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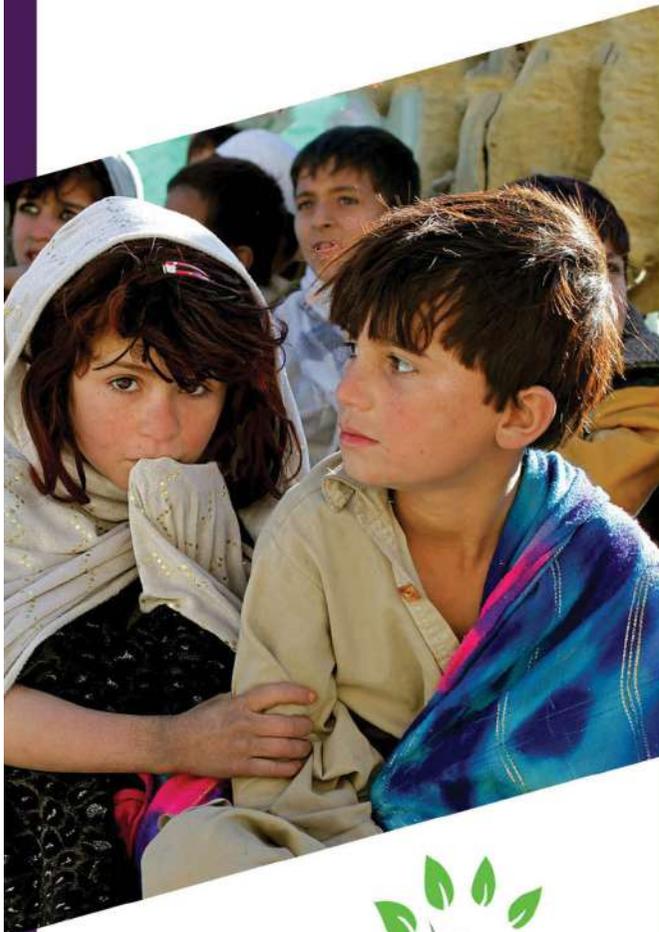


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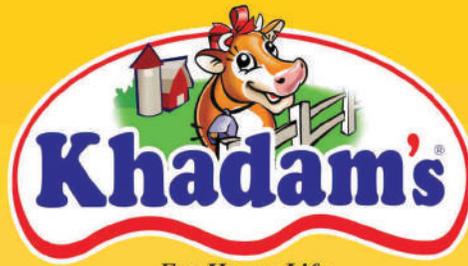
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- Aim to support people to become creative entrepreneurs in order to stand on their feet
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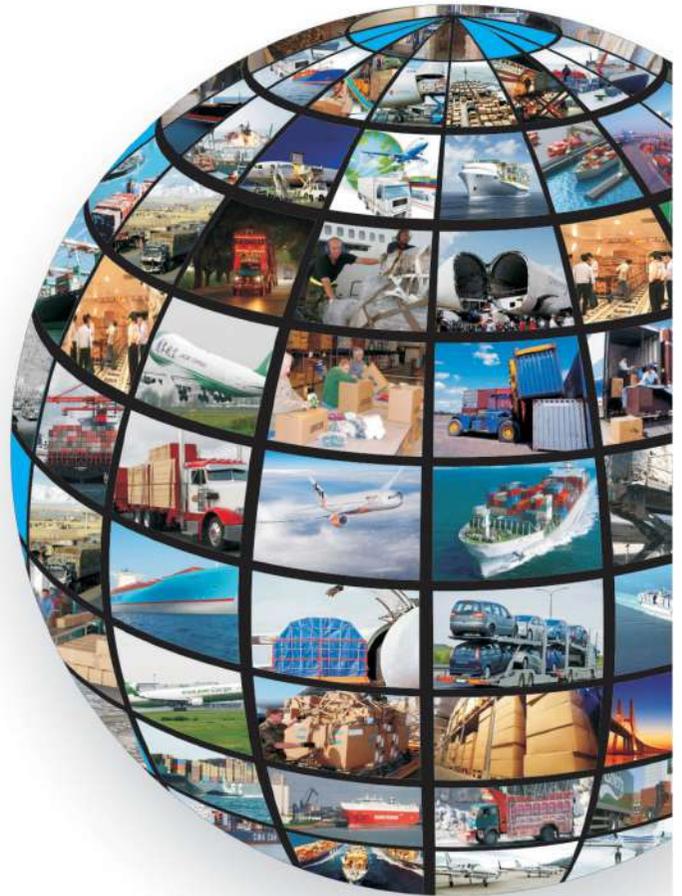
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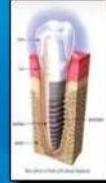
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OIC session in Islamabad a feather in govt's cap



THE extra-ordinary session of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held in Islamabad on December 19, 2021 can surely be regarded as a feather in the present government's cap because over 20 foreign minister and 10 deputy foreign ministers attended this event. In the eyes of the outer world, Pakistan is often regarded as an unsafe country for such mega events therefore holding of this particular session helped dilute that impression. The foreign ministers of the member states met in Islamabad after almost 40 years to discuss once again the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

While there is no denying the fact that the conference could have not seen the light of the day without the active support and patronage of the Saudi government, Pakistan had gladly accepted to be the host of the event and post-conference feedback suggests, the Pakistan government and especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs successfully conducted the event albeit there were few hiccups as well but the same can be overlooked given the fact that Pakistan had no experience of hosting such a gigantic event, at least in the recent past. As we saw many countries made solemn pledges both in cash and kind to help suffering Afghans. Saudi Arabia announced 1 billion Riyals while many European countries too committed reasonable sums. Interestingly when it comes to pledges, Muslim countries response is quite forthcoming but when it comes to actually deliver these pledges, they start beating about the bush. Western countries unlike make modest pledges yet ensure their timely fulfillment. The evolving Afghan situation requires an urgent response. Any complacency can only add to their woes.

All said and done, the Afghan government spearheaded by Taliban needs to address concerns shared with them during the OIC session and on other occasions as well. And more than that, concerns of the neighboring countries also need to be heeded to because these countries happen to be the direct target whenever instability rules supreme in Afghanistan. Stability in Afghanistan ostensibly holds key to regional peace and stability. Also it is important for Afghanistan to thrive and prosper, particularly in the field of economy, with a view to minimizing its dependence on foreign aid. Without economic independence, political independence will remain elusive. Historically the spoilers have also played key role in causing instability in Afghanistan. And irony of the matter is that the spoilers are still there. They exist within and without Afghanistan. They would wish to keep Afghanistan always on its toes so that their (spoilers) relevance remains intact. One must not forget that in the United States, withdrawal was construed as an ignominious defeat. And as we know it is always difficult to accept or digest defeat, especially when it is inflicted by the minnows.

Coming back to the OIC extra-ordinary session, it was indeed a big opportunity for Pakistan to showcase to the outer world that it is a peaceful country. The delegates would have been taken to various touristic sites, many of such sites located in Islamabad, to reveal true beauty of Islamabad. But regrettably, no such effort was made. Guests were not allowed to even enjoy grandeur of the Margalla Hills under the so-called excuse of security threat. What a pity.

Last but not the least, the foreign ministers of the Central Asian states were conspicuous with their absence, though their assistants attended the event. According to reports they chose to attend a similar conference in India. Being the key stakeholders their presence in Islamabad moot could have made a difference. The Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs need to look into it and try to figure out why foreign ministers of these countries did not deem it necessary to grace the Islamabad moot with their presence.

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.

PM Imran calls for immediate action to avert humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan

EXCLUSIVE

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti



The prime minister said that owing to a dearth of resources, if the Afghan government remained unable to fight terrorism, other countries may also face its spillover impact

AFGHANISTAN is heading towards chaos and the ‘biggest man-made disaster’, warned Prime Minister Imran Khan Sunday and called for devising an immediate strategy to address the dire humanitarian crisis in the war-torn country. In his keynote address at the 17th Extraordinary Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation in Islamabad, PM Imran warned that if the international community failed to act in a timely way, Afghanistan could potentially become the biggest man-made disaster. “Unless action is taken immediately, Afghanistan is heading for chaos. When it cannot pay salaries to public servants, doctors and nurses, any government is going to collapse. But chaos suits no one. It certainly does not suit the United States,” he added. The prime minister said that owing to a dearth of resources, if the Afghan government remained unable to fight terrorism, other countries may also face its spillover impact.

Mentioning the presence of Daesh in Afghanistan, and terror attacks inside Pakistan by it from across the Afghan border, the prime minister said the only way to handle the terror outfit was a stable Afghanistan. He said Daesh was capable of carrying out international attacks. The prime minister said Pakistan also had the same worry, having faced the biggest collateral damage of the Afghan war with the loss of 80,000 people and a shattered economy, and displacement of 3.5 million people. The prime minister welcomed the delegates in Pakistan and said ironically, Pakistan had hosted the OIC moot on Afghanistan 41 years ago as no country suffered from conflicts as much as Afghanistan. He said the situation in Afghanistan was also caused by “years of corrupt government, suspen-

sion of foreign aid, freezing of foreign assets and a dysfunctional banking system” which could lead to the collapse of any state. The prime minister said the OIC had a huge responsibility as it was our religious duty, too, to support the suffering Afghan brethren.

The prime minister urged the world not to link their support with the Taliban, but rather that they must think of 40 million people. However, he also said that the Taliban would also have to understand that formation of an inclusive government, respect for human rights, particularly women, and disallowing the use of Afghan soil for terrorism in other countries would pave the way for international aid to Afghanistan.

