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**Peace, security a
pre-requisite for
foreign investments**



**Surprised by
diverse history
of Pakistan**

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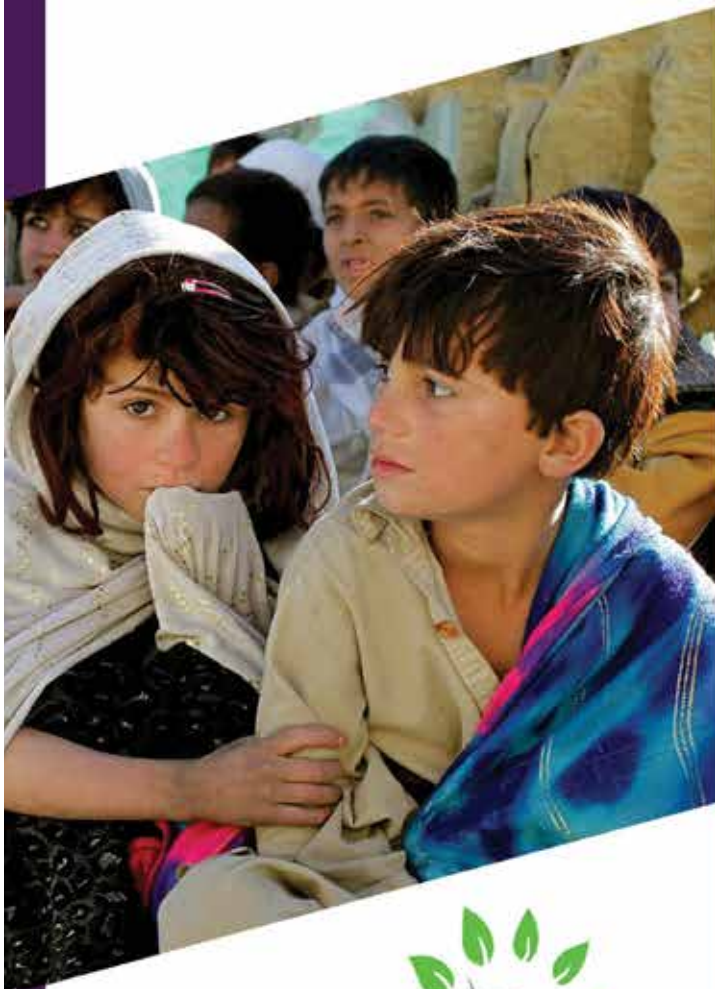


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Head Office

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Branch Offices

Karachi

Room No.14 &15, 3rd Floor, Kahkashan Mall,
Main Tanq Road, 172-1,Block-2, P.E.C.H.S.
Karachi. Tel: (+92-21) 34530626,34310478
Fax: (+92-21) 34531747
E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com

Lahore

F-4, Gulberg Centre,
Main Boulevard, Lahore.
Tel: (+92-42) 35758861, 35761085.
Fax: (+92-42) 35711420
E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com

Peshawar

Office No. C-9, 2nd Floor, Zaheer Plaza,
Latif Abad, Ring Road, Peshwar.
Tel: (+92-91) 2582778
Fax: (+92-91) 2582998
E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com

Kabul

House # 4, Street # 4,
Charahi Ansari Road, Shahr-e-Naw,
Kabul - Afghanistan.
Tel: +93 799021 773, 93 797595 808, 93 778468 268.
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Sarmad Ali
President / Jang Group



Nazafreen Saigol
Secretary General/Dawn Group



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www.centreline.com.pk

Editor-in-Chief
 Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

Executive Editor
 Mubashar Ahmad Bhatti

Deputy Editor
 Abid Raza

Founding Content Head
 Lt. Col Ihsan Piracha (R) (Late)

Advisor

Prof. Dr. Farid A. Khwaja

Legal Advisor

Raja Khurram Shahzad

(Advocate High Court)

Mohammad YahyaFarid

(Advocate)

Sub Editors

Farrukh Shehzad

M. Shaheen Qureshi

Saifullah Ansar

Bureau Chief Karachi

NazirSiyal

Chief Correspondent

Ather Javed Sufi

Online/ Web Editor

Mahnoor Ansar

Photo Journalists

Muhammad Shahid

Shahbaz Sindhu (Lahore)

Head Office: #11, Block 18-A

(Awan Plaza) G-8 Markaz,

Islamabad-Pakistan 44000

Tel: 051-2261960, Fax:

051-2280074 Cell: 0333-5203232

centrelinemag@gmail.com

Publisher: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

Printers: 051-5441 786.Com

Price Rs. 500/-

Pakistan's Largest Circulated Diplomatic Magazine

MEMBER ALL PAKISTAN NEWSPAPERS SOCIETY (APNA)

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Will the govt complete its five year term?



THE opposition parties that gathered on August 11, under the banner of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) resolved to give tough time to the government especially on the issues of the so-called electronic voting system. The govt, few days ago, unveiled Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) to be used in the next general elections. The opposition has unanimously rejected this idea arguing the govt has introduced yet another method of manipulating the elections. The opposition smells something fishy behind this idea as, according to it, the government did not take it into confidence on this particular issue.

The PDM is of the view the EVMs experience may not be successful in Pakistan until and unless they are tested and tried thoroughly. In last elections, according to the opposition, the powers that-be managed rigging through RTS, which at the eleventh hour went out of order and thus results were delayed abnormally. Now after that system stands fully exposed, the government now wants to try another one, the PDM believes. The govt must have taken on board all the electoral parties before introducing the EVMs because they are the stakeholders and thus they have every right to be part of a system that relates to the election process. The one sided approach perhaps has cast doubts. The govt says it wants to ensure that the next elections are flawless and held in a transparent manner. So, if that is the case then why not to take the opposition on board?

On the other hand, opposition parties are still groping in the dark when it comes to evolving a joint strategy against the government. At one point in time it became evident that the opposition may send the govt packing however after some manipulations and lucrative offers, the PPP – the main party in the PDM, torpedoed these efforts as it chose to dance to the tune of govt wishes. Thus PDM was rendered ineffective. The August 11 meeting sought to instill a new spirit into the PDM as PML N President Shehbaz Sharif re-surfaced on the scene. PML N, during past few months, has witnessed some internal rifts mainly because Shehbaz Sharif is not willing to move ahead in the light Nawaz Sharif philosophy. The latter believes in a head-on collision with the establishment while Shehbaz holds a diametrically different view on this issue. He believes, PML N can grow faster while being in good terms with the establishment, which, in the given scenario, seems to be a logical approach.

In one of his recent interviews Shehbaz Sharif openly admitted that in 2018 PML N could have come to power if it would have reached an understanding with the establishment. This is true to a great extent. Shehbaz Sharif as Prime Minister is accepted to all stakeholders. There was a risk in introducing Imran Khan and his team because of their being new in the field. However, when there was no deal with the PML N, PTI had to be elevated. The top PML N leadership is worried these days as it knows this tug-of-war within the party will lead them nowhere. Next year shall be the election year and still they have not been able to grapple with the internal differences. They genuinely believe, if they go to polls with a party that is badly fragmented and disjointed, it would simply allow PTI and others to beat them easily. Unlike, the PML N supreme leader Nawaz Sharif is said to have told Shehbaz that the establishment was setting him up in order to fracture the party. Sources say, Nawaz told his younger brother that offers of prime minster ship to him were nothing but bait. Once the party stands fractured, such offers shall also be withdrawn and he will be left in the lurch.

All said and done, one thing is for sure that the government is not going anywhere for another year. But Pakistan's history suggests that no prime minister has completed five year term. From the face of it, it appears as if Prime Minister Imran Khan may break this tradition, yet those close to power corridors still believe the tradition will not be broken. They say it is likely that the fresh elections are called before the end of the tenure of this government, maybe six months earlier, so if it happens the government and prime minister will not complete five years!!

Ansar

Chief Editor's Profile: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti is a career journalist. He started off as District Correspondent of Daily The Muslim in 1988 from Gujrat. Later he moved to Islamabad and joined Pakistan Observer as Sub-Editor / Op-ed Writer, in 1993. In 1995 he again moved to The Muslim as Sub-Editor and he left The Muslim in 1997 to join THE Nation as City Editor and Diplomatic Correspondent, where he remained till 2002. His association with the The News spans over three years from 2002 to 2005 as columnist. In 2005 Mr. Bhatti switched over to Khabrain Group as Columnist / Special Correspondent. In 2010 he was made Resident Editor of The Post, a sister publication of daily Khabrain. In 2010, he launched his own publication Centreline. He has authored two books on European Union. He also served in Pakistan Telecommunication Company (PTCL) as Media Advisor/ Director Communication. He launched Diplomatic News Agency (DNA) in 2012. In May 2020 he launched Pakistan's First & only Diplomatic Newspaper Daily Islamabad POST.

Peace, security a pre-requisite for foreign investments

Ambassador of Republic of Korea
Talks to CENTRELINE, Daily Islamabad POST
and DNA News Agency

Ambassador of Republic of Korea to Pakistan Suh Sangpyo talked to Centreline on a variety of issues. He discussed in detail the ongoing cooperation between the two countries. Ambassador Suh also explained salient features of bilateral cooperation in the field of agriculture and as to how this cooperation can further be enhanced. Here is the text of his interview

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti



1. Let us begin with Pakistan, South Korea relations how would you to describe these relations especially in the field of trade and economy?

Korea's annual trade volume is over 1 trillion dollars and the trade volume between Korea and Pakistan is only 1 billion dollars. So, trade and economic relations between the two countries need to be expanded. Recently joint ventures between Korea and Pakistan have been created, such as Kia and Hyundai in auto industry and Samsung in electronics as well. In June two hydro power projects of 1.5 billion us dollars obtained Letter of Intent from the KP provincial government.

2. If you could please touch upon business potential that Pakistani markets have for foreign

investors and how can we further improve business environment in Pakistan?

The Pakistani government has done well to make business easy for foreign investors. So I see the increase of Korean companies in trade and investment. However, there exist some aspects to be improved for creating even better environment for business. For example, transparency and predictability are very important in doing business and so more sophisticated business regulations need to be introduced.

3. If you could list some of the Korean companies doing business in Pakistan? What kind of difficulties they experience while operating in Pakistan?

There are Korean companies in various sectors. If I



enumerate some of Korean companies in Pakistan, there are Korea Energy, K-Water, Lotter Construction Company in hydropower sector, Hyundai and Kia in auto industry and Samsung and LG in electronics sector.

Most of difficulties that Korean companies encountered have been resolved thanks to the full assistance by the federal and local governments of Pakistan. But as I told earlier, some difficulties such as unpredictability in doing business might be a barrier for Korean companies to come here. Recently an abrupt imposition of taxes on the imported mobile phones gives difficulties to Samsung electronics.

4. Korea has been accepting manpower from Pakistan. Please tell us is this practice still continuing? And how can this manpower contribute to cementing of relations between the two countries?

