both sides would exchange visits this year that would take the bilateral relations of both countries to the next level. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) offered that ICCI would like to host a dinner reception in honour of the President of Kazakhstan during his visit to Pakistan.

Embassy of Kuwait celebrated 62nd anniversary of Independence and the 32nd anniversary of the liberation in Islamabad

Ambassador of Kuwait Nassar Abdulrahman J. Al-Mutairi hosted a grand reception to mark the country's 62nd Independence Day and the 32nd anniversary of the Liberation Day of the State of Kuwait in Islamabad. Pakistan's minister for power and energy Ghulam Distagir Khan was invited as the chief guest, and the event was attended by dignitaries, diplomats, members of the business community and civil society.



Fatherland Day of the Russian Federation Celebrated in Islamabad

Russian embassy hosted a reception to mark Fatherland day of the Russian Federation in Islamabad. Chief guest Vice Admiral Naveed Ashraf, Ambassador of the Russian Federation Danila Ganich, Defence Attache Col. Vadim N Fenchenko and others cut the cake to celebrate the Defender of the Fatherland Day of the Russian Federation. The event was attended by Armed Forces, diplomats, senior bureaucrats and senior journalists of capital.



260th Rising Day of Nepali Army celebrates in Islamabad

Nepal embassy hosted a reception to mark Army day in Islamabad. Chief Guest Lt General Shehbaz Khan, (ASFC) Army Strategic Force Command, Pakistan Army and Nepalese Ambassador, H.E. Tapas Udhakari and others cut the cake to celebrate the Army Day of the Nepal. Nepal's Army Day celebrations were attended by Islamabad-based diplomatic officials, representatives of international organizations, trade and tourism sectors, media, and friends of Nepal.





Serena Hotels hosted a networking breakfast to celebrate International Women's Day

Serena Hotels hosted a networking breakfast to celebrate International Women's Day to honour, appreciate, and laud women who have excelled through achieving success in their professional careers. The chief guest for the occasion was the First Lady, Begum Samina Arif Alvi. The invitees included members of the diplomatic community, representatives of international agencies, corporate sector, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Serena associates, and other women who have been striving to change behaviours for the betterment of women.





The 44th anniversary of the Iranian Islamic Revolution and the National Day of Iran celebrated

H.E. Syed Ali Hussaini, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran hosted an event to celebrate National Day and the 44th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in, Islamabad. The event was attended by dignitaries, diplomats, members of the business community and civil society.





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