The prime minister, however, asked the international community to be sensitive to the

cultural traditions of Afghanistan as well as adjoining areas in Pakistan, particularly considering girls’ education.

He said in case of violation of their traditions, the families would never send their girls to school even if incentivised, but they would willingly do it without any stipend if they felt satisfied. The prime minister said any chaos in Afghanistan would lead to the mass exodus of refugees which would be unaffordable for Pakistan.

He said developed countries had a problem even with a few thousand refugees, so how could a developing country like Pakistan host hundreds of thousands of them. He also called for OIC’s unified response on the issues of Kashmir and Palestine, where people were struggling for their democratic rights guaranteed by the United Nations.

– Saudi Foreign Minister calls on Prime Minister Imran Khan

THE Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, His Highness Prince Faisal Bin Farhan Al Saud, called on Prime Minister Imran Khan today. The Prime Minister conveyed cordial greetings for the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques His Majesty King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Appreciating the Saudi initiative to convene the Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers on the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, the Prime Minister expressed the hope that the world would not repeat the mistake of disengaging with Afghanistan. He urged the international community to support the vulnerable people of Afghanistan. To alleviate the sufferings of the Afghan people, the Prime Minister highlighted that Pakistan remained committed to facilitate humanitarian organizations working from Pakistan for their humanitarian support to Afghanistan. Reaffirming Pakistan’s abiding commitment to the continued well-being of the people of Afghanistan, the Prime Minister highlighted that Pakistan has already committed to immediate relief of in-kind humanitarian assistance worth Rs. 5 billion, which comprises of food commodities including 50,000 MT of wheat, emergency medical supplies, winter shelters and other supplies. On Pakistan-Saudi Arabia bilateral re-

lations, the Prime Minister underscored the special significance of the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia relationship, which is based on close fraternal ties, historic links, and support at the grass-roots level. Recalling his visit to Saudi Arabia in October 2021, the Prime Minister highlighted the assiduous follow-up on the decisions taken and stressed the need for exploring new avenues of cooperation to further deepen bilateral relations in diverse fields. Thanking the Prime Minister for the hosting the Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers on the

humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, Prince Faisal expressed hope that the Session would be instrumental in mobilizing the international community to support the people of Afghanistan on humanitarian grounds. He also underscored the importance that Saudi Arabia attaches to its strong relationship with Pakistan, based on bonds of brotherhood. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoy close fraternal relations, marked by close cooperation and mutual support. Saudi Arabia is a member of OIC Contact Group on Jammu & Kashmir and steadfastly supports the Kashmir cause.



– OIC Secretary General calls on the Prime Minister



SECRETARY General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) H.E. Hissien Brahim Taha called on Prime Minister Imran Khan today. The Prime Minister welcomed the OIC Secretary General on his first visit to Pakistan and thanked him for his participation in the Extraor-

inary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM). He appreciated the OIC's efforts for peace and stability in Afghanistan. He also emphasized on the importance of providing humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable Afghan population and the need for economic engagement by

the international community.

The Prime Minister highlighted the contemporary challenge of Islamophobia affecting Muslims around the world. He suggested that OIC can take a lead in educating the global audience about the love and reverence of Muslims for the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.). The Prime Minister raised concern regarding the grave human rights situation in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). While appreciating the OIC's steadfast support for Kashmiris, he requested the OIC Secretary General for continued advocacy for the resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions.

The OIC Secretary General thanked the Prime Minister for his leadership in organizing the Extraordinary Session of OIC CFM to address the humanitarian crisis confronting the Afghan people. He also thanked Pakistan and its people for the warm hospitality extended during his stay in Pakistan.

– Indonesian FM meets Gen Bajwa

RETNO Lestari Priansari Marsudi, Foreign Minister of Indonesia called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), today.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, enhanced defence and security cooperation, regional security, current situation in Afghanistan & collaboration / partnership in Humanitarian measures were discussed. COAS said that Pakistan values Indonesia's role in global and regional affairs and we look forward to enhance our bilateral relationship. COAS stressed upon the urgency for swiftly devising an institutional mechanism for channeling humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan in order to avert a looming humanitarian catastrophe. He underscored the importance of peace and reconciliation initiatives in Afghanistan. COAS emphasised that peaceful resolution



of Kashmir dispute is essential for stability in South Asia. He also reiterated that Pakistan wants cordial ties with all its neighbours in pursuit of regional peace and prosperity. The visiting dignitary appreciated

Pakistan's role in Afghan situation, special efforts for border management, role in regional stability and pledged to play her part for further improvement in diplomatic cooperation with Pakistan at all levels.

– Pakistani Women Parliamentarians Interact with Indonesian FM

FOREIGN minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi met the foreign minister of Indonesia, Ms. Retno Marsudi, in Islamabad today on the eve of the 17th extraordinary session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The meeting was later joined by 8 women parliamentarians of Pakistan (members of the National Assembly and Senate), including Ms. Andleeb Abbas, Ms. Maleeka Ali Bokhari, Ms. Kanwal Shauzab, Ms. Seemee Ezdi, Ms. Tashfeensafdar, Ms. Syma Nadeem, Ms. Aliya Hamza Malik and Dr. Zarqa Suharwardy Taimur, to interact with the Indonesian foreign

minister. Views were exchanged on women empowerment and promotion of equal opportunities, especially in the context of democratic and Islamic character of both Indonesia and Pakistan. The meeting discussed the great scope for cooperation between the women MPs from both sides to share best legislative practices, enhance mutual contacts and further parliamentary engagement in the areas of health, education and sports, among others. The participants expressed solidarity with the people of Afghanistan, in particular women and girls, and discussed ways to reach out to them in these difficult times.

– Meeting of the Foreign Minister with his Somali counterpart



FOREIGN Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi met his counterpart from Somalia, H.E. Mr. Abdisaid Mouse Ali, on the margins of the 17th Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers being held in Islamabad today. The two Ministers recalled their historic, fraternal and trust based ties, anchored deeply in common faith and values. They exchanged views on bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest. The excellent cooperation, shared perceptions and traditional support

for each other at multilateral fora were highlighted during the interaction. Both sides expressed satisfaction on the current status of their bilateral relationship and shared the common desire and keenness for enhanced engagement at all levels.

Foreign Minister Qureshi appreciated the presence of over 2000 Somali students in different educational institutions in Pakistan as their preferred destination under Pakistan's Technical Assistance Program and reassured continued training oppor-

tunities for diplomatic, defense, banking, health and IT professionals. Both Ministers expressed readiness to conclude MoU for 'Bilateral Political Consultations' between the Foreign Ministries and advance technical cooperation for supporting the national database of Somalia. Extending full support for the efforts of Somalian government for promoting peace and progress in the country, Foreign Minister Qureshi extended a cordial invitation to his counterpart for a bilateral visit to Pakistan.

– Malaysian FM calls on the Prime Minister

MALAYSIAN Foreign Minister, His Excellency Dato Sri Saifuddin Abdullah, called on Prime Minister Imran Khan today. Thanking Malaysia for participation in the Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers, the Prime Minister appreciated Malaysia's active role in the OIC and its efforts for peace building and humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan. Prime Minister Imran Khan said that Pakistan and Malaysia have historical relations deeply rooted in mutual respect and support at regional and global level. Pakistan was committed to deepen the bilateral ties through enhanced economic engagement and further strengthening of cooperation in a range of areas including tourism, defence, and people to people exchanges. Foreign Minister Dato Sri Saifuddin Abdullah appreciated the convening of the OIC Extraordinary Session on Afghanistan as

a timely initiative to address the humanitarian crisis confronting the Afghan people. He lauded Pakistan's constructive role for promotion of peace and stability in Afghanistan,

and expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Imran Khan and the people of Pakistan for their warm welcome and generous hospitality extended during their stay in Pakistan.



– Prime Minister receives Foreign Minister of Iran



humanitarian assistance to avert economic collapse and improve livelihood. Expressing the hope that the Extraordinary session would provide impetus to OIC member states to assist Afghanistan, the Prime Minister urged the international community to find additional ways for long term reconstruction and infrastructure development in Afghanistan. In the bilateral context, Prime Minister Imran Khan highlighted fraternal bilateral relations and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthen ties. He appreciated Iran's consistent support on Kashmir, specially at the Supreme Leader level. The Prime Minister reiterated invitation to President Raisi to visit Pakistan. Foreign Minister Dr. Abdollahiyan appreciated Pakistan's decision to host Extraordinary session of OIC Council of Foreign Ministers on Afghanistan. He assured of Iran's full cooperation to promote bilateral relations.

PRIME Minister Imran Khan received Foreign Minister of Iran Dr. Amir Hossein Abdollahiyan today. The Prime Minister, welcoming the Iranian Foreign Minister

on his first visit to Pakistan, shared Pakistan's perspective on the latest economic situation in Afghanistan. He remarked that Afghanistan needed urgent international



Shaikh Rashid welcomes Afghan Foreign Minister



State Minister for Information Farrukh Habib presents album to OIC Secy General



FM Qureshi in a meeting with Jordan Foreign Minister

Ms. Shahera Shahid Federal Secretary Ministry of Information and Broadcasting giving certificates to Information Ministry officers after training session at the Information Service Academy. Director General ISA Saeed Javed and PIO Sohail Ali Khan also present.