Pakistani manpower is skillful and diligent, so they are welcomed by the Korean companies. The Korean government established a work visa system for the skilled foreign workers. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, around 500 Pakistani workers entered Korea under the work visa system. Pakistani workers in Korea contribute a lot to cement the ties between the two countries. Their excellent work performance and their kindness are well explaining Pakistan to the Korean people.

5. Of course conducive business environment is essential to fetch foreign investments.

In this perspective how would you comment on the regional situation particularly relations among Pakistan, India and Afghanistan?

Security in a society is one of important elements to bring foreign investments. Therefore, Afghan peace process is very important to continue to host foreign investment in Pakistan. I see the Pakistani government do its best for the peace process and on the other hand fencing the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan to prevent happening abrupt insecurity in Pakistan.

6. Tourism is yet another field where both countries can benefit from each other's experience. Please share your views on this subject.

In 2019 a big Korean Buddhist delegation of Jogye Oder visited Pakistan to boost Buddhist pilgrimage tourism here. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, tourist exchanges have been limited. Once the pandemic is over, we will see a rapid increase of Korean tourists here. Other than Buddhist heritage, the Northern mountainous areas are also famous to Koreans. So there is great potential in touristic exchanges.

7. Your impressions about Pakistan and its people?

Pakistan is a huge country with a population of 220 million and endowed with natural resources and vast farmland. Pakistan is a country where Indus valley civilization, one of three ancient civilizations of the world, is originated. So my impressions about Pakistan is amazing. Pakistan is making efforts to do its role as a responsible country in the world. Pakistani people are enjoying their lives in all the aspects of society such as culture and economy. Even people of Pakistan are very kind to foreigners and make them feel at home. Pakistan is a preferred country for diplomats to come.

8. Cultural relations

Cultural relations between Korea and Pakistan go up to the 4th century when Malananda, a Buddhist monk from Pakistan, brought Buddhism to the Korea. In 8th century Hyecho, a Korean Buddhist monk made a pilgrimage visit to Pakistan. Now cultural exchanges of the two





Pakistan. The bilateral cooperation will make a great contribution to support Pakistan's food security goals. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Office and the Embassy of the Republic of Korea jointly inaugurated the Symposium on "Agricultural Technical Cooperation between Pakistan and Korea" on August 3, 2021 at Serena Hotel, Islamabad. This symposium was co-organized by the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) and Rural Development Administration (RDA) of the Republic of Korea. The symposium was attended by the SAPM on Food Security, Minister for National Food Security and Research, the RDA delegation from Korea and dignitaries from KOPIA, PARC and NARC. The symposium explored the ongoing and future cooperation between Pakistan and Korea including the potato seed multiplication, and production and R&D of Chilli and Fodder Crops. RDA and PARC agreed to strengthen agricultural technical cooperation through the KOPIA-Pakistan Center.

On the occasion, Mr. Hur Taewoong shared that KOPIA-Pakistan Center and the PARC will jointly develop locally-customized technologies to contribute to increasing farmer's income and developing Pakistan's agro-industry. He mentioned that the two governments are opening a new chapter in agricultural technology cooperation. Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhar Imam appreciated the Korean RDA projects and reiterated the support of the incumbent government for sustainable Agricultural development. He apprised the delegation on the Pakistan's agricultural industry and provided a positive outlook for future collaborations.

countries have expanded to various areas. The Korean embassy recently held a festival of K-Pop, Korean popular music and many Pakistani young people attended the festival and enjoyed themselves.

KOREAN DELEGATION VISIT

A delegation of the Republic of Korea headed by the Rural Development Administrator (RDA), Mr. Hur Taewoong called on the Prime Minister Imran Khan on August 3, 2021 at the PM Office. The high level representation from both sides included the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea Suh Sangpyo, Foreign Minister. Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, Mr. Jamshed Cheema, Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, Mr. Syed Fakhar Imam were present to discuss matters of Agricultural Cooperation. The Aeroponic-Potato Seed production, establishment of Technology of Fodder Crops and Chilli Production projects by the RDA were appreciated by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister assured of his government support for smooth implementation of the projects. The SAPM apprised the Prime Minister on current outcomes and opportunities in agricultural cooperation between both countries.

The Prime Minister commended Korea-Pakistan Exchange and Cooperation on the advanced technical assistance through KOPIA in Pakistan and hopes for their further collaboration. The opening ceremony of KOPIA Pakistan Center was held on August 4, 2021. Two countries will work together on the development of customized technology in the fields of small agri-machinery, agricultural inputs, and protected agriculture, in order to modernize the agricultural sector of





ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Republic of Korea Suh Sangpyo hosted lunch for Chief Editor Daily Islamabad POST, at his residence. Both sides discussed ways and means to further strengthen cooperation. Daily Islamabad POST also owns largest circulated diplomatic magazine CENTRELINE and Diplomatic News Agency (DNA).

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Islamabad POST gets membership of APNS

Daily Islamabad POST completed its one successful year of publication in May this year. The newspapers got the APNS membership in minimum possible period

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Daily Islamabad POST has got membership of All Pakistan Newspapers Society (DNA), which is the sole body of newspaper owners of Pakistan. The APNS is currently headed by DAWN and The News group. Daily Islamabad POST completed its one successful year of publication in May this year. The newspapers got the APNS membership in minimum possible period.

The newspaper management owes a great deal to the leadership of APNS and especially the readers, who have been a great source of inspiration and encouragement.

The newspaper plans to expand its network by starting editions from Lahore and Karachi as well besides increasing the number of pages. It may be mentioned here that CENTRELINE magazine, the largest circulated diplomatic magazine, is already member of the APNS and member of the APNS central executive committee as well.

Spanish ambassador meets Naval Chief



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Spain to Pakistan Manuel Duran called on Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Amjad Niazi. Both sides discussed matter of mutual interest. The Spanish ambassador remained with the Naval Chief for quite some time. – DNA

CEO and founder of Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal hosts dinner for the outgoing Kyrgyz ambassador



Indonesian envoy discusses Batik promotion in Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Indonesia Adam Tugio had afternoon tea with Mohsin Qamar, CEO Batik Studio Fashion Store in Marriott Hotel. During discussion, they exchanged ideas on how the Embassy and Batik Studio Fashion Store can work together to promote Indonesian intangible cultural heritage of Batik through exhibitions and competition to design Batik with Pakistani motives later this year. – DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Germany bids farewell to the outgoing Head of Press Section of the Germany embassy Christine Rosenberger and welcomes her successor Dorota Berezicki. – DNA

The Afghan Imbroglia, Regional Integration and Pakistan



Prof Shabir Ahmad Khan

AFGHANISTAN holds the key to enhanced regional connectivity and economic integration. Stability in Afghanistan will expedite economic rise of the entire region while instability ensures a double jeopardy i.e. threatening regional security and risking regional economic rise.

Smooth implementation of almost all Regional Integration Arrangements (RIAs) and connectivity plans of ECO, SCO, BRI, CAREC and CPEC, directly depends on the stability of Afghanistan. The three Central Asian Republics bordering Afghanistan have concrete plans in coordination with Pakistan to develop Pipelines, Railways and Electricity transportation and other communications links via Afghanistan. These plans will restore Afghanistan to its historical role as a transit hub between Central and South Asia and beyond.

Stability in Afghanistan will materialize the Pakistan-Afghanistan-Central Asia Corridor supplementing CPEC for generating immense socio-economic development for the entire region. The Tashkent International Conference entitled "Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity. Challenges and Opportunities" on July 15 2021 has been an excellent effort for regional integration on the part of the dynamic leader-

ship of Uzbekistan. The President of Uzbekistan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Foreign Policy chief of European Union and the President of Afghanistan addressed the inaugural session attended by Foreign Ministers, experts and heads of economic, political, research and educational institutions of more

“
Uzbekistan's initiative for Termiz-Kabul-Peshawar Railway line will be a milestone for developing Termiz-Peshawar Corridor. This Termiz-Kabul-Peshawar corridor in turn will serve as a backbone for Central and South Asian connectivity”

than 25 countries.

Getting together hundreds of participants for exchange of views and contact details laid the foundation for enhanced regional and inter-regional connectivity through people to people contacts. Uzbekistan's initiative for Termiz-Kabul-Peshawar Railway

line will be a milestone for developing Termiz-Peshawar Corridor. This Termiz-Kabul-Peshawar corridor in turn will serve as a backbone for Central and South Asian connectivity. Indeed it has been the Major Powers' desire to have control over Afghanistan in order to have control over Central and South Asian integration process. This desire has generated Major Powers' conflicting interference in Afghanistan historically; at least for the last four decades.

In this regard control over Afghanistan was denied to Soviets by USA and other rivals while in post 9/11 same has been denied to USA. However the global and regional geo-political configuration has changed a lot in terms of regional countries' political and economic consolidation. The present scenario of Afghanistan and ongoing peace process demand immediate international as well as regional attention as the situation is worsening day by day.

The Britain have been relocating Afghans who have served and assisted British during the last two decades fearing instability, Australia has hinted on the closure of its mission in Kabul due to uncertainty while America continues its phase wise withdrawal. The present and future of Afghanistan has been analyzed from three dimensions. (i) Local/ Afghan National

(ii) Regional and (iii) Global.

Local Afghan Scenario:

Afghanistan has been at war with itself due to internal ethnic, tribal, sectarian, ideological and regional divisions. The internal divisions have always exposed Afghanistan to external conflicting geo-politics. Decades of wars have devastated the state structure, institutions resulting in lack of rule of law. Currently the two main groups or forces in Afghanistan the incumbent Kabul Regime and Afghan Taliban are in conflict and negotiations simultaneously. The incumbent government desires to maintain the status quo and prolong their rule. The Afghan Taliban striving to topple the government and takeover Kabul. If the two groups could not reach a consensus on power sharing the current instability in Afghanistan may engulf the entire region and resultantly stalled regional connectivity. In addition, different Afghan groups will find support from different corners of the regions on ethnic and political basis giving birth to regional suspicions and lack of regional cooperation.

If Afghan Taliban mainstreamed through a negotiated settlement it will have positive impact on lasting peace in Afghanistan. However, if Taliban takeovers Kabul through fighting, it will have impact on the future Behaviour of Afghan Taliban also. Therefore, it is imperative that both the groups pressurized by International and regional powers/states to work towards the success of peace process by making compromises.

Regional Dimension:

There is a realization in the region that without peace in Afghanistan the economic rise of the region and regional integration plans will remain a dream. The neighbours of Afghanistan seem decided to encourage various Afghan groups towards sustainable peace to expedite the process of regional connectivity for a win-win situation. One has to acknowledge that the regional politics have been absorbed by politics at the global level due to the major power direct intervention in regional security complex. It has put limitations on the regional states to effectively intervene in the peace process and play a decisive role. USA is party to the deal, its financial aid and as-

sistance can work either way i.e. to encourage and push the incumbent government to continue resistance while can also link aid to culminate the peace process into a logical conclusion through compromises. Currently it seems that Kabul Regime has been encouraged to continue resistance. Similarly the regional support of Islamabad, Beijing, Tashkent, Tehran and Moscow can pressurize Taliban to make compromises and reach a consensus on power sharing.