By appeasing Iran, Biden is repeating a historic mistake

The JCPOA was endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231 of 2015. The IAEA has collected enough evidence about Iran's treaty violations for a censure resolution by its board of governors and to place it before the UNSC



Ishtiaq Ahmed

THE appeasement of Nazi Germany in the 1930s spectacularly failed in its attempt to prevent the outbreak of the Second World War. In 1938, after British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain agreed to the fatal compromise on Czechoslovakia's German-speaking Sudetenland at Munich, Winston Churchill said: "You were given the choice between war and dishonor. You chose dishonor and you will have war." War broke out a year later after Germany invaded Poland. The rest is history, and its consequences were devastating. Three-quarters of a century down the line, yet another appeasement is now in play. This time, Iran is the aggressor and the US the appeaser.

The venue is Vienna and the end goal less than ideal: To delay the possibility of Iran acquiring a weapon of mass destruction, rather than permanently cap its ability to do so. President Barack Obama tried before, fueling Iran's aggression across the region. His Democratic successor, Joe Biden, is now trying again, overlooking the consequences of this aggression.

Since 1979, Iran's clerical rulers have thrived on perpetual conflict with America and its allies in the Arab world, sponsoring terrorist assassinations, inflaming sectarian passions and flouting international commitments. More than a decade ago, Iran's unlawful pursuit of nuclear weapons alarmed the International Atomic Energy Agency, compelling the UN Security Council to pass a number of punitive resolutions. But the worst was yet to come.

The 2011 Arab Spring provided Iran with an opportunity to gear up its proxy warfare in Bahrain, Yemen, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. Yet, in 2015, without consulting his Arab allies, Obama went ahead with the so-called Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – handing more than \$100 billion in sanctions relief to Iran in return for its nuclear compliance for a decade or so.

The ayatollahs instead shifted their focus to amassing short and medium-range ballistic missiles and precision-guided munitions, which the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps has, through its affiliates, used against Arab nations and American forces. In response, President Donald Trump in 2018 exited the "horrible" ac-

cord and exerted "maximum pressure" on Iran; but he did so only to protect US interests and not those of Washington's Arab allies.

Ironically, just as Iran has intensified its aggressive activities in the Middle East, the US has eroded its security commitments in the region. This is a bipartisan policy, which began with Obama's pivot to Asia strategy, continued with Trump's America First slogan and now sees a declared US geopolitical shift to the Indo-Pacific under Biden.

It is, however, on the nuclear front that the appeaser's kowtowing before the aggressor is unraveling rather starkly. Biden has already wasted almost a year attempting to woo Iran back to the JCPOA, despite its consistent breaches of the nuclear accord since 2019.

Consequently, the breakout time Tehran needs to make a nuclear weapon has now shrunk to a matter of weeks, from three months in 2015, which Obama claimed to have extended to one year under the JCPOA. A return to this status quo ante would be fraught with great risks. Unless the timeline is extended by another decade or so, Iran has a few years left under the nuclear deal's sunset clauses to resume clandestine nuclear operations without any international oversight.

Even an Iranian return to the nuclear accord becomes meaningless when one considers that the IAEA has already raised the alarm that Tehran has seriously breached the limits set by the JCPOA on the level and volume of uranium enrichment and the number and type of centrifuges. Iran has produced uranium metal, a crucial element in nuclear weapons; enriched enough uranium to 60 percent purity, a short distance to the 90 percent purity needed for nuclear weapons; increased its production and use of advanced centrifuges for nuclear enrichment; and accumulated the scientific knowledge needed to develop nuclear weapons. It has also restricted or even blocked IAEA inspectors' access to declared nuclear installations at Natanz and Fordow and the centrifuge assembly plant at Karaj, while several of its undeclared and suspected nuclear sites remain beyond their reach.

Now in their eighth and probably final round, the so-called P5+1 talks on the JCPOA's revival in Vienna are hostage to the whims of Iran's hard-line negotiators. They have spared no opportunity to sabotage them by making unrealistic demands that the US must first lift all economic sanctions – even those not covered under the JCPOA – and also guarantee that no future president will withdraw from the accord. Biden's team is effectively cornered, unable to even directly participate in the Vienna talks upon Iranian insistence. It no more insists on a "longer, stronger" agreement – one that incorporates Iran's malign activities and ballistic missiles. And it prefers to blame Trump for providing Iran with the pretext to violate the JCPOA, instead of confessing its own timidity in dealing with such an aggressive rival.

Appeasement breeds aggression. Rather than learning this key lesson from the buildup to the Second World War, Biden has incentivized Tehran's march toward the bomb by refusing to impose any consequences on the clerical regime for its provocations. What prevents him from taking firm action on an issue where the cost of inaction is unaffordable is hard to fathom. The US still has a narrow window of opportunity to preempt Iran's nuclear breakout by immediately forsaking this useless nuclear diplomacy and adopting a range of sequential actions, such as ratcheting up the sanctions regime and sending a clear message that, if Iran chooses to cross the Rubicon on this issue, it must be ready to face resolute military action.

The JCPOA was endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231 of 2015. The IAEA has collected enough evidence about Iran's treaty violations for a censure resolution by its board of governors and to place it before the UNSC, where China and Russia can at best abstain from proceedings meant to invoke the use of force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Of course, such a course would have its own consequences, but that's a different story.

– Ishtiaq Ahmad is a former journalist who has been Vice Chancellor of Sargodha University in Pakistan and Quaid-e-Azam Fellow at the University of Oxford.

Chinese officials negligence; future of Pak students at stake

RCCI President Nadeem Rauf says chamber would take up the matter with the Chinese embassy and govt representatives

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has shown strong concerns over the difficulties faced by Pakistani students in continuing their education in China.

The educational future of more than 6,000 students is at stake if they do not go to China, the academic year of thousands of students will be wasted.

This was stated by RCCI President Nadeem Rauf at a meeting of the Pak-China Overseas Community Standing Committee at the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce here.

Vice President Talat Awan, executive members, committee members and a large number of students and businessmen were present on the occasion.

The meeting discussed issues facing Pakistani



students, especially those returning to China, quarantine stay, high prices of air fares, accommodation, expiration of scholarships, suspension of direct flights, travel documents, antibody tests such as IgG, IgM, and Other COVID related tests.

President Nadeem Rauf said the chamber would take up the matter with the Chinese embassy and government representatives.

He assured the committee members and students participating in the meeting that the demands of the students

would be conveyed to the higher authorities so that the students' academic year would not be wasted.

Chairman of the committee Shaukat Ali Safi said that students as well as businessmen are facing problems.

Ticket and accommodation fares for Chinese cities have increased manifold. On this occasion, the students informed that IgG and IgM tests are very expensive.

HEC and PMDC in Pakistan are not accepting online education certification/courses from China.

Scholarships of many students are running out, and are on the verge of expiry.

Part-time job should be facilitated, many courses are based on seasons, e.g. spring courses, if you can not go to China in January, the whole year will be wasted, they added.

Indonesian embassy, NCSW join hands for women rights

The meeting discussed potential joint collaboration between Indonesia and Pakistan
The meeting discussed potential joint collaboration between Indonesia and Pakistan



Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Adam Tugio held a meeting with the Chairperson of the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar. Both sides praised women's significant roles during the pandemic, such as in the healthcare sector and in generating national economy from home. The meeting discussed potential joint col-

laboration between Indonesia and Pakistan, the two largest Muslim majority and democratic countries, and other Islamic countries in advancing women's rights from an Islamic perspective.

Through a series of dialogs with experts from Islamic countries, it is expected that the workshops will shed light on best practices from a number of Islamic countries in mainstreaming women as an equal agent of national development.



Hungary willing to support Pak in sports

Special Correspondent

Ambassador Bela Fazekas says Hungary has expertise in setting up sports academies and coaching, especially in the sports of football; hints at Hungarian PM visit to Pakistan next month

ISLAMABAD Hungary is willing to support Pakistan in sports development said Bela Fazekas, Hungarian Ambassador in Pakistan who met with SAPM on youth affairs Usman Dar along with Mr. Tivadar Takacs.

Welcoming the ambassador, Mr. Dar briefed the envoy regarding Kamyab Jawan Programme; envisioned for youth development in Pakistan. He said that Kamyab Jawan Programme is working in three areas including education, employment and engagement of youth through various initiatives. “We have disbursed more than Rs. 30 billion against the target of Rs. 100 billion among youth for business loans encouraging entrepreneurial culture and creating employment opportunities in the country. We have a Rs. 10 billion ongoing project for technical skills education, especially in hi-tech fields. We have recently rolled out Rs. 4 billion sports and youth engagements projects with the collaboration of Higher Education Commission of Pakistan”, said Mr. Dar. Mr. Bela Fazekas congratulated SAPM and his team for the mega sports event recently held in Islamabad. “It was fascinating development for

sports in Pakistan. We are willing to collaborate and cooperate for development of sports in Pakistan”, said the ambassador. The Ambassador further said Hungary has expertise in setting up sports academies and coaching, especially in the sports of football. “The Hungarian Prime Minister who is also a sportsman like Pakistani Prime Minister is expected to visit Pakistan in the month of February and we are looking forward to signing agreements for cooperation in various areas, including sports”, added the Ambassador. SAPM welcomed the offer for cooperation regarding sports by the Hungarian Ambassador. It was agreed to hold follow ups meetings of technical and working teams from both sides so that areas for bilateral cooperation are identified before the scheduled visit. The meeting was also attended by senior government officials.

Yunnan: China's Emerging Gateway and Pakistan

Thanks to continuous attention and robust policies of China's central and Yunnan's provincial authorities, the province is witnessing one of the highest rates of GDP growth among Chinese provinces and regions, in recent years



By Li Ping

WHILE the growth and progress of entire China continues to amaze the world in so many ways, some of the regions and parts of the People's Republic are increasingly noticeable in this regard. South-western province of Yunnan is one such stand-out example of recent years.

That the world community chose Kunming, the capital of Yunnan, as the venue for 2021 World Biodiversity Conference is a testimony that the province is being appreciated globally for its efforts to preserve its rich natural wealth as well as promotion of eco-friendly development. It, however, is just one example to cite.

Looking from Pakistan, it is important to understand some basic facts about the province. Located at the juncture of South and Southeast Asia, the province is half the size of Pakistan in terms of landmass and almost one-fourth when it comes to population. It borders Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar and is in close proximity to Cambodia, Thailand, Bangladesh, India and, we can say, Nepal. Flight time between the capitals of all these countries from Yunnan's capital Kunming is between hardly 1 to just over 3 hours. Direct flight from Islamabad to Kunming is also of around 4 hours' duration.

It would be interesting for people Pakistani audience to note that the province has a GDP, in nominal terms, of around \$350 billion which is now actually more than GDP of Pakistan. International trade of the province is around \$ 30 billion. In the first half of 2021 alone, international trade of the province has grown around 60%. Good for the province that it enjoys a surplus, exports exceeding the imports.

Thanks to continuous attention and robust policies of China's central and Yunnan's provincial authorities, the province is witnessing one of the highest rates of GDP growth among Chinese provinces and regions, in recent years. International trade and commercial cooperation is also increasing fast,

further, in size and scope. It would not be wrong to say that Yunnan is now serving as an important gateway between China and South and Southeast Asia.

Chinese and international investors are increasingly turning to Yunnan, to invest there and start their businesses – reaping the benefits of the province's ideal location in the south-eastern part of Asia; and getting the dividends of favorable central and provincial policies and approaches. The latest among these approaches is Pilot Free Trade Zone – one of the six such zones initiated by China's State Council now being actively built. It is recorded that activities linked with Yunnan's Pilot Free Trade Zone are proving to be promising for the province's and as a whole China's, commerce with South and Southeast Asia.

As a whole, the province offers immense investment, business and trade opportunities for international potential partners and Pakistani investors, businesspersons – due to extraordinarily positive relations between the two nations – stand to gain a lot if they wish to benefit from these opportunities.

When we talk about up and coming investment opportunities of investing in this beautiful province of China, some of the prefectures, cities and areas as well as their projects that are being developed for the purpose assume a renewed significance for international investors. Wenshan, Honghe, Dehong, Lijiang, Xishuangbanna, Yuxi, Lincang, Qujing, Dali and Pu' Er are such parts of the province being specifically focused for investment.

Yunnan is also home to the best varieties of green and herbal tea as well as black tea and coffee; major producer of tobacco and its products; a huge power in terms of hydropower generation; a leading global producer and exporter of cut-flowers. The province, due to its mesmerizing landscape, historical heritage, ethnic diversity and natural wealth is a magnet for tourists from China and abroad. The floral wealth of the province is a global attraction,

exported widely.

Like other parts of China, Yunnan is already engaged in various forms of commercial cooperation with Pakistan – particularly involvement in CPEC projects and slowly but gradually increasing trade. Every year, province's capital Kunming hosts a major trade expo of South and Southeast Asian producers and manufactures, which would no longer be running on permanent basis, and Pakistani businesses' have been an important feature of this activity. Doing business in and with Yunnan means not only exploring the commercial potential, but visiting Yunnan and spending time there also means enjoying one of the most pleasant environments on the face of the earth. Pakistani students have studied in and continuing their education in institutions of higher and professional learning in Yunnan. A direct flight between Kunming and Islamabad ensued in December 2019 that would be resumed once COVID-19 related restrictions are removed, soonest we hope. However, we are nowhere near realizing the potential that exists – on both sides – for closer economic cooperation. A lot remains to be done.

Pakistan and China are commemorating 2021 as the 70th anniversary of founding of bilateral relations between the two countries. It is high time that investors, producers and traders come forward; take advantage of the opportunities that Yunnan offers and resultantly play a much needed role in further solidifying the evergreen partnership between our two countries. Policymakers and institutions, on their part, should facilitate stronger economic cooperation and people-to-people linkages for win-win cooperation and moving towards shared future.

– The writer is Director of the Overseas Representative Office (ORO) of Yunnan Commerce in Pakistan. This Op-Ed piece is a contribution of the ORO towards celebration of 70th anniversary of Pak-China Relations

TRNC indebted to Pakistan for whole-hearted support

Turkish Cyprus FM Tehsin Ertugruloglu says other OIC member states response to Cyprus problem disappointing; comes down heavy on EU for unilaterally accepting Greek side as EU member



ISLAMABAD: Tehsin Ertugruloglu the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus talking to media. – Photo Shahid Raju

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Tehsin Ertugruloglu the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus has thanked Pakistan for whole-hearted support on the issue of Cyprus adding the rest of the Muslim world, unfortunately, was yet to pay heed to our difficulties. The TRNC Minister expressed these views while talking to media people in Islamabad on Monday. He visited Islamabad to take part in the OIC extraordinary session on Afghanistan. Minister Tehsin is a seasoned politician and this is his fourth ministerial stint. He further said, motherland Turkey and Pakistan have always been forthcoming whenever TRNC needed support. “I would say categorically that Pakistan, among the OIC member countries, has a clear understanding of what is going on in the island. Minister Tehsin was all praise for people of Pakistan as well. To

a question about the recently held 5+1 talks, the minister said even before the beginning of the talks the TRNC side was convinced that nothing tangible will come out of this exercise only because of intransigence of the Greek side. “As I had clearly mentioned during my Zoom interview with you a few months ago that if these talks fail, we will then go for international recognition. And I believe these talks have not produced desired results therefore there was no question of any further talks on this issue. As regards international recognition, the option was very much on the table,” he added. He said we are only waiting for the UN Secretary General’s call who, after the 5+1 talks, told us that he will get in touch with TRNC government after finding some common grounds for further negotiations. But, hitherto there is no call from the UN Secretary General. To yet another question about Azerbaijan and Pakistan rec-

ognizing TRNC, the minister said there is no doubt that they had unique relationship with these two countries however TRNC has not sought recognitions from Azerbaijan and Pakistan. “Both the countries are very close brothers and we do not want our brothers to be in any difficult situation because of us”, Mr. Tehsin added

He said the European Union did a great injustice with the people of TRNC when it unilaterally accepted the Greek part as member of the EU. It ostensibly disturbed balance of power in favour of the Greek side and literally killed the concept of equality. Now, under prevailing circumstances how can we have negotiations that are based on equality when the one side is already member of the European Union?

It may be mentioned here that the former Secretary General Kofi Annan had spearheaded a referendum in 2004 on the island in order to seek re-unification. Nevertheless the Greek side had rejected the plan by voting against it while the Turkish Cypriots had overwhelmingly (65 %) supported the UN Secretary General initiative by saying a big Yes. The Annan Plan had undergone five revisions before it reached its final version. The 5th revision proposed the creation of the United Republic of Cyprus, covering the island of Cyprus in its entirety except for the UK’s Sovereign Base Areas. This new country was to be a federation of two constituent states – the Greek Cypriot State and the Turkish Cypriot State – joined together by a federal government apparatus.

To yet another question about exploration of resources in the area, the Foreign Minister said, the Greek Cypriots have unilaterally licensed international oil companies to conduct hydrocarbon activities and they have passed a legislative bill to establish a so-called national investment fund to manage unilaterally the future capital income from hydrocarbon reserves. Moreover they have signed bilateral agreements with many countries regarding the delimitation of its unilaterally declared so called exclu-



sive economic zone. As a result of Greek Cypriot side's increasing unilateral actions, the Turkish Cypriot side has been obliged to take steps to protect its own rights and interests regarding the hydrocarbon resources around the island. To a question about COVID situation in

TRNC, the Foreign Minister said everyone is suffering and so is the TRNC. But daily cases in our country are less and number of deaths is very low, but then you know we are a small country. Our government is conscious about spread of virus and we are thankful to moth-

erland Turkey for providing us the vaccines. To yet another question he said he was looking forward to host Pakistani leadership, especially the Foreign Minister Qureshi in his country. Similarly he hoped the TRNC leadership would also pay a visit to Pakistan.

Book launch ceremony of “The Tajiks In the Mirror of History” organized



MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: A Book Launch Ceremony of “The Tajiks in the Mirror of History” was jointly organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad at the National Library of Pakistan. This book is authored by Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan, and was translated and published in Pakistan by CGSS and the University of the Punjab, Lahore.

Chief Guest of the occasion was Zaheer ud Din Babar Awan, Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs/Adviser to PM, Government of Pakistan. He appreciated the efforts of the Embassy of Tajikistan and CGSS. Highlighting the importance of bilateral ties between Tajikistan and Pakistan he stated that Tajikistan and Pakistan have many commonalities including our culture, history, religion & commonalities in language as well. He was of the view that this book will prove to be a milestone in enhancing bilateral ties between Pakistan and Tajikistan.

Ismatullo Nasredin, Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan stated that Pakistan and Tajikistan share many common interests including our history, culture & cooperation in regional forums. This book will allow Pakistani readers to be better acquaint-

ed with Tajik history & culture.