Global Dimension:
There seems divergent and competing interests of major powers in Afghanistan which need to be harmonized for a win-win situation. USA has declared China and Russia as strategic competitors. USA desires and plan to counter China's rise by impeding BRI and 5 aggravating situation in Xinjiang. It makes the regional situation complicated and lack of cooperation on Afghanistan. However USA cannot blame any other country for its unnecessary prolonged war in Afghanistan. It has spent trillions of dollars but cannot blame others for this misadventure. For USA there are dozens of ways to engage the region positively by contributing to regional integration through its New Silk Road plan.

This will have dividends for US companies by investing in various regional integration arrangements. USA has to realize that by physically stationing in Afghanistan, it could not stabilize the country, how it can do it by having military bases in the region outside Afghanistan? Further the Moscow Format, Istanbul Process, the Quadrilateral Cooperation Group, SCO Contact Group on Afghanistan need to support and coordinate their efforts with Doha Peace Process to make long lasting peace a reality.

Pakistan's Role :

Historically Pakistan did recognize whichever government came to Kabul. Pakistan has been advocating a negotiated political settlement and inclusive setup in Afghanistan since long. Pakistan has welcomed every effort for peace and stability in Afghanistan and played its positive role in each endeavor ranging from Quadrilateral Cooperation Group, Moscow Format, Kabul Process I and II, SCO Contact Group, Inter-

national Contact Group on Afghanistan, Six Party talks, Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan and last but not the least in the Doha process. Pakistan played role in bringing various parties to the table under the Doha process. However it must be realized that Pakistan has limitations, Pakistan cannot negotiate for Afghans and it is up to the Afghans to reach a consensus on power sharing and chose the future setup for their country. It must also be realized that bringing peace and stability to Afghanistan is a 6 shared responsibility and beyond the capacity of a single state or two. Pakistan has been in contact with all the regional states on the issue of Afghanistan. Pakistan realizes that the immediate neighbors of Afghanistan are the real stakeholders in the peace of Afghanistan and aims to contribute to the socio-economic development of Afghanistan by making it a transit hub between Central Asia, Pakistan and beyond by developing transport and communication links.

Conclusion:
The future of regional connectivity and socio-economic rise is closely linked to the peace and stability of Afghanistan while the future stability of Afghanistan is closely linked to the ongoing peace process. The Central and South Asian integration via Afghanistan will enable the regional countries to capitalize on and maximally benefit from their comparative advantages. This integration will also generate immense revenue for Afghanistan to reduce its dependence on foreign aid.

The extra-regional powers have interests in Afghanistan but the neighbours of Afghanistan have stakes involved. There must be a coordinated approach at the regional as well as global level to make grounds for Afghan national reconciliation towards unity and peace. Pakistan's path to regional integration passes through Afghanistan and therefore Pakistan fully supports the ongoing peace process towards a logical conclusion. The failure of peace process will be tantamount to the failure of the entire region.

*— The writer is the Director
Area Study Centre
(Russia, China & Central Asia)
University of Peshawar*

PM Imran Khan visit to Uzbekistan a milestone in bilateral relations

Deputy Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Furqat Sidiqov talks to Islamabad POST



Furqat Sidiqov, Deputy Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan

Q: Excellency, Can you please brief us on current activities to further strengthen the bilateral cooperation between Uzbekistan and Pakistan and what kind of events will be held this summer to boost dynamically growing relations?

A: Thank you for your question, indeed the main important event convened recently on April 14, 2021 was the successful Online Summit at the highest level convened between the leaders of our brotherly countries. The outcomes of the April's Online Summit were highly and positively perceived as the fruitful candid and active virtual interaction between the Heads of Uzbekistan and Pakistan.

President of Uzbekistan H.E. Shavkat Mirziyayev and H.E. PM of Islamic Republic of Pakistan H.E. Imran Khan had held in depth analyses of the current state of the multifaceted relations as well as the ongoing implementation of intraregional cooperation.

The Road map, as effective monitoring tool was approved by the Government of Uzbekistan according to the agreements our two leaders which contains the particular dates, responsible persons for the implementation of the multifaceted projects and identified the detailed dimensions for the further expansion of the trade-economic, investment, transport, logistics education tourism and people to people contacts.

Our two governments, trade and commerce chambers, non-governmental organizations and private businessmen are working very hard to implement the agenda and agreed mutually beneficial projects between Uzbekistan and Pakistan. Indeed, forthcoming high level Visit of Hon PM of Pakistan H.E. Mr

Imran Khan will be next important milestone in the history of our two countries as genuine continuation of the political dialogue as well as industrial cooperation, widening the inflow of the mutual investment, technical and scientific educational interaction. The Ministry of the foreign affairs of Uzbekistan in active cooperation with Ministry of foreign trade and investments and other stake holders are in closest coordination and working very hard with Pakistany colleagues and their counterparts to prepare the substantial and result oriented Visit of Hon H.E. PM of Islamic Republic of Pakistan H.E. Mr Imran Khan Prime Minister of Uzbekistan to Uzbekistan. Two leaders of Uzbekistan and Pakistan also agreed that in nearest days ahead our foreign offices will held 1st political consultations. Of course after this event two embassies Uzbekistan's in Islamabad and Pakistan's in Tashkent will actively engage and cooperate with the relevant ministries trade and commerce chambers, non-governmental organizations and private businessmen to prepare the fruitful agenda for our leaders during the forthcoming high-level event.

No doubt that the forthcoming high-level visit will be a continuation of the active interaction of the leaders of the two countries to discuss on joint actions for cooperation in the areas of economic affairs, transport connectivity, defense, security, as well as a partnership in combating against the pandemic.

It's worth to mention that such active, open and candid interaction between the heads of Uzbekistan and Pakistan is of great importance not only for bilateral relations but also for intraregional connectivity.

Q.: Excellency, we want to ask about the Project of the Century – the construction of the Mazar-i-Sharif - Kabul - Peshawar railway line. Please brief us on significance of this project for all parties involved in it, as well as for the development of Uzbek-Pakistani relations and the Central Asian region in particular.

A: This significant trilateral project will provide a completely new transport and transit corridor Central and South Asian countries. It diversifies the transport flows of the region. Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar route with subsequent access to the ports of Karachi and Gwadar will allow us to significantly reduce export and import costs.

From the position of South Asian countries, commissioning of Trans-Afghan railway corridor to Pakistan direction will significantly reduce the delivery time of goods to/from

Central Asia, the CIS and Europe.

For example, if the project would be fully implemented, the transportation of goods from Pakistan to Uzbekistan will have to spend not 35 days, but only 3-5 days. Instead of movement of almost a month, this will take less than a week. In means the reducing the cost of transporting goods, which means saving money. According to preliminary calculations, laying the route will reduce cost of transporting of one container by almost 3 times.

According to expert estimates, the cost of transporting goods from Tashkent to Karachi will be almost 1.5-2 times cheaper than the existing ones. Continuing this logical chain, we can already predict that an increase in the profitability of transportation will automatically contribute to an increase in freight traffic and interregional trade.

The launch of Mazar-i-Sharif-Peshawar railway will also create a powerful platform for achieving inclusive economic development for Pakistan and will also contribute to the expansion of the transport and communication network within Afghanistan. Moreover, Mazar-i-Sharif-Peshawar line will become part of the broader infrastructural connectivity of Central and South Asia. Taking this opportunity, I would like to congratulate both brotherly nations on such high achievements. I am happy to mention that by strong will of our leaders, Uzbekistan and Pakistan are becoming main partners, whose cooperation only strengthens projects for the sustainable development of the peoples of South and Central Asia.

Q.: Your Excellency please brief us on the development of trade and economic cooperation between Uzbekistan and Pakistan and what areas can be considered the most promising in in this area?

A: Our countries have a great mutual interest in further increasing of the volume of mutual trade. By the great efforts of all ministries of Islamic Republic of Pakistan especially of the Foreign Office and the Ministry of commerce, the Hon Adviser to Prime Minister of Pakistan for Commerce and Investment H.E. Abdul Razak Dawood effective measures are being taken by Pakistan side to speed up negotiation process on bilateral Preferential Trade Agreement.

According to Statistical Committee of Uzbekistan in 2020 bilateral trade with Pakistan exceeded \$123 million. In January-May 2021 the trade turnover between Uzbekistan and Pakistan amounted to 69.4 million (+ 260%). Today, over 140 enterprises with Pakistan operate in Uzbekistan. Their activities are



President of Uzbekistan

mainly related to trade, pharmaceuticals, textiles, paper, leather goods and food production. In March 14-18 of this year the delegation of the Ministry of Transport of Uzbekistan headed by the Deputy Chairman of "Uzbekistan Railways" visited the Pakistani seaports in Karachi and Gwadar. Negotiations were held on the creation of the first off-dock terminal of Uzbekistan in the seaports of Pakistan. An agreement was reached on the organization of joint intermodal transportation of Uzbek goods to the seaports of Pakistan. In April Pakistani logistics company TCS or-



ganized the first direct delivery of Pakistani cargo from Karachi directly to Tashkent in transit through Afghanistan. May Uzbek forwarding company "Asad Trans" in collaboration with Pakistan transport company "Best Trans Pvt. Ltd." for the first time realized a pilot logistic project on direct delivery of Uzbek export cargo from Tashkent directly to Faisalabad through the territory of Afghanistan. According to the will of our leaders the activities Intergov-



ernmental Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation has been renewed and it was agreed that the next session of this Commission will be held in July 2021 in Tashkent.

Having said this let me point out that Uzbekistan considers Pakistan as a reliable and promising partner in the region of South Asia. Taking into account the potential of our countries, as the trust and partnership expanded and mutually beneficial cooperation strengthened then in near future two sides may open the new page of the interaction based on the strategic partnership bonds and principles.

Q: As you know Excellence, our two countries are linked by close cultural and historical ties, the rich heritage of the Uzbek and Pakistan people is highly valued and revered in both countries. Please tell us about how cultural and humanitarian ties between Uzbekistan and Pakistan are developing today.

A: Pakistan is cradle of civilizations closely linked with Uzbekistan and Central Asia. We have a lot of similarities are connected by one religion, single school of Islamic teaching, tasawwuf and fiqh, common centuries-old history associated with the Baburid dynasty, common traditions and values and even language. There are more than 40 thousand identical words in the Uzbek language and the Urdu language. Many people in Pakistan can say: my roots are in Bukhara, Samarqand or Fergana and so on.



Prime Minister of Pakistan

The Baburid dynasty left in Pakistan an invaluable historical and cultural heritage that contributed to the creation of a unique civilization in the region, including literature and art. And this is the solid foundation of unique, strong and friendly Pakistani-Uzbek relations. In February of this year, we jointly organized an opening ceremony of the "Center for Babur's Legacy" in Punjab University during of which held a contest among 70 students who presented their paintings dedicated to Baburid's dynasty in Pakistan etc. It should also be said that the rich scientific and literary heritage of the Uzbek



people is highly valued in Pakistan, great scientists and thinkers Abu Ali ibn Sino, Alisher Navoi, Zakhiriddin Muhammad Babur and others are honored.