He stated that the book covers all the important aspects of Tajik history, culture, and struggles. He appreciated the role of CGSS and the University of the Punjab, Lahore for translating the book in Urdu and publishing it in Pakistan, this way all the information will be reaching a wider audience in Pakistan.

Mr. Khalid Taimur Akram, Executive Director, CGSS stated that this book will potentially contribute to the pool of Knowledge for Pakistan, it will help our students and faculty members to understand the socio-economic and political dynamics of Tajikistan. Such initiatives are great steps towards enhancing academic cooperation and people-to-people contacts.

Mr. Ashfaq Ahmed Gondal, Former Federal Secretary of Information and Broadcasting & Vice President CGSS (Federal Region) stated that Pakistan and Tajikistan share cultural and historical roots we also share a common religion. He emphasized that both countries have several MoUs and agreements in various fields, and now is the right time to materialize these agreements for better connectivity, collective success, and strengthening our partnership in various sectors.

Dr. Fouzia Hadi Ali, Director, Regional Integration Center, University of Punjab,

Lahore shared her views on the visionary leadership of his Excellency Emomali Rahmon, President of Tajikistan. She highlighted that President Rahmon is known to be a visionary leader due to his effective strategies and structural reforms. He has the vision to promote regional cooperation and economic integration for all allies.

Mr. Raja Javed Iqbal, Director, National Library of Pakistan, Islamabad highlighted that the National Library of Pakistan has strong ties with libraries in Tajikistan. He shared that Pakistan has sent several books to libraries in Tajikistan that show our commitment and will to promote relations with our counterparts in Tajikistan. He also stated that multiple copies of the book will be kept in the National Library of Pakistan for students, academicians, and researchers to read and know about Tajikistan and its rich history and culture.

The book launch ceremony was moderated by Ms. Maryam Raza, Research Executive, CGSS, and was attended by 100 participants including worthy ambassadors and diplomatic community from the embassies of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Germany, Belarus, and United Arab Emirates. It was also attended by academicians and students from various universities of Pakistan.



1971 - The Untold Stories



Dr M Ali Hamza

Indeed the responsibility to provide room for forgery and falsification to one's adversaries lies with the authorities of the then West-Pakistan. But how long we can use it as an excuse and let counterpart infusing self-fabricated facts of the history. One sided history can never claim to be trustworthy. It takes two to make a clap, and there is sheer possibility that one hand might not exerted the force that could end up in applaud with extreme sound of destruction. It is obligatory for the scholars to get the record straight, and distinguish between myths and realities

E VOLUTION in human species has made plenty of changes in its physiological as well as psychological makeup. Biases are now one of the permanent features in human nature, and historical biases are undeniable part in the nature of human social contracts. Biased sources can yield biased history, and it happens when historical reconstruction is ensured in accordance with someone's preferences, when rationality has no room to be entertained. Therefore, presenting an account of past events by maintaining the rationality is no less than a rocket science. Especially the happenings in pre-ICT era are difficult to decode. Historical events are generally re-fabricated by certain powerful groups of people who had their vested agendas. History related to the "Fall of Dhaka" is a classic example of history manipulation and its distortion.

Indeed the responsibility to provide room for forgery and falsification to one's adversaries lies with the authorities of the then West-Pakistan. But how long we can use it as an excuse and let counterpart infusing self-fabricated facts of the history. One sided history can never claim to be trustworthy. It takes two to make a clap, and there is sheer possibility that one hand might not exerted the force that could end up in applaud with extreme sound of destruction. It is obligatory for the scholars to get the record straight, and distinguish between myths and realities.

A recent launch of a documentary film produced by Erum Binte Shahid, with Senator Javed Jabbar as the executive producer is an appreciable effort to bring-up the other side of the story: the untold stories of 1971. The documentary gathered the views of international and national intellectuals who elaborately but rationally countered the false information disseminated by India and shared less

known facts about 1971. One of the ways to distort history is to deny that certain events happened the way that history tells us they didn't. To avoid historical denialism, first part of the film is based on accepting certain mistakes made by the then decision makers. Admitting your mistakes is indeed not a sign of weakness rather of maturity and granting permission to screen this film evidently speaks of the grown maturity of decision makers.

Second part of the film pulls the myth to pieces. It was told to the world in last 50 years that 3 million Bengalis been slaughtered during operation searchlight. Dr. Junaid Ahmed; the author of a book "Creation of Bangladesh: Myths Exploded" challenges that how come during an operation of 262 days this could be possible. He explains that a simple arithmetic can solve the riddle, because to do so every day 11, 450 people be murdered, buried and evidences been washed out, and at night the same soldiers go rapping. Sheer fiddling of numbers is obvious. Though there was political unrest and civil discontent, but how could anyone deny the fact that weaponizing Mukti Bahni and invasion of East-Pakistan by Indian Army caused the separation and creation of Bangladesh. It would portray an absolute ignorance of sensible brains to excuse the attack on a sovereign nation, and history witnessed that United Nation stay mute on entering of Indian Army into the then East-Pakistan.

There are more than 32 separatist movements going on in India. Who does not know the Naxal-Moists, Khalistan, United Liberation Front of Asom, Karbi Separatism, Kamtapur Liberation Organization and many more? Is Indian not aware of its Chicken's Neck; The Siliguri Corridor. How would it feel if China engages its army in a direct manner? What UN

response would be? It is obvious, that solidarity of a sovereign nation must not be challenged in our new social contract, but why India was an exception to this rule?

The documentary is the first of its kind, sharing facts and information not revealed before. It reveals how history had been manipulated against Pakistan, purposefully creating strains between Bangladesh and Pakistan, to ensure continued regional unrest. It was necessary to balance the accounts, and content of the documentary did well in doing so. Whosoever your opinion is inclined to, the film is a must watch. Let past be the past, and now it is time re-think, re-design and re-build our diplomatic relations with Bangladesh. We need to mop away the dust of incorrect narrative. If not now than when?

A prominent Arab historian Ibn Khaldun once said "Throughout history many nations have suffered a physical defeat, but that has never marked the end of a nation. But when a nation has become the victim of a psychological defeat, then that marks the end of a nation." Though Fall of Dhaka raises the emotion of sorrow but it should raise the emotion of embarrassment. When your 3 division having 34,000 feet on ground are fighting against 8 divisions of Indian army having 100,000 plus soldiers, and 175,000 Mukti Bahni trained and weaponized by India. When there is a distance of thousands of miles between two portions of the same nation and between those thousands of miles reside and enemy that never accepted your existence, then surviving that long deserves an appreciation. So let's not be a victim of a psychological defeat, and do not forget the untold stories of 1971.

- The writer is a columnist and broadcast journalist and can be reached at mali.hamza@yahoo.com

On Culture Day, Romanians celebrate Mihai Eminescu, the national poet of Romania

DNA

ROMANIA IS GETTING READY TO CELEBRATE ITS NATIONAL CULTURE DAY ON JANUARY 15

INTRODUCED in 2010, Romania's National Culture Day is celebrated on January 15, the birth date of Romanian poet and novelist Mihai Eminescu, a canonical figure of Romanian literature and a representative of the European Romanticism. The Romanian National Culture Day, now reaching its 12th edition, is an official national celebration, initiated by the Romanian Academy. Mihai Eminescu was a Romanian poet, prose writer and journalist, reckoned by Romanian readers and literary criticism as the most important poetic voice in Romanian literature. He was born on 15 January 1850 in Ipotești/Botoșani County, then in the Principality of Moldavia, and died on 15 June 1889 in Bucharest / Kingdom of Romania.

He is considered the national poet of Romania, being called the "The star of Romanian poetry", but also the most important representative of romanticism in Romanian literature. He transformed both the form and content of Romanian poetry, creating a school of poetry that strongly influenced Romanian writers and poets in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Eminescu was an active member of the Junimea Literary Society and worked as an editor for the newspaper *Timpul* ("The Time"), the official newspaper of the Conservative Party (1880–1918). His poetry was first published when he was 16 and he went to Vienna to study when he was 19.

The poet's manuscripts contain 46 volumes and approximately 14,000 pages, being one of the most prolific poets of his time. His most notable works include *Luceafărul* (The Vesper/The Evening Star/The Lucifer/The Daystar), *Odă în metru antic* (Ode in Ancient Meter), and the five Letters (Epistles/Satires). In his poems he frequently used metaphysical, mythological and historical subjects. "Luceafărul" (Evening Star) is the most famous poetry of Mihai Eminescu, started in 1873, but written and finished over many years until its publication in April 1883 in the Almanac of the "Romania Juna" student society in Vienna. After the publication in Vienna, the poem was then resumed in the same year in the magazine "Convorbiri literare" and finally in the princeps volume entitled "Poesii" published in 1884. With 98 stanzas, *Luceafărul* is the longest love poem in the world.

Eminescu's poems have been translated into more than 60 languages, being one of the most appreciated love poets in Europe. Mihai Eminescu is considered as the first poet to make Romanian language a real object of art, since Romanian poetry was only at its beginnings. Having studied the philosophy, law, medicine, economics, sociology and other subjects, he gained a real success in his career as a journalist, and his articles of literary, social and political criticism were published in "Timpul"



and "Curierul de Iași" newspapers. His entire journalist activity was put to the right of the Romanian people to live in the Romanian nation, supporting the Romanians in Transylvania and Bucovina in his articles. Nicolae Iorga, the Romanian historian, considers Eminescu "the godfather of the modern Romanian language, in the same way that Shakespeare is seen to have directly influenced the English language". Mihai Eminescu is unanimously celebrated as the greatest and most representative Romanian poet his legacy strongly influenced the Romanian literature and culture.