In Uzbekistan operates "International Babur's Foundation" who IA will work closely with the "Center for Babur's Legacy" in Punjab University in order to promote the heritage of the Baburids in Pakistan as well as to organize joint conferences dedicated to the life and work of our great common ancestors.



Pakistan ASEAN Experts Dialogue “Pakistan-ASEAN: Shared Future and the Way Forward” held at ISSI in collaboration with ASEAN group countries; dialogue concluded with remarks by Ambassador Tugio with a proposal for an interactive engagement between Pakistan and ASEAN



Pakistan needs to prioritize cooperation with ASEAN: FS

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: “ASEAN has transformed into a vibrant 10-member Organization, an increasingly integrated economic community, and a central pillar of regional architecture. Pakistan needs to prioritize five areas of cooperation with ASEAN, which include: strengthening of Pak-ASEAN connectivity, support for the business communities to comprehensively upgrade economic cooperation with ASEAN countries, focus on tourism, explore avenues of cooperation in Science & Technology, IT and higher education and lastly deepen our cultural exchanges.” This was stated by Pakistan’s Foreign Secretary, Mr. Sohail Mahmood who was the Chief Guest at the Pakistan-ASEAN Experts Dialogue titled, “Pakistan-ASEAN: Shared Future and the Way Forward”, organized by the Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with the Indonesian Embassy and the ASEAN Committee in Islamabad (ACI).

The members of the ASEAN Committee in Islamabad included the Chairman of the Committee, Adam M. Tugio, Indonesian ambassador in Islamabad; Nguyen Tien Phong, Ambassador of Vietnam; Abdul Mubdi Osman, Charge d’Affaires, High Commission of Brunei Darussalam; Lutfee, Charge d’Affaires, Embassy of Thailand; San Yu Kyaw, Minister Counselor, embassy of Myanmar; Dan Erwin Bagaporo, Third Secretary and Vice Consul, embassy of Philippines; and Deddy Faisal Ahmad Salleh, Charge d’Affaires, Malaysia who joined on zoom.

Speakers from Indonesia and Pakistan made short presentations on three dimensions of Pakistan-ASEAN cooperation including political and security cooperation; economic collaboration; and socio-cultural cooperation. The speakers included: Dr. Dewi Fortuna, Indonesian Academy of Sciences; Dr. Fithra Faisal

Hastiadi, Executive Director of Next Policy; Dr. Shofwan Al Bana, Executive Secretary, ASEAN Study Centre; Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, DG, ISSI; Dr. Usman Chohan, Director, Economic Affairs, CASS; and Ambassador Mian Sanaullah, former ambassador of Pakistan to Indonesia.

Director CSP, Najam Rafique moderated the dialogue and said that it seeks to bring together experts and practitioners of policy together to make recommendations for a comprehensive engagement between Pakistan and ASEAN under Pakistan’s Vision East Asia and Prime Minister Imran Khan’s desire for geo-economic engagement with regional countries.

Earlier, in his welcome remarks, Director General ISSI, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry said that this is the start of a process, and that such dialogues help in generating ideas for future engagement. The Chairman of the ASEAN Committee in Islamabad, H.E. Adam M. Tugio in his introductory remarks stated that this is a good forum to increase collaboration between ASEAN and Pakistan and it is time to extend the scope of this relationship by having multidimensional cooperation.

During Session-I, titled, ‘Pakistan-ASEAN: Political and Security Cooperation’, Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, in his presentation, shed light on the changing world order, declining multilateralism, US-China rivalry in Asia-Pacific and its effects globally. He further stated that we require a delicate balancing act and that Pakistan must increase its cooperation with ASEAN and a quantum leap is required in this regard. Prof. Dr. Dewi Fortuna, in her presentation stated that we must look at the ASEAN’s vision of inclusivity and work on two areas of cooperation, the normative sphere and the technical areas. Dr. Dewi further said that there is great potential for Pakistan-ASEAN relations.

In the Session-II on ‘Pakistan-ASEAN: Dimension of Economic Cooperation’, Dr. Usman

spoke at length about Pak-ASEAN economic relations. He appreciated Pakistan’s foreign policy shift to geo-economics and expressed his optimistic views on building deeper economic ties. Dr. Fithra Faisal Hastiadi offered a succinct analysis on effectively tapping the economic potential of ASEAN. He said that in the modern era, although the geographical distances have reduced to nothing yet the non-geographical distances do matter. He shed light on cultural and political barriers in this regard. He said that ASEAN region is highly dynamic and offers an interactive window to the interested players on the basis of soft and open regionalism. He suggested that an interactive strategy must be followed for productive and effective outcomes.

In the Session-III on ‘Pakistan-ASEAN: Future of Socio-Cultural Cooperation’, Ambassador Mian Sanaullah stressed upon considering the social network of ASEAN countries. Talking about the concept of ASEAN community, he elaborated on its three main pillars: political-security, economic and socio-cultural. He said that the impact of social and cultural linkages cannot be ignored in Pakistan-ASEAN relations. Dr. Shofwan Al Banna in his presentation suggested that exchange of inspirational ideas and personalities are of critical importance. He referred to the works of Pakistan’s national poet, Muhammad Iqbal who is a well-known literary figure in Indonesia. He said that there is ample room for cooperation in the fields of academic exchange and people-to-people contacts.

The dialogue concluded with remarks by Ambassador Tugio with a proposal for an interactive engagement between Pakistan and ASEAN in order to analyze each and every aspect of Pak-ASEAN relations. In his vote of thanks, Chairman BoG, ISSI, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood thanked all the participants for making this dialogue a successful event while making a case for nurturing socio-cultural ties and economic linkages with the ASEAN countries.

Pleasantly surprised by diverse history of Pakistan: Swiss envoy

Special Correspondent

Trade relations between Pakistan and Switzerland are about 600 million USD per annum, which is not a lot considering the size of the Pakistani market. We could do more. It depends very much on the economic framework – political and economic stability, stable exchange rate etc. - and the level playing field for foreign companies

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan Benedict de Cerjat in his recent media interview talked about his impressions about Pakistan and various touristic attractions of Pakistan. Besides, the ambassador also talked about trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. Ambassador Benedict de Cerjat hoped trade volume between the two countries will increase. Here is the text of his interview.

Tell us about your experience living in Pakistan so far, Did you like our people, our culture?

I have been pleasantly surprised by the extraordinarily diverse and impressive history of this land. I did not know, for example, that the Indus River Civilization was actually the very first one we can call a civilization. Since my arrival, I have been able – even under COVID restrictions – to visit several interesting places along the Grand Trunk Road: Rawat Fort, Taxila, Swat, etc. Moreover, my Embassy teamed up with UNESCO, the European Union and

the World Bank to publish this book by Salman Rashid “From Landi Kot to Wagah”, celebrating the Grand Trunk Road and those who left their mark on the history of Pakistan.

2. Pakistan and Switzerland have signed an agreement on the reciprocal promotion and protection of investments. Tell us more about this agreement?

The Bilateral Investment Treaty between Pakistan and Switzerland has been in force since 1996 and has been pivotal to the increasing attractiveness of Swiss companies to invest in Pakistan. The success of this treaty is evident from the fact that over the last ten years, Switzerland has been one of the top 5 foreign direct investors in the country with an investment of more than 1 billion USD in Pakistan.

3. How do you see the Pakistani community living in Switzerland?

The Pakistani community in Switzerland is relatively low in numbers, around 3'000 individuals only. They reside throughout the country but predominantly in the German-speaking part of Switzerland- i.e. the cities of Zurich, Basel and Bern. Pakistani citizens are playing a constructive role in the social and economic fabric of our society. The majority of Pakistanis working in Switzerland are in upper management and at senior level positions in all major sectors such as in the banking, insurance, pharmaceutical, engineering, and educational fields in Switzerland.

4. How are the economic relationships between Switzerland and Pakistan?

Trade relations between Pakistan and Switzerland are about 600 million USD per annum, which is not a lot considering the size of the Pakistani market. We could do more. It depends very much on the economic framework – political and economic stability, stable exchange rate etc. - and the level playing field for foreign companies.



**Ambassador of Switzerland
Benedict de Cerjat**

5. Switzerland is known as the heaven on earth because of its landscape and mountainous beauty, have you visited our North side? Did you like our landscape and mountainous sites?

Yes, during my first year in your country, I have visited a few beautiful places in the Northern Areas of Pakistan. Since the Swat Valley is famously called “the Switzerland of Pakistan”, I started my journey there and I was not disappointed. I have seen Barikot, Saidu Sharif, Islampur (a great place to buy pashmina shawls!), Bahrain, Kalam, Ushu and Mahodand Lake. I went back in February with a group of European colleagues and we enjoyed some skiing in Malam Jabba.

A very nice place! More recently, I was in Chitral and I loved it. The roads are bumpy but it was worth the effort. I was in Garam Chashma (close to the border with Afghanistan) and to the Kalash Valley.

Malaysian Charge de Affaires Deddy Faisal hosts farewell lunch for the outgoing Japanese DHM



Kazakhstan at 30: Achievements & Future Prospects



Dr Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan

Kazakhstan is the “biggest” economy of the Central Asian Region which has also “plentiful” of natural resources. It celebrates 30 years of its independence in 2021. During these years it has successfully “transformed” its macro-economy which is now stable and sustainable with bright prospects



vides great opportunities for local entrepreneurs. The government plans to increase the number of people employed in SMEs to 4 million compared to 3.3 million in 2020, thus increasing the GDP share of SMEs to 35 percent by 2025 compared to 31 percent in 2020.

Constant structural reforms in economy, administration, business, trade and industries have transformed into biggest recipient of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in the Central Asia. It was ranked 25th in the World Bank's Doing Business Report 2019. It has attracted over \$330 billion in the FDIs since 1991 which has increased 16-fold since independence.

Now Kazakhstan accounts for approximately 70 percent of FDI into Central Asia. According to Kazakhstan statistical data (2020) around 50 percent of FDI in Kazakhstan has been attracted from the EU, including \$96.6 billion from the Netherlands, \$16.7 billion from France, \$8.7 billion from Belgium, \$6.8 billion from Italy and \$5 billion from Germany.

Kazakhstan has been introducing comprehensive reforms in recent years to strengthen protection for investors, abolishing red tape, and transparent tax system and support domestic and international investors, businessmen and entrepreneurs. In this context, Kazakhstan was ranked 34th in the 2021 Index of Economic Freedom (in

comparison with 59th in 2019) among 180 countries which is again highest among the CIS countries. The Astana International Financial Centre (AIFC) was established in 2018, aimed at making Nur-Sultan a financial hub in the region.

It has stable, and accommodative political system in which opposition has stakes to participate in the decision making process of the government. On political front, parliamentary elections were held on 10 January 2021, to elect members of the Mazhilis and local representative bodies. The elections were the first since the implementation of new national guidelines designed to further increase the openness, fairness and transparency of Kazakhstan's electoral system. 3 out of 5 political parties gained enough votes to win seats at the lower house of Parliament following the election.

In this regard, Kazakhstan president H.E. Kassym Jomart Tokayev has successfully institutionalized concepts of “Listening Stat” in the hierarchy of government’s vertical and horizontal presentations. In this connection, Kazakhstan was ranked 29th in the UN E-Government Survey 2020 among 193 countries (compared to 39th in 2019) the highest among CIS countries. According to the Constitution of Kazakhstan, it has a presidential form of governance.

Executive power is shared by the government, while legislative power is exercised by Parliament consisting of the Senate and the Mazhilis.

Right from the beginning, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev introduced various meaningful political, law, civil, and judicial reforms in the country aimed at modernising the political system and ensuring protection of human rights. It included, establishment of the National Council of Public Trust, an advisory body under the

DUE to numerous and constant structural reforms its national economy has been diversified up to optimal levels of productivity, innovation and renewables orientations. Its banking system is the biggest in terms of deposits, finances, operations and mortgaged assets in the whole region. Its financial system is resilient, restructured and remolded up to the requirements of global system and BASEL.

According to latest report of the World Bank (2019-2020) Kazakhstan has a GDP of above \$180 billion. It is the largest economy in Central Asia, accounting for more than half of the region's GDP.

Unemployment is low 4.9 percent in 2020. It joined the World Trade Organisation in 2015 which further strengthened its economic ties with the outer world. Strategic vision of the government pro-

President to conduct open dialogue with representatives of the public, legal formalisation of an institute of parliamentary opposition, 30 percent quota for women and young people to be included in political parties' candidates lists, decriminalisation of libel, liberalisation of peaceful assemblies and registration of political parties, lowering the threshold for political parties to enter Parliament from 7 percent to 5 percent, joining the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, thus abolishing the death penalty and last but not least, strengthening the role of the Ombudsman for Human Rights which has now further strengthened its political stability and democratic norms in the country.

It seems that substantial reduction of electoral threshold, relaxation in formation of political parties, paradigm shift from indirect elections to direct, further empowerment of women, free role of media, NGOs, civil society, and last but not least inclusion of very young people in the various elections has now further revolutionized the process of politicization and democratization in the country. In this context most recently held "Akim Elections" in rural areas of Kazakhstan through direct votes has consolidated true spirits of democracy in the society at the grass-root levels. It has strong political commitment having strategic vision to play a wider global role and widen its strategic partnership with South Asia especially with Pakistan which was among the first few states to recognize it in 1991.

It aims to become among the 30 most advanced countries in the world by mid-century, while shifting from a resource-intensive growth model to one that is cleaner, more innovative and more diversified. Reaching those goals will require further substantial reforms to improve public governance, to make the economy more open and competitive, to promote greener growth and to promote more equal access education, employment and economic opportunity.

Right from the beginning, Kazakhstan initiated a series of reforms to introduce spirits of decentralization and a modern free market model to achieve the desire goal of socio-economic prosperity, massive industrialization and eradication of poverty and generation of new jobs. It successfully transformed the outlook of political canvas by changing its one-party government to a multi-party democratic system. Over the past 30 years Kazakhstan has established diplomatic relations with 186 countries and transformed into one of the dynamically economies of the region and world alike. On the front of external relations, Kazakhstan has implemented a multi-layered foreign policy to establish good relations worldwide and is a world leader in the movement to ensure nuclear security.

On 29 August 1991, Kazakhstan closed the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site and gave up the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world. It contributed to the establishment of the Central Asian Nuclear

Weapons Free Zone (CANWFZ) in 2009. A Low-Enriched Uranium Bank under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been established on the territory of Kazakhstan.

It has now become hub of diplomacy, conflict resolution, interfaith harmony and last but not least, multiculturalism. Kazakhstan plays a crucial role in enabling the 'Belt and Road' initiative. Kazakhstan accounts for 70 percent of transit traffic passing from China to Europe and vice versa.

It previously hosted two rounds of nuclear talks between the P5+1 and Iran. Kazakhstan convened the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), which now consists of 27 member states. It is also a founding member of the Eurasian Economic Union which was established in 2014. It may also be recalled that Kazakhstan became the first Central Asian country to be elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for 2017-2018. Moreover, Kazakhstan is an active participant of regional projects being as a co-founder of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States (CCTS). It became the first post-Soviet and the first Muslim-majority country to chair the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2010, and hosted the first OSCE summit in eleven years, which adopted the Astana Commemorative Declaration towards a Security Community.

Kazakhstan successfully chaired the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 2011-2012. Kazakhstan hosted the EXPO 2017 International Specialised Exhibition in Nur-Sultan with the theme of Future Energy.

Kazakhstan has made a significant contribution to the settlement of the Syrian crisis through the Astana Process, which provided a platform for negotiations between the Syrian government, the armed opposition and the guarantor states Russia, Turkey and Iran. Contribution to re-

building of Afghanistan is a major priority for Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan has rich ethnic diversity which is indeed core strength of its state and people alike. There are approximately 140 different ethnic groups and almost 4,000 religious organisations operating freely across the country representing 18 religious denominations. The key ideas of ethno-politics were devised during 1993 by former president, founder and father of the nation H.E. Nazarbayev. It was derived from Kazakhstan's century's old civilization, rich traditions, culture and customs based on the preservation of interethnic harmony, ethnic diversity, equality of citizens regardless of ethnic affiliation as well as instruction in proper patriotism

It has been pioneer of interfaith harmony in the region and the world alike. It has been judged as the best tolerant country in the region by many regional as well as international organizations of humanities. The largest ethnic group is Kazakhs 68.5 percent. Other ethnicities include: Russians 18.9 percent, Uzbeks 3.3 percent, Uighurs 1.5 percent, Ukrainians 1.4 percent, Germans 1.0 percent and Koreans 0.6 percent. Every three years, the capital Nur-Sultan hosts the Congress of Leaders of World & Traditional Religions to provide a forum for religious leaders to discuss the core issues facing the humanity and communities worldwide.

The UN Human Development Index (2020) ranked Kazakhstan 51st in the (compared to 76th in 1999) the highest among CIS countries. Being prominent regional expert of Kazakhstan & CIS I fully endorse structural reforms of Kazakhstan president H.E. Kassym Jomart Tokayev which has actually revolutionized its macro-economy, politics, civility, society, judicial system, administration, governance, foreign policy, trade & commerce potential, inflows of FDIs, joint ventures and last but not least brightened its future socio-economic prosperity, industrial productivity and connectivity with all the regional countries.



Tapping Gawadar's Economic Potential to the maximum



Abdul Rashid Shakir

GAWADAR, a port city with breathtaking and mesmerizing coast line can undoubtedly be developed into a major tourist attraction of Pakistan. Conceived as a natural deep water port in early nineties, its scope has increased manifold over the years. In 2015, with the launch of CPEC, a pilot project of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Gawadar assumed a crucially important strategic place in connecting Western China with Middle East, Central Asia, Africa and Europe for materializing optimal benefits of shared development by easing trade, tourism and cultural ties in the region.

Rightly dubbed as 'Jewel of CPEC', it is an ideal location for industry, business and tourism to thrive, with huge potential of generating economic activities and numerous employment opportunities. According to a conservative estimate, once developed fully, Gawadar free economic zones may generate economic activities worth \$13 Billion dollar annually. Gawadar South Free Zone covers 66 acres of land; whereas North Free Zone, inaugurated by Prime Minister during his recent visit to Gawadar on 5th of July 2021, is planned to be developed over more than 2200 acres of land, making it almost 35 times greater than the South Free Zone. It would offer huge investment opportunities to the business commu-

nity, both local and foreign. Notable Chinese investors expressed their commitment via video link to tap Pakistan's huge economic potential by investing more than \$100 Billion in Gawadar Free Zones in various labor and investment intensive projects. On this occasion, other projects inaugurated by the Prime Minister

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Gawadar South Free Zone covers 66 acres of land; whereas North Free Zone, inaugurated by Prime Minister during his recent visit to Gawadar on 5th of July 2021, is planned to be developed over more than 2200 acres of land, making it almost 35 times greater than the South Free Zone
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under CPEC framework included establishment of Agriculture Industrial Park, Gawadar Expo Center, Gawadar Animal Vaccine Plant, Lubricants Plant and Gawadar Fertilizer Plant. Moreover, two MOUs were also signed between Government of Pakistan and Chinese companies for the

installation of a desalination plant and a power house to provide clean drinking water and affordable clean energy to address two of the major issues plaguing the area. Besides all this, the construction of East Bay Expressway would go a long mile in improving upon connectivity of Gawadar port with Karachi, the leading industrial and business center of the country for the promotion of economic activities in the region.

In short, Prime Minister's recent visit to Gawadar would usher in a new era of economic growth in the region by boosting efforts to connect Gawadar with rest of the country by improving upon communication infrastructure, massive industrialization by roping in foreign direct investment, and taking on board all major neighboring countries like Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Egypt and Kenya.

One window facilitation process to ensure ease of doing business is need of the hour to lure in foreign investors. Cognizant of the fact, Federal Government is taking practical steps to clear hiccups in the process by developing a robust mechanism with the help of Balochistan's provincial government. Besides all these development initiatives aimed at the development of Gawadar as a hub of business activities and a buckle in the belt of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

‘Circling In’: Deciphering Taliban’s Strategy for Control of Afghanistan



Irfan Shahzad Takalvi

THIS was certainly not the best of welcomes Abdul Rashid Dostum received on his return back from Turkey. Soon after he landed in Afghanistan, Taliban captured Sheberghan – the capital of Jawzjan province bordering Turkmenistan – considered stronghold of the notorious warlord.

This happened on Saturday, August 7, 2021. And it was the second provincial capital Taliban took within 24 hours. Zaranj, the capital of southern Nimruz province bordering Iran became the first provincial headquarters to fall to resurgent Taliban a day earlier, on Friday, August 6.

Not only that it depicts a hostile welcome for Dostum who was getting a ‘treatment’ in Turkey; but the fall of Zaranj and Sheberghan together with other recent happenings in the raging war between Taliban and government forces give us several indications about the unfolding strategy of Taliban. On Sunday, August 8, Taliban are reported to be closing in on city center of Konduz, capital of the northern province with the same name bordering Tajikistan. Fighting is also said to be raging intensely in Heart, Helmand and Kandhar provinces.

So what does it tell us about Taliban’s progress so far and strategy for the future? Until the turn of August, Taliban were already controlling an overwhelming share of the countryside while the cities were, and mostly remain till now, under the control of government forces. Taliban claimed controlling 85% of country’s land – which seemed realistic as most of the countryside is rural – while even an American general admitted few days ago that they [Taliban] control ‘half’ of the country.