Spouses of heads of missions distribute items among orphans

ISLAMABAD: Spouses of heads of missions posing for a picture with boys of the Suffa Sweet Home after distribution of Hats, socks, gloves and scarves. The donation was raised with thanks to the personal funds of the Ambassador's Wives from Turkey, Italy, Tajikistan, Nepal, Belarus, Indonesia, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Bangladesh, Ukraine, Cuba, World Bank, Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Kenya and Yemen.

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RMI celebrates its 100th kidney transplant surgeries in

DNA

PESHAWAR: Fully endorsing the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's initiative of ensuring better health services to general people through Sehat Card, the private sector is practically contributing to the government's efforts of complete health cover to population across the province. As part of this mission, a private sector health entity Rehman Medical Institute (RMI) has operated 100 kidney transplant surgeries including over 50 free of cost cases under the provincial government's Sehat Card, in Peshawar. The institute has established the Kidney Transplant Unit to provide state-of-the-art inpatient and outpatient healthcare to ensure complete cure. The RMI arranged a ceremony in Peshawar to celebrate its 100 successful kidney transplant surgeries and appreciate the KP government's Sehat Card launched early this year to facilitate poor &

marginalized population. The ceremony was attended by senior surgeons, healthcare professionals, patients and staff of RMI. While sharing the success of patients' healthcare, Dr. Taqi F. Toufeeq Khan, Professor and Consultant Transplant Surgeon RMI, told the audience that the KP government's Sehat Card has provided opportunity to get free-of-cost healthcare services and RMI has endorsed the government's commitment and expanded its operations and treated patients. The patients have not only treated but also ensured their one-month post-surgery examination for their healthy diet and timely medication, he said. He also said that RMI has managed 95 percent success in healthcare of patients through inpatient and post-health services. "We not only provide transplant but regularly monitor patient's health to maintain our success percentage," he maintained. Dr. Taqi also informed that they are expanding their Kidney Transplant Unit to provide global healthcare

services to the patients through experienced and foreign qualified doctors and para-medical staff. In his remarks, Head of Nephrology RMI, Dr. Nisar Anwar, said that under the Sehat Card program, RMI has treated more than 50 patients in last six months while another 150 patients are in pipeline to get treatment. He also said that, to ensure good healthcare facilities to patients, RMI seeks government support in accreditation of training institute to encourage youth in healthcare sector. "We have announced fellow-scholarship for young doctors," he disclosed. He urged the provincial government to ensure supply of medicines for the kidney transplant patients and donors once surgery is done /after the surgery for their quick and complete recovery. Shafiqur Rehman, Chief Executive Officer RMI, appreciated the efforts of surgeons and staff for completing the 100th kidney Transplant in a very limited time.

Korea urged to increased quota for Pakistani under EPS

Korean Ambassador Suh Sangpyo meets PM Adviser Ayub Afridi

Ansar Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: Suh Sangpyo, Ambassador of Korea to Pakistan called on Muhammad Ayub Afridi, Advisor to Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development (OP&HRD) in his office here the 16th December, 2021 and congratulated him on his appointment as Advisor. Besides, bilateral relations of mutual interests, the matters relating to Employment Permit System (EPS) were discussed.

While appreciating the Korean government for hiring of Pakistani workers regularly, the Advisor reiterated him to increase quota for Pakistanis under EPS.

Besides manufacturing area in which presently Pakistani workers are hired, other sectors like Construction, Agriculture and Fisheries may also be opened under EPS since Pakistan has trained manpower for these sectors. The Advisor requested the Ambassador to include Pakistani workers EPS re-



turnee workers in Korean EPS in Agriculture, Construction & Fisheries sectors. The Ambassador of Korea assured that he will take up these proposals with his government. Muhammad Ayub Afridi, Ad-

visor to PM on OP&HRD thanked the Ambassador of Korea for his gesture and assured him of continued coordination and enhanced cooperation for export of Pakistani workers to Korea.

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Azeri Ambassador, Munaza Hassan hold meeting at National Assembly



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov met with Ms. Munaza Hassan, Chairperson of the Climate Change Standing Committee and Secretary-General of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus in the National Assembly of Pakistan.– DNA

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South Africa highly values ties with Pakistan: Envoy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: South Africa's High Commissioner to Pakistan Mthuthuzeli Madikiza has said that Pakistan is a great country and its people are hardworking and friendly.

He said that South Africa attaches great importance to its trade, diplomatic and cultural relations with Pakistan as South Africa is currently a major trading and cultural partner of Pakistan. The high commissioner was talking to prominent social and religious leaders at the South African Embassy in Islamabad, led by Muhammad Ijaz Nuri, Chairman of the Pakistan Council for Social Welfare and Human Rights, a special advisory body at the United Nations Socio-

Economic Council.

Prominent spiritual figure and Sajjada Nasheen of spiritual shrine Darbare-e-Allia Basahan Sharif and former member Azad Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Pir Syed Muhammad Ali Raza Bukhari, Punjab Chief Minister's Provincial Coordinator, Advocate, Department of Housing, Urban Development and Public Health, Chaudhry Tahir Mahmood Advocate and former President of Parliamentary Reporters Association (PRA) Behzad Salimi were also part of the delegation. Speaking to the delegation, the High Commissioner of South Africa further said that South Africa will continue to play its full role in achieving the goals of sustainable development in Pakistan. Talking on the occasion,

Chairman Pakistan Council for Social Welfare and Human Rights Muhammad Ijaz Nuri said that it was time to promote inter-faith relations for lasting peace, social development and betterment of human beings.

On the occasion, the High Commissioner of South Africa and the delegation of Pakistan Council for Social Welfare and Human Rights congratulated each other on New Year and Christmas and hoped that the coming year would be a year of progress and happiness for the whole world.

A commemorative shield was also presented by the Pakistan Council for Social Welfare and Human Rights to the High Commissioner of South Africa to Pakistan, Matthew Zeli Mediciza, on the occasion.



Independence Day of Kenya celebrated





Italian archaeologists all praise for Pakistan for full support

Prof Luca Maria Olivieri, the Director of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan says a number of excavations done in past few years





Special Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Prof Luca Maria Olivieri, the Director of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan has thanked Pakistan government and KPK authorities for extending full support during the excavation work in Swat and other areas.

Talking to media people at the residence of the Italian Ambassador, Prof. Luca further said, the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan started sondages at Bir Kot ghwandai in 1977 when Prof Giorgio Stacul discovered the earliest sequence of the site with important discoveries of a typical painted pottery of Chalcolithic period. It was only later that the signs of the old city of bastion of the city of Bazira were discovered. From the year 1990 to 1992 south-western corner of the old city were dug out. From 1993 to 1995, survey of the entire area was conducted, he added.

He further said from the year 1998 till 2000 excavations on the upper top of Bir kot ghwandai were carried out. In this work the Hindu Shai temple and other relics ranging from Bronze Age till the Ghaznavid period were discovered.

During years 2004 to 2007 field-work on the rock painting sites was conducted in the Kandak and other areas by the Italian Archaeological Mission. The excavation work was resumed in 2009 which continues



till date. During this period twenty one excavation seasons have been carried out. While talking about work in Swat he said in the year 2014 work under the Joint Italian Archaeological Mission was conducted in Abba Sahib-chinah, Am-luk-dara, Balo Kalay/Gumbat, Bazira, Saidu Sharif I, Jahanabad, and in the Ghaznavid mosque at Udegram. The excavation brought to light the Shahi Vishnuite temple in its entirety. As it is known, of the temple remains only the podium, the related floors, conspicuous part of the decoration with pilasters with pseudo ionic capitals, remarkable examples of the original marble decoration of the Turki Shahi period. The professors said that at the end of the month of October, a series of robbers' pits in

the central zone of the ancient city was explored and it revealed a very important Buddhist monument, preserved despite the robbers vandalism. At the sides of the monument there is a minor stupa a cell and the podium of a monumental pillar.

Prof Luca further told that during an excavation in Nov 21 in north-west of the main urban exposure of Barikot, we discovered a row of graves of unknown age and other archaeological features. These graves contain pottery shards and other rare finds which could date back to the Indo Greek and Saka Parthian period. At the end of the excavation more than 2200 objects inscriptions, ceramics, ornaments, iron weapons, stone tools were found, restored and handed over to the KP govt, he added.

Mayor of Rochdale visits Khadam Milk Foods



SAHIWAL: Mayor of Rochdale Asim Rasheed visited Khadam Milk Foods where he was received by CEO of Khadam Foods and Ambassador of Sahiwal Sohail Anjum Ansari. The visiting dignitary was shown various parts of the Farm. – DNA

A Personal Tribute to Germany



Irfan Shahzad Takalvi

Recent developments indicate that Germany remains one of the most prominent development partners for Pakistan. Be it technical cooperation or assistance for health and education – particularly that of girls and women – Germany is visible among top players. Good to see that Climate Change and its wide-ranging impacts are becoming an important area of cooperation between the two sides. Being attached with policy research and academics

AS the year coming to close is also marking the 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties between Pakistan and Germany, I feel it as my duty to express my personal gratitude to Germany. This gratitude has a personal touch, because I am a direct beneficiary of German Development Cooperation with Pakistan. A decade and a half ago, back in early to mid 2007, I was among a group of young Asian and African journalists selected for and successfully completing a professional training course in Berlin. This wonderful period of less than three months' stay in the German capital has been, and would always remain, an unforgettable part of my life. The training was on 'Economic and Financial Reporting.' Although my career in the years that followed was oriented more towards policy and academic research, it was this very course that broadened my horizons and prepared me for contributions in my chosen field. The fact that tutors came from world's renowned institutions and news outlets made it once-in-a-lifetime learning and grooming opportunity. While the resident course was for a short period of less than three months, a continuation of it was online six month course on 'Financial Journalism', and it also involved a trip to New York as well as a short course at prestigious Columbia University – moreover, above all, close interaction with world famous Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz. Of course many other Pakistani and international young journalists / media contributors have benefitted from this opportunity that the Germany offered to them, but I consider it particularly a life-transforming gift for me. Among many other explorations, visits to the European Central

Bank (ECB) in Frankfurt and the headquarters of Transparency International would always stand as noted accomplishments of my professional career so far. For months and perhaps years after my return, I have been imagining myself taking a stroll in the Tier Garten, driving along the mighty Rhine or just snapping a click from atop Reichstag's glass dome. And yes, who can forget that Germany has a Lore-Lei of its own – just as Pakistan has one in Balochistan. It indeed was educative to come across hardworking, dedicated, professional Germans. However, in terms of people-to-people interactions the great lesson to learn for respect for diversity. Many of my long-standing friendships with people of Middle Eastern, Central Asian and East Asian origin were initiated in Germany. The Deutschland was my first window to Africa as well. And it all was not without a big regret, too. I failed to learn German. That entirely was my failure. In nutshell, the opportunity that Germany provided me in very initial years of my career as a media contributor and policy researcher provided me with much needed base, and transformed my personal landscape for better, in a big way. While writing this piece, I have just had a look at some of the latest figures and data. Pak-German trade has been around \$ 2.5 to \$ 3 billion per annum in recent years, which makes Germany one of the largest trading partners for Pakistan. A more important dimension to note is that remittances of overseas Pakistanis living and working in Germany have increased significantly in Past two to three years, having crossed \$400 million mark in the fiscal year 2020-21.

Recent developments indicate that Germany remains one of the most prominent development partners for Pakistan. Be it technical cooperation or assistance for health and education – particularly that of girls and women – Germany is visible among top players. Good to see that Climate Change and its wide-ranging impacts are becoming an important area of cooperation between the two sides. Being attached with policy research and academics, I must mention constructive contribution that German political foundations are rendering for academic discourses and raising awareness on critical issues confronting Pakistan, internally and externally. Some events have been held to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Pak-German ties, but I do feel that the occasion did not get the attention it deserved. Part of it may be attributed to COVID-19 restrictions. Particularly on the Pakistani side, this one of the most important international partnerships for my country – must have been highlighted rather more. German envoys including the current one are seemingly and reportedly quite active in Islamabad. I tried to arrange a talk with German ambassador on the 70th anniversary from the platform of my new institution but it somehow did not get through, perhaps due to weaknesses on communication on my side. Let us hope that Pak-German ties grow from strength to strength, for a win-win outcome, for the two states and the two people.

– The author is CEO of Policy Pak and founder of the Eurasian Century Institute (ECI), Islamabad. He may be accessed at irfanfad@gmail.com

India on path to self destruction: President Alvi

President Dr. Arif Alvi addressed a book launching ceremony of Dr Muhammad Qasim Fakto, a political prisoner in India, organized by Kashmir Youth Alliance



SHUJAAT HAMZA

nations long ago and therefore, he parted ways during 1928, he added. The president observed that injustice was done during the Indo-Pak partition principles whereas promises made with the Kashmiri people by the world community had not been fulfilled. The president opined that the Hindutva policy pursued by the recent rulers had been a reincarnation of the Hindu's supremacist ideology centuries ago. He referred to a book of Khushwant Singh, an Indian writer, who had predicted doom for India due to its self-destruction course. The president said the Muslims could not be suppressed with injustices and oppression. He said India was trying to change its history and there was a continuous onslaught against minorities including Muslims and Christians. "No minority is safe in India," he said, adding the Christian charity organizations like Mother Tressa Charity was banned from collecting foreign donations while churches were attacked by the Hindu zealots.

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Wednesday said that India was on path to self-destruction with its Hindutva policy targeting all minorities, while it was vainly planning to suppress Kashmiri struggle for their right to self-determination with barbaric steps. He said the unending oppression coupled with atrocities and human rights violations committed against the innocent Kashmiris in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and other minorities in India, were resulting into a fire that would eventually engulf India and dawn into freedom of the Kashmiri people.

The president was speaking at a book launching ceremony of Dr Muhammad Qasim Fakto, a political Kashmir prisoner who had been languishing in an Indian jail for the last twenty-nine years. The author's book "Baang' provides insight into his sufferings and life-long struggle against the Indian illegal occupation of the IIOJK. The event was organized by Kashmir Youth Alliance (KYA) in collaboration with the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir in connection

with the observance of Kashmiris' right to self-determination day. The president said Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah had regarded Kashmir as the jugular vein of Pakistan which meant that the Pakistani nation and Kashmiris were tied together in permanent bonds of affections and brotherhood. Quaid had realized the Hindu machi-



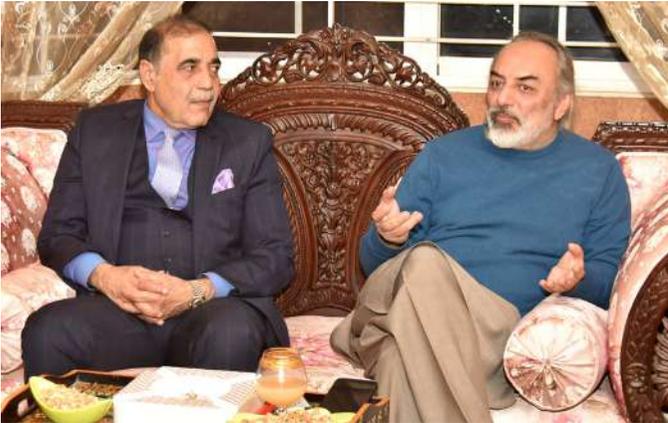


The president cited the success of Prime Minister Imran Khan's stance in highlighting the issue of Islamophobia which also echoed in the recent comments of Russian President Vladimir Putin. Similarly, the president also credited the government and foreign minister Qureshi for effectively raising the humanitarian issue of Afghanistan and holding a suc-

cessful OIC meeting. Chairman Parliamentary Special Committee on Kashmir Shehryar Afridi said that on the Kashmir issue all the political parties in Pakistan were on the same page. He reiterated nation's full support to Kashmiri's right to self-determination struggle. He also called upon the world community to realize its commitment

made with the Kashmiri people and ensure a plebiscite over IIOJK in accordance with the UNSC resolutions. He also reminded the world to learn from the lessons in history. On the occasion, Ahmad bin Qasim, son of Dr Faktoo, narrated the ordeals of his father after his arrest in 1993. He said the people in IIOJK did not accept Indian illegal occupation.

Zahid Latif Khan hosts dinner for Pakistan ambassador to Saudi Arabia Ameer Khurram Rathore at the farmhouse of Aftab Chaudhry





French EU presidency priorities

President Emmanuel Macron has proactively furthered the establishment of a European army to decrease Europe's independence from the US and NATO

News Desk

PARIS: France, for the first time in 14 years, took over the presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) from Slovenia. France will hold the presidency of the Council of the EU for six months from 1 January to 30 June 2022. The presidency of the council is responsible for conducting meetings, determining the agenda, and facilitating dialogues with other EU institutions. French President Emmanuel Macron, in an hour-long presentation at the Élysée Palace, laid out France's priorities during its presidency by encapsulating the motto: "Recovery, power and belonging". France attempts to resolve multiple issues during its presidency across Europe as President Macron aims to foster cooperation in Europe by emphasising on sovereignty and strategic autonomy. President Macron set out the framework for the French presidency in 2017 and, since then, his government has been working towards building genuine European sovereignty, which would focus on Europe's ability to defend its values and interests. In a news conference, President Macron encapsulated his priorities of moving towards a Europe that is powerful and fully sovereign in its choices.

The French EU Presidency will be taking place against the backdrop of health, energy, and migration crises, especially amidst rising tensions on the EU's eastern border as the Ukraine–Russia conflict brews. In his speech, Macron highlighted improving European border control to avoid the challenges of migration by reforming the Schengen border-free area by establishing a political steering committee. Additionally, France will also defend the creation of the Emergency Border Support Mechanism for the Refugee Crisis, an instrument created in 2016 to address the humanitarian needs within the EU in relation to the migration crisis. The EU has been dealing with a fresh migration crisis due to Belarus encouraging asylum-seekers to venture into Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia.

Furthermore, Macron also stated the importance of the African continent and has announced an EU–Africa Summit to be held in February in Brussels as France continues its agenda towards taking structural initiatives towards Africa and the Western Balkans. He also showed the desire to launch a new economic and financial deal with Africa beyond the aegis of Europe's



Global Gateway initiative. Similarly, the Western Balkans is a region of utmost importance for France and the EU as Macron insisted on protecting the minorities in the region and further accession negotiations between the EU and Western Balkans countries. The region also is a key transit route for irregular migrants trying to reach Western Europe and the route in the past has contributed towards increased criminal activities in the region such as drug smuggling, petty theft, and human trafficking. Earlier in 2021, at the EU–Western Balkan summit, the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said, the EU is not complete without the Western Balkans, therefore, France during its Presidency aims to further the region's accession talks.