It seems very likely now that within next few days Taliban would be controlling 5 to 7 provincial capitals, probably more.

But the areas that have fallen to Taliban already or are going to fall soon to them give a very clear message.

Control of Zaranj, means Taliban are now in-charge of trade route leading from Afghanistan to Iranian port of Chabahar. Fall of Dostum’s stronghold Jawzjan means Taliban not only control border with Turkmenistan but also overlook trade-routes with Uzbekistan passing through nearby Balkh province.

Tajik president has already made it known to the world that militia controls his country’s border with Afghanistan. Actually, several hundreds of Afghan national forces’ troops ran away into Tajik territory fleeing Taliban attack a few days ago. Some also fled to, and were given a safe passage by, Pakistan not far away from Tajik-Afghan border.

Taking Heart, and Kandhar would mean Taliban have seized control of much, rather all, of border with Iran and also with Pakistan’s Balochistan. While entire Kandhar is yet to fall, Taliban already control border crossing of Spin Boldak with Pakistan – in fact having started to dictate terms of cross-border movement to Pakistani counterpart authorities managing Chaman-Spin Boladak crossing. Afghan government authorities stated a few days ago that customs revenue has decreased significantly as Taliban controlled many of the country’s border posts – drying up the main source of revenue for Kabul.

So militia is making it clear that before they make any major move on Kabul, they are aiming for taking control of major international routes except for the air-traffic. Wakhan strip is already under their influence.

Internally, while Taliban did not rush towards provincial capitals until start of August, they were in control of many of inter-provincial roads and also partially asserting

control over roads between major provincial capitals and Kabul. With recent and upcoming gains, Taliban would be more in position to cut Kabul off from many of provincial capitals. Soon, it seems.

So the developments and moves so far tell us that ‘Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan’ – as Taliban formally name themselves – are following a strategy of ‘circling in’, on the center of power, gradually.

Yet, it is not going to be easy or smooth for them. Government forces, though highly demoralized, still control air power and airports of the country. So not only airpower may make Taliban retreat from certain gains but a complete blockade of Kabul is also not possible – it is clear to Taliban as well. Besides, government forces are also backed by lethal and unmatched airpower of US / NATO forces and bombing on advancing Taliban’s positions has been intensified in recent days. Yet, bombing is not a feasible response when the militia had already entered cities as it means huge collateral damage. As Taliban capture cities, they are releasing Taliban and other prisoners from the jails. More vehicles, equipment and ammunition in coming in their hands adding to their prowess.

It all indicates one of the bloodiest periods in Afghan history, ahead. Advance towards Kabul may take months, but even before that a lot of bloodshed is very much likely, all across the country. It is never too late, though. Let us hope that Taliban, Afghan regime in Kabul and other factions may somehow reach a negotiated arrangement – the earlier, the better. Unfortunately, the prospects for that are not really bright.

– *The author is Founding President of the Eurasian Century Institute, Islamabad-Pakistan and may be accessed at irfanzad@gmail.com*

Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan regular direct flights from Sept: envoy

Zafar Bakhtawari hosts reception; Chief Organizer, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senator Saifullah Khan Nyazee acknowledged the role & efforts of the outgoing envoy to further bilateral ties between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan





Ansar M Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: Erik Beishembiev, Ambassador of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has said his country was keen to further strengthen and diversify relations with Pakistan adding there existed huge business potential between the two brotherly countries. Ambassador Erik made these remarks during a farewell reception hosted in his honour by Zafar Bakhtawar, Chairman Pakistan, Central Asia Friendship Association. Ambassadors from Central Asian countries, Senator Saifullah Nyazee and other prominent personalities attended the reception. Senior central leader of PTI Syed Numan Shah, Syed Amir Daood Shah were also present. He added, direct chartered flights between the two countries have made it easy for peoples of both sides to visit each other. The ambassador hinted at regular flights to be commenced this year in September thus making connectivity much easier. He said his country provided gateway to other Central Asian states besides being a hub for the rest of the world. Likewise, he said like Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan was also beneficiary of the GSP+ status owing to which dozens of products could land in the European markets with zero tax. Pakistani businessmen, he said, can also benefit from this facility. The Kyrgyz ambassador further said, Kyrgyzstan is rich in water resources, which are used for electricity production by a number of hydropower stations. My country is a member of the project CASA-1000, which is aimed at bringing surplus electricity from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan hydropower stations in summer times

to Pakistan through the territory of Afghanistan. Kyrgyzstan is interested in development of short transportation links through its territory between Central Asia and China and Pakistan with access to Gwadar and Karachi ports using railway and automobile roads, which are being constructed in the framework of CPEC Pakistani and Kyrgyz businessmen may open joint ventures on textile production as Kyrgyzstan is already a major supplier of textile goods to Russia and Kazakhstan and Pakistan is one of the world's top textile producers. Of course, agriculture and livestock are dynamic sectors, where both sides can explore opportunities of opening joint ventures on agricultural products processing to increase exports to Eurasian Economic Union, European Union or Arab world, he added. Chief Organizer, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senator Saifullah Khan Nyazee acknowledged the role & efforts of the outgoing envoy to further bilateral ties between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan and extended his heartfelt felicitation to the newly appointed ambassador of Republic of Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan. Zafar Bakhtawari prominent businessman and Chairman Pakistan, Central Asia Friendship Association earlier in his welcome remarks lauded services of the outgoing ambassador. He said during his four year tenure relations between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan touched new heights. Zafar Bakhtawari added, Pakistan attached huge importance to the Central Asian region adding the upcoming visit of the Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan to Uzbekistan is a clear manifestation of our huge interest in the region. He said, when it comes to regional peace and stability, Central Asia holds key therefore mutual collaboration among the regional countries was a good omen.

Turkish ambassador hosts ceremony to commemorate July 15 Day when valient Turkish people thwarted coup attempt





Dr. Amineh's "GEMS and JEWELS: The Religions of Pakistan" launched

Murree Brewery Company sponsored the book; the company will continue to support such initiatives in the coming days as well: Asfanyar

Ansar M Bhatti

RAWALPINDI: Dr. Amineh Hoti, a well-known author and researcher's book "GEMS and JEWELS: The Religions of Pakistan" was launched at the Christian Study Centre, Rawalpindi.

The Book was sponsored by Murree Brewery Company Limited, distinguished guest such as Dr. Qibla Ayaz the chairman of Islamic Council and Isphanyar Bhandara the Chief Executive of Murree Brewery Company Limited were present there along with the representatives of different religions in Pakistan.

Ambassador of Nepal also attended the book launch ceremony.

The author of the book, Dr. Amineh Hoti said that the book and the launch event was sponsored by Murree Brewery Company Limited, she took this opportunity to thank the chief of Murree Brewery Company Limited Mr. Isphanyar Bhandara.

People perceive Pakistan as a Muslim nation only throughout the globe, though peo-

ple from different religions reside in this country too and in this book Dr. Amineh Hoti has discussed these religions thoroughly. Furthermore, she added that she named the book "GEMS and JEWELS" because she believes people residing in Pakistan with different faiths are the real gems and jewels of Pakistan. Lastly, she thanked each and every one of the guests and people part of the launch ceremony.

At this occasion, the Chief Executive of Murree Brewery Company said, "People from different faiths residing in Pakistan are wishful of a prosperous and peaceful Pakistan, with patience, resilience and discipline he minorities of Pakistan are enjoying their lives with freedom in the country and this brotherhood amongst everyone in the country shall forever remain intact for the positive upbringing of the country."

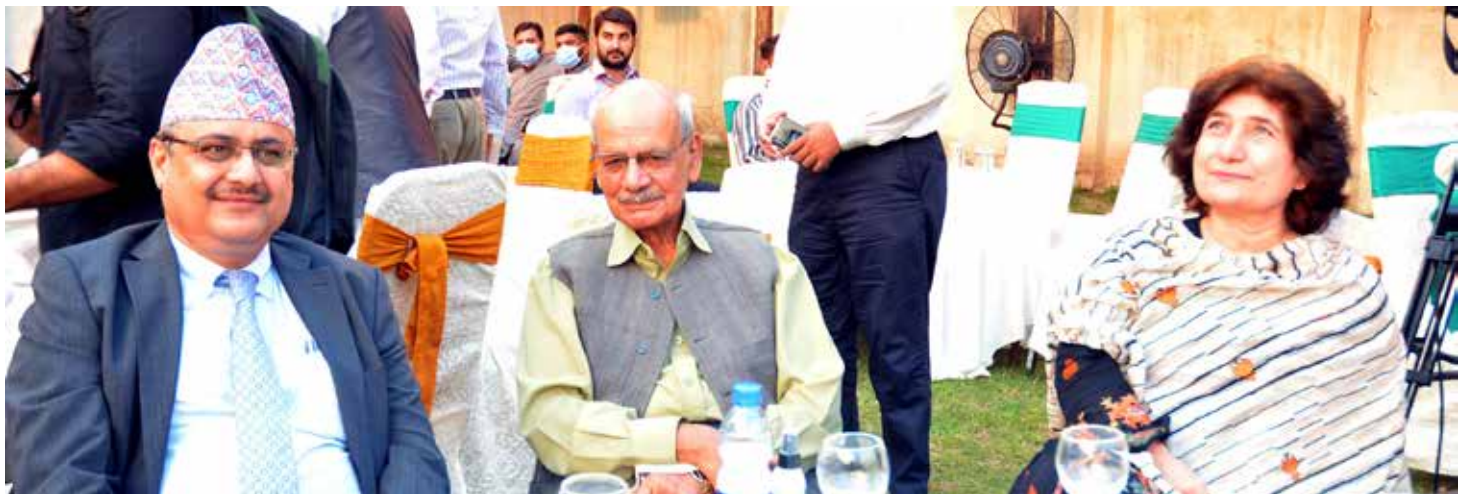
While talking about the book, Bhandara added that this book along with the facts

about different religions of Pakistan has also brought to light the notion of inter faith harmony and the historical facts about these religion and reading this book will most definitely help our young generation know more about the different people with different faiths in the country.

The Executive Director of the Christian Study Center Bishop Samuel also spoke on the occasion and praised the author for putting up a great work. He said in Pakistan all religions were co-existing peacefully adding Pakistan government needed to be supported in its efforts regarding protection of rights of the minorities.

This book is showcasing the soft image of Pakistan where we tell the world the people of all faith living in Pakistan peacefully. This is not just a book but it is a service to the motherland. This book will help building positive image of Pakistan amongst the global world and proves, Pakistan is a peace striving nation.





Chairman REIT Zahid Latif Khan fetes Kyrgyz ambassador







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Minister invites Argentina companies to Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Leopold Francisco Sahores Ambassador of Argentina in Pakistan called upon the Federal Minister of National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhar Imam in Islamabad today. Federal Minister for National Food and Security Syed Fakhar Imam welcomed the Ambassador of Argentina in Pakistan Mr. Leopold Francisco Sahores. Fakhar Imam discussed agricultural trade between the two countries. He said that Pakistan has immense agricultural capacity which can allow Pakistan to increase its exports. He hoped that Argentinian private companies would invest in Pakistan and bring value added technologies to the agriculture of Pakistan.