President Macron has called for "imagining a new European model" to fight against mass unemployment across the EU and bring economic development to the continent as Macron has announced several European investment plans and new industrial alliances would be launched by March 2022. The new model would also focus on adapting a simplified and transparent framework, particularly a banking union in Europe. France aims to rethink the budgetary framework of Europe, especially after dealing with the fourth wave of COVID-19. Under the new model, France has outlined digital transformation as a top priority as it hopes to successfully conclude the EU's Digital Market Act (DMA) and the Digital Services Act (DSA). The new European growth model also promotes environmen-

tal ambitions as Macron promises adoption and implementation of a carbon adjustment mechanism also known as carbon tax, which would allow European industries to preserve their competitiveness. The new model also serves as an inspiration to compete against China and the United States as France aims to decrease Europe's dependency in the technology sector, and Macron pushes Europeans to create genuine technological sovereignty in Europe to make the continent a digital powerhouse. One of the other major priorities under the French Presidency is furthering progress on the EU defence policy as France, since 2017, has made considerable progress on European defence by leading the initiative by establishing a European defence fund and the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) under the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). PESCO is notably perceived by other EU member states as complementary to NATO. The EU currently is working on a European Strategic Compass (a white European defence and security paper), a document that lists out the EU's defining ambitions for security and defence for the next decade and the document would operationalise the EU's strategic autonomy and allow Brussels to tackle Europe's security responsibilities directly. The document is likely to be adopted in the first half of 2022 coinciding with the French Presidency. President Macron has proactively furthered the establishment of a European army to decrease Europe's independence from the US and NATO.

– Courtesy ORF

Book Review: Where the clouds meet

ASMA ISHAQ

Book: Where Clouds Meet
Author: Tahir Mehmood
Genre: Novel (Fiction)
Publisher: Ferozsons (Pvt.) LTD
Publication Year: October 2021
ISBN: 978-969-0-02781-8
Reviewed By: Asma Ishaq

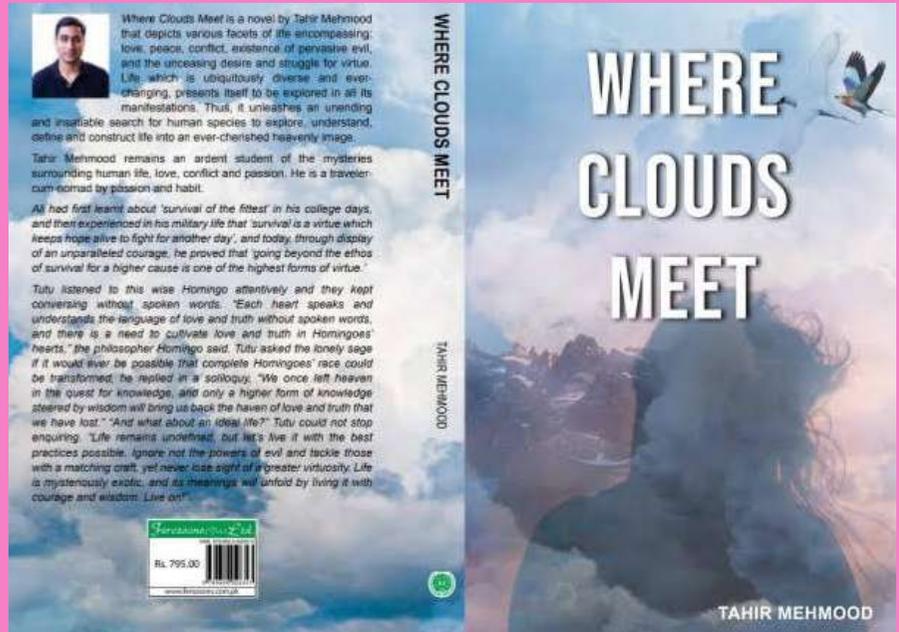
THE worth of any book can be gauged via critical analysis that how much it has been able to incite the reader's mind to do critical thinking upon the themes. Any book proves to be void without the proper theme imbedded with the plot. The heavier the themes are, the heavier the story is for the readers.

'Where Clouds Meet' written by Tahir Mehmood is one such book that weighs heavier on the literary scale when it comes giving the cognition exercise to its readers. Providing a range of philosophical interpretations on life, Tahir has come up with an ideal literary work of Fiction. Based on Love in particular, it has been enriched with themes like Warfare, Nature, Survival of the Fittest, Soldierly, Romanticism, Idealism, Realism, Friendship and Individualism. Such a novel happens to be appealing and thus becomes successful to convey the message.

Having set in the background of Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the post invasion conditions throughout 1980s and a beautiful love story of a young soldier Ali, it is a 'novel of happenings' narrated beautifully. The title, 'Where Clouds Meet' is to present the concept of 'Eternal Love' which is beyond this world. Out of the set-boundaries of world. The writer here, has conveyed it well love unmet is, 'Divine.'

The novel opens up with a breath taking natural scenery of a lake in Naran Valley. A young soldier Ali who is found enjoying the green lush valley amidst the high raised mountains. Ali is the first protagonist of novel. He remains in the main plot till his martyrdom. He has got the mind and body 'intoxicated' by the ecstasy of love for Motherland. He has got that trance of patriotism that nurtures the true soldier's soul in him.

One finds a wonderful description of Individualism in the character of Ali. A Literary Movement from the 18th and 19th Century that propagates an ideal of 'human' who realizes the 'worth' as well is able to 'utilize' the given potentials to the best. Ali has all the morals and ide-



als of Individualism. Ali appears an 'impeccable' in making the calculations for all the tasks assigned to him. He proved to be highly vigilant from taking care of his soldiers' meal to building the most intimidating observation posts and then for his last post at the Point 4777 before the martyrdom.

To the surprise of many, the second protagonist is not a human but the high-mountains-bird that the author has named it, 'Tutu Titu'. His part of plot runs with the two major themes Survival of the Fittest and Individualism. He descends from the mountains to know about the world of 'Homingoes' to whom he thinks the strange specie. Tutu calls humans the 'Homingoes.' He goes on the 'journey of learning', 'research' and seeking 'wisdom' via many errands and encounters.

Throughout his journey, he is in a spell-bound state to study humans. He becomes an ardent observant in this regard. The two words, 'Use' and 'Work' help Tutu to grow and be acquiesced with the norm that humans are way more skilful in leading the life. Tutu represents the 'Free Soul' or 'Free Will Human.'

The author has dedicated a great part of discussion on warfare and soldiery. There are many pages with the purpose of sharing the military details. Many readers will find it much interesting to read about the details of Transit Camp, Patrolling, Reconnaissance, Observation Post, Command Post and Command Bunker. One get to know so much about the Military Service in real as well in the action i.e. Planning, Reporting and then Immediate Response Action for the enemy. There are warfare theories also in

the real action Deterrence and at time the Pre-Emptive strikes.

The theme of Love seems to be glorified in the character of Professor NKK. He has a soul of nomad. He is filled with the wisdom and intellect. Despite the fact that life has been horribly cruel to him, he manages to give love to the fellow humans. The time and circumstances have transformed him in the personification of love. Now, he has become a philosopher to interpret the life and to seeking its meaning and purpose. NKK's mantra for love is, "Love is a Divine manifestation which has put a halo around the universe."

This book is a 'stand-out' than many other contemporary books. It has got to offer so much for its reader. For any young officer, it is a complete guide for learning soldiery. For any history student, it brings the concrete details. For any common individual, it shares a useful read to fit in the society for the survival.

For students of peace and conflict, it reveals that the war is sacred too and actually comes in the field to prevail the good over evil. It is definitely right to say here, Tahir has written one Classic Literature kind of literary masterpiece. He has strengthened the 'Gripping Narration' in this novel. He amps up the reader's mind while creating an irresistible picture in the narration. He knows the art of storytelling. He proves it aptly, "We humans are the story telling creatures in life, so make it an interesting read."

— Asma Ishaq teaches
English Language and
Literature to senior classes.

“NINGYO: Art & Beauty of Japanese Dolls” exhibition starts at PNCA

Ambassador WADA, while speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the exhibition said that dolls have been an important part of the Japanese culture for centuries



Ansar M Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: An exhibition titled “NINGYO: Art & Beauty of Japanese Dolls” started here at Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) as part of 70th anniversary celebrations of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Japan. The Embassy of Japan in Pakistan and the Japan Foundation in collaboration with PNCA displayed a superb collection of Japanese dolls at exhibition, said a press release issued here. This popular Japanese dolls travelling exhibition was inaugurated on Tuesday 11th January by WADA Mitsuhiro, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, together with the distinguished guests, Andleeb Abbas, member of the National Assembly of Pakistan and Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs, present on the occasion.

The exhibition presented a comprehensive introduction to Japanese doll culture, from Katashiro and Amagatsu, which are considered to be the archetypes of dolls in Japan, to local dolls that reflect the climate and anecdotes from across the country, to dress-up dolls that are beloved in Japan today as doll toys, and scale figures that are highly regarded around the world.

In the exhibition, a total of 67 carefully selected dolls divided under four sections “Ningyo to pray for children’s growth,” “Ningyo as fine art,” “Ningyo as folk art,” and “Spread of