Federal Minister said that we will initially set up a trial of low-cost grain storage technology from Argentina and eventually its outreach will be multiplied. He continued that the two countries should increase bilateral trade in agriculture.

H.E. Leopold Francisco Sahores Ambassador of Argentina in Pakistan said that the agricultural bilateral trade between the two countries has immense potential. He said exchange of agricultural technologies can enhance the productivity of agriculture in Pakistan and thus should be a primary area of focus.



Bulgaria keen to deepen relations with Pakistan, says Ambassador Irena



Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Bulgarian Ambassador Ms Irena Gancheva said that Bulgaria is serious about expanding trade, economic and political relations with Pakistan and she started her diplomatic assignment as an ambas-

sador to Pakistan two months ago. She expressed these views during a meeting with Zafar Bakhtawari, Chairman Pakistan Cultural Forum at her embassy in Islamabad today.

Ahsan Bakhtawari and Waqar Bakhtawari were also present on the occasion. The Bulgarian Am-

bassador said that peace in Afghanistan is important not only for Pakistan but for the whole world and Pakistan's efforts in this regard are commendable.

She said that the next government of Afghanistan should have international acceptance and it Global and constitutional issues must be taken into account which will lead to the regional peace stability and development.

Zafar Bakhtawari, chairman of the Pakistan Cultural Forum, said on the occasion that after Russia, the United States has also left Afghanistan without forming a joint government and now all its responsibilities fall on Pakistan, Afghanistan's and their neighboring countries. We must work together to bring peace to Afghanistan.

Waqar Bakhtawari called for the development of trade relations with Bulgaria and assured full co-operation from his organization in this regard. Zafar Bakhtawari presented his book "Jahan Dost" to the ambassador on the occasion.



CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani hosts farewell dinner for Kyrgyz and Azerbaijan ambassadors and welcomes Kazakh ambassador





Naval Chief awarded UAE's highest military award

Staff Report

Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi is the first Naval Chief to receive this Medal

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi has been conferred with the highest Military Medal of the United Arab Emirates, during an impressive award ceremony held at UAE Embassy in Islamabad.

The Medal was conferred to the Naval Chief by His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Supreme Commander of UAE Armed forces in recognition of his outstanding professional services and efforts to enhance bilateral relations and cooperation between the

two brotherly countries.

Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi is the first Naval Chief to receive this Medal.

Pakistan and UAE enjoy close and cordial relations in defense sector. Both the brotherly countries' military leadership exchange visits regularly.

In 2018, President Dr. Arif Alvi had conferred Hilal-i-Imtiaz (Military) upon Rear Admiral (PILOT) Saeed Bin Hamdan Bin Mohammed Al Nehyan Commander, UAE Naval Forces in a special Investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, Islamabad.

Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi and senior officials were also present in the ceremony.

During the visit, Rear Admiral (PILOT) Saeed Bin Hamdan Bin Mohammed Al Nehyan Commander, UAE Naval Forces also called on President Dr. Arif Alvi. Speaking on the occasion, the President said that Pakistan and UAE have longstanding strategic and close political relations. He added that both countries maintain similarities of views on all important regional and international issues.



Climate Change and Pakistan



ASSERTING "Architects of our destruction" is not wrong for this issue. Lands, waterbodies and seasons are our world's greatest treasures. They are critical to our climate and provide a livelihood to around a billion people in and around them. Climate change is the greatest threat to our planet basically, it is expounded as the average temperature and weather conditions at a particular place over time about 11 to 40 years. It is comprised of several factors which consist behavior of winds, air pressure and temperature etc. Today human activities have influenced climate change directly or indirectly on this planet. The major contributors of climate abnormalities are emissions of combustion of fossil fuels and industrialization which affects the composition of the global atmosphere.

Thus it became distinctively clear how human activities have contributed to global warming over the years. Ever since the industrial revolution man has kept advancing, over a century and a half of industrialization, deforestation, large scale agriculture, we have reached the point where the amount of greenhouse gasses in the air is more than what it ever was in three million years. These greenhouse gasses increase the temperature of our environment, resulting in large amounts of glaciers melting all over the world risking massive floods, threats of extinction of wildlife and in general a hotter environment all around the globe.

Pakistan "The Land of Pure" is witnessing a scale of destruction and devastation. Long live Zindabad Pakistan is at the utmost terrifying stage. It is among the countries that are going to see catastrophic consequences if temperatures continue to rise. Land of beauty has moved from water affluent country to stress country, plains to barrens. Though our nation contributes less than 1 percent of the world's greenhouse gases, it is most likely to be affected by changing climate. It is at greatest risk for a fact it is lagging in 13th SDG ; Climate Action, one of the main targets of Sustainable Development Goals. Pakistan is at the point where any slight increase in temperature will

have harsh results.

Southern Pakistan (Sindh in particular) has been facing heat waves for many years which is a symptom of Global Climate Change. Similarly, droughts have reduced the river flow resulting in disruptions of agriculture which in turn affected Pakistan's economy, food production and necessities of life. Climate change has emerged as an important driving force behind floods in Pakistan.

Floods have not only displaced about 20 million people and their properties but also affected the Indus River basin by heavy monsoon rains. Coastal areas of Karachi, Badin and Thatta have also been threatened because of rising sea levels by global warming. Shivering effects of Climate Change on Pakistan such as the recession of Himalayan glaciers, monsoon rains, extreme events of heat strokes, floods, droughts, destruction of the irrigation system, low yield of crops, degradation of ecosystems and shifting of biomes has been multiplying day by day.

The major sources of GHG (Greenhouse Gases) emissions in Pakistan are the Energy and agriculture sector. It has been our government's prime responsibility to have laws and procedures in place to follow for the reduction of GHG emissions and control the amount of pollution in the air. We should take major steps towards this cause. These are essential building blocks on which the foundation of our industry will survive for the decades to come.

In Pakistan, various initiatives such as Green Pakistan Program, Billion Tree Tsunami Program, Sustainable Forest Management Rehabilitation of Indus Delta Mangroves for Future Program are underway to deal with deforestation to promote sustainable forest management across the country. Both adaption and mitigation are reflected in the country's policy and implementation approach.

Moreover, programs such as "Clean and Green Pakistan" and "Recharge Pakistan" have been launched. Several projects are also working side by side as Project Clean-Green and Green Hope under British Council Citizens Program, that aims to

create awareness among youth and communities on climate crisis. Thus, these countrywide tree plantation drives provide a natural solution to restore depleted forest and mitigate climate change.

For the mitigation of GHG emissions, many companies and institutes host a green drive every month, where they plant trees in their vicinity. Planting more and more trees is the most natural solution to the growing environmental threats to our planet. The new regulations set by certain governments force the big car manufacturers like Toyota to design cars that pass their carbon emission requirements. Those models are then sold across the globe benefiting everyone. Nowadays we do not see cars with smoke coming out of their tailpipes, this was not a regular feature until a decade ago. Factories are not planted in the vicinity of residential areas but rather in the outskirts of cities to provide cleaner air for people to breathe. GHG emissions not only contribute to climate change but the harmful toxins in the air cause many respiratory issues as well. These steps are surely slowing down the process but are not enough to stop and restore the balance of our environment. We must proceed towards a cleaner future. Electric vehicles, improved methods of agriculture production, a new sustainable renewable energy source, these are just a few things which will ensure a better future for generations to come, provided we act now.

It has taken man centuries of ignorance to bring us to a point where we cannot avoid it anymore and it will take several decades to fix it – if we act now. Global warming is a worldwide occurring phenomenon and it affects the whole world, and this is a time we truly accept it and do act towards a better tomorrow than today for long live Pakistan.

– The writer is student of BS (Centre of Environmental Sciences) University of Sindh, Jamshoro)

Serena Hotels fets Pakistani Mountaineer Sirbaz for Everest Ascent







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Government of Pakistan

SHAHEED ZULFIQAR ALI BHUTTO MEDICAL UNIVERSITY (PIMS), ISLAMABAD

SITUATION VACANT

| S. No. | NAME OF POST | NO. OF POSTS | QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE |
|--------|---|--------------|--|
| 1 | Project Coordinator (PPS - 9) | 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">B.Sc. preferably Masters in Engineering (Civil) or Equivalent degree recognized from HEC15 years' experience for civil works / construction especially in hospital buildings including planning, scheduling, optimized resource estimation and assignment, monitoring, periodic reviews of project progress, updating and control, compiling of technical reports and consultation with the consultant, contractor on behalf of senior management and having good interpersonal skills and communication.Age 45 - 55 years |
| 2 | Electrical Engineer (PPS - 8) | 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">B. Sc. Engg. (Electrical)/Electronics or Equivalent degree recognized from HECMaster in Electrical / Electronic/Computer Engineering or Equivalent will be preferred.05 years' experience for civil works / construction especially in hospital buildings including planning, scheduling, optimized resource estimation and assignment, monitoring, periodic reviews of project progress, updating and control, compiling of technical reports and consultation with the consultant, contractor on behalf of senior management and having good interpersonal skills and communication.Age 22 - 35 years |
| 3 | Civil Engineer (PPS-8) | 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">B.Sc. preferably Masters in Engineering (Civil) or Equivalent degree recognized from HEC07 years' experience for civil works / construction especially in hospital buildings including planning, scheduling, optimized resource estimation and assignment, monitoring, periodic reviews of project progress, updating and control, compiling of technical reports and consultation with the consultant, contractor on behalf of senior management and having good interpersonal skills and communication.Age 22 - 35 years |
| 4 | Accounts Officer (PPS-7) | 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">ICMA/CA/ACCA from a reputed Institution.02 years' experience as Accountant for development and Project's Accounts in the Health / Hospitals Departments.Age 22 - 32 years |
| 5 | Office Assistant (PPS-5) | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">2nd Class Bachelor's Degree from a recognized university.05 years' experience of administration work (experience in development projects of health / hospitals will be preferred).Age 18 - 28 years |
| 6 | Assistant Engineer – Civil (PPS-4) | 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">DAE03 years' experience in the relevant fieldAge 18 - 28 years |

| | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| 7 | Driver (PPS-2) | 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matriculation • Holding a valid driving license of LTV • 05 years' experience as LTV Driver • Age 18 - 28 years |
| 8 | Office Attendant (PPS-1) | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle pass • 05 years' experience as office boy in the Government offices. • Age: 18 – 25years |

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 - ✓ Two recent passport size photographs
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- ☞ Candidates applying for more than one post shall submit separate application with necessary documents, complete in all respects.
- ☞ The applications for all posts will have to be submitted through courier or registered post etc. only. By hand applications will not be entertained.
- ☞ Application for PPS (1-4) must be accompanied with pay order / demand draft (non-refundable) of Rs. 500/- and for PPS (5-9) must be accompanied with pay order / demand draft (non-refundable) of Rs. 1,000/- in favor of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Medical University, Islamabad.
- ☞ Candidates already in services of Government/Semi-Government department or in an autonomous department must apply through proper channel otherwise their application shall not be entertained.
- ☞ The University reserves the right to increase/decrease the post(s) according to the need of the University and has right to reject any application without giving any reason.
- ☞ Both male and female candidates are eligible to apply.
- ☞ Age relaxation will be given as per Government rule.
- ☞ The above posts will be purely on contractual basis for a period of three years.
- ☞ Incomplete applications or received after due date will not be entertained.
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Serena hosts Musical Grand Finale of Sarangi Season 5

CEO Serena Hotels South and Central Asia, Aziz Boolani says
“Serena has promoted the arts and intercultural activities
to inspire a culture of peace and hope

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A star studded grand finale event was held on Friday evening at Serena Hotels to conclude the Season 5 of Serena Hotel's Sarangi countrywide music talent hunt competition. The event, held with full Covid-19 SOPs including social distancing and vaccination card checks, was attended by prominent members of the diplomatic corps, business community and Islamabad society gathered to listen to the musical performances and the announcement of winner.

The First Lady Samina Alvi along with jury members Shehzad Roy and Sarmad Ghafoor as well as CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani jointly announced the results. The judges declared the contest a tie between Ali Baloch from Islamabad and Ghayas Haider from Lahore.

A call for submissions had been given earlier this year through Serena Hotel's social media platforms as a result of which 5 talented contestants, hailing from diverse backgrounds and different parts of the country, were shortlisted for the grand finale. The contestants also included Ayesha Afzal from Pakpattan, Adden Sohail from Faisalabad and Fida Mughal from Neelum Valley, Kashmir. This year's Sarangi jury panel once again consisted of renowned figures of



music industry including singers Shehzad Roy and Zoe Viccaji and music producer Sarmad Ghafoor.

Sarangi is a Cultural Diplomacy initiative of Serena Hotels and aims to promote the arts and culture of Pakistan. Since its inception in 2017, the Sarangi initiative has given a large pool of promising musical talent from around the country a platform to be discovered, polished and become the nation's rising star.

Ayesha Rasheed from Lahore, who was the winner of Sarangi Season 4, also performed a powerful rendition of “Lambi Judai” on the occasion. Speaking to the press, Shehzad Roy said, “I am blown away by the talent that is to be found all over Pakistan. It was a tough challenge for us judges to select only five people from the 50 shortlisted submissions, but we tried to do justice.”

“With the dearth of a proper music industry and opportunities for younger people, projects like Sarangi gives young musicians a platform to work towards and be heard on a larger platform. The final prize which is a song recording and music video is so apt and something I would have truly valued when I first started pursuing music,” commented Zoe Viccaji via a video message.

CEO Serena Hotels South and Central Asia, Mr. Aziz Boolani, speaking at the occasion, said: “Serena has promoted the arts and intercultural activities to inspire a culture of peace and hope. And we truly believe in giving recognition and platform to the emerging artists that need recognition. I am grateful to the judges and the guests for coming together to support this initiative and encourage the creative talent that Pakistan possesses.”





MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT SIGNING CEREMONY

Foster Gender Equality



“

The MoA aims to bring together the expertise of Pakistan's leading business school at NUST, and Serena Hotels as a leading hospitality brand, to offer women graduates of NBS a valuable training opportunity for hands-on experiential learning and training in the field of hospitality management in a structured and professional setting

”

Serena Hotels, NUST sign MoU for trainee programme

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with National University of Science and Technology (NUST) to induct female graduates from NUST Business School (NBS) into the Serena Management Trainee Programme.

Engr. Javed Mahmood Bukhari HI (M), Rector of NUST, graced the MoA signing ceremony along with the Pro-Rectors and the Dean of NBS, and representatives of the business and hospitality sectors.

The MoA aims to bring together the expertise of Pakistan's leading business school at NUST, and Serena Hotels as a leading hospitality brand, to offer women graduates of NBS a valuable training opportunity for hands-on experiential learning and training in the field of hospitality management in a structured and professional setting. The one-year programme will provide the Management

Trainees with immersive learning to equip them with a holistic view of the business, as well as understanding the inter-relationships between different functional departments. The training is envisaged as an accelerated pathway that will help unlock their advancement to higher-level management positions in the industry.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels South and Central Asia, said that the number of female professionals in the hospitality sector is traditionally low. As a leading hotel chain, Serena Hotels makes every effort to encourage women in their professional development for assuming higher positions, including the leadership role. There is no doubt that companies can deliver greater business impact and be more competitive by fostering an equitable and inclusive workplace for women and men.

Mr. Boolani added that Serena Hotels is the recipient of the Employer of Choice for Gender Balance and Economic Dividends for Gender Equality (EDGE) Certification by International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank. The Company is also a member of the Male Champion of Change (MCC) coalition - a global initiative working towards achieving gender equality in the workplace.

"Our country has immense potential in tourism. High-quality education and training programmes can expose professionals, especially women, to world class training so they can lead the country to excellence in the hospitality sector," said Engr. Javed Mahmood Bukhari HI(M) in his remarks on the occasion.

Mr. Aziz Boolani expressed his gratitude to the Rector NUST, the Dean of NUST Business School Dr. Naukhez Sarwar and the Serena team for making the collaboration possible.





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"Made in Azerbaijan" products in the Pakistani markets

Staff Report



ISLAMABAD: With the initiative of the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Gazelli Group, the first local natural cosmetics producer company of Azerbaijan, was introduced in Pakistan in order to sell "Made in Azerbaijan" products in Pakistan. Mrs. Narmin Ismayilova, CEO of Gazelli Group who is in Pakistan for this purpose, held bilateral meetings with a number of Pakistani companies operating in this field, and informed them about local and natural products manufactured by Gazelli Group. She emphasized that her company is ready to do the necessary works to sell the high quality natural products of Gazelli Group in the Pakistani market.

During the meetings, an agreement was reached to sell the products of the Azerbaijani company Gazelli Group in the D.Watson chain of stores of Pakistan, which sells many different brands from around the world. Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari, Managing Director of Pakistan's D.Watson chain of stores, expressed interest in the products of Gazelli Group, a well-known brand of Azerbaijan, and told that they will visit Azerbaijan soon to get acquainted with the company's factories.

Malaysia offers scholarships to Pak students

Priority will be given to the following areas of study: Economics and Banking, Business Management, Science and Technology

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: The Malaysian Technical Co-operation Programme (MTCP) has invited full time postgraduate Master's Degree Programmes students from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to apply for MTCP Scholarship for the Academic Year of 2021/2022.

All applications are to be submitted through online application system via the link <https://biasiswa.mohe.gov.my/INTER/> Full time postgraduate students are invited to take Master's Degree Programme in 20 Malaysian Higher Learning Institutions including Universiti Malaya (UM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia (UIAM), Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)

Priority will be given to the following areas of study: Economics and Banking, Business Management, Science and Technology (not including nursing, medicine, clinical pharmacy), International Relations and Diplomacy, Public Policy and Governance, Agriculture and Livestock and Social Science.

For more information, the applicants may visit the following website to have more information https://biasiswa.mohe.gov.my/INTER/index_criteria_MTCP.php



JOBS IN PAKISTAN RAILWAYS

Ministry of Railways intends to hire the services of professionals having relevant expertise and qualifications, under various PSDP Projects. Interested candidates may apply for relevant post to be filled purely on contract basis under Project Pay Scale (PPS).

| # | Description of the Posts | No. of Post | Qualification | Eligibility/Experience |
|----|--|-------------|---|--|
| 1 | Project Director/ Construction of New Track, Upgradation/ Rehabilitation of Track from Chaman Yard (including) to Pak-Afghan border (PPS-10) | 01 | Bachelor's of Civil/ Construction Engineering or equivalent approved by PEC | • Over all 12 years' experience in project Management with experience of successful completion of 2-3 projects. |
| 2 | Project Director/ Rehabilitation of track between Baruli-Sohan Bridge on Kundian-Attok City Section (Peshawar Division Phase-1) (PPS-10) | 01 | | • Preference shall be given to PMP certified Professionals. |
| 3 | Project Director/ Rehabilitation of track between Rehmani Nagar & Bakrani Road on Dadu-Habib Kot Section (Sukkur division, Phase-4) (PPS-10) | 01 | | • Master's in project management or equivalent is optional and shall be given preference. |
| 4 | Project Director/ Rehabilitation of Track between Sama Satta-Bahawalnagar on Sama Satta-Amruka Section) (PPS-10) | 01 | | • Preference shall be given to candidates having experience in quality execution of civil works and inspection/ testing of civil structural works. |
| 5 | Project Director/ Improvement of terminal facilities & enhancing security arrangements at Marshalling yard, Pipri, Karachi (PPS-10) | 01 | Government Servant with 12 years' experience of operations and commercial management of dry ports/ terminals with minimum master's degree/16 years education and experience of project management | • Preference shall be given to candidates having prior experience of railway/ government. |
| 6 | Project Director/ Establishment of Coal Terminals Pakistan Railways (Phase-I) (PPS-10) | 01 | | • Preference shall be given to candidates having familiarity with PPRA procurement rules. |
| 7 | Project Director/ Improvement of terminal facilities (Mughalpura & Qila Sattar Shah) on Pakistan Railways (PPS-10) | 01 | | • Clean service record during previous service. |
| 8 | Project Director/ Rehabilitation of 300 KVA DG sets (PPS-10) | 01 | Bachelor's in Electrical/ Electronics Engineering (Mandatory) with Masters in Project Management | • Post is purely on contract basis with a notice period of 3 months. |
| 9 | Project Director/ Installation and Commissioning of Solar System at 155 Nos Railway Stations (PPS-10) | 01 | | • Retired Government or railway officers can apply. |
| 10 | Project Director/ Procurement of equipment for improved security and antiterrorism measures (PPS-10) | 01 | Bachelor's in Information Technology (Mandatory) with Masters in Project Management | • Serving Government/railways officers can apply through proper channel. |

1. The appointment shall be purely on contract basis initially for 01 year and further extended till project completion on performance basis.
2. Applicants already working in Federal or Provincial Government may apply through proper channel.
3. Application along with complete CV, attested copy of the testimonials, and three latest passport size photographs should reach the office of undersigned within 15 days of the publication of this advertisement. Incomplete and late applications in any respect will not be considered.
4. Ministry of Railways reserves the right to select/reject or not to fill any position (s) and reason shall be communicated.
5. Retired/ Serving officers can apply as per government policy, as amended from time to time. No objection certificate from the concerned department must be furnished at the time of application.
6. Only short-listed candidates will be called for interview. No TA/DA will be admissible for test/ interview.

(Imran Mashal)

Deputy Chief Planning
Room No. 104, D-Block
Pak. Secretariat, Islamabad
051-9214272

PID (I) 708/21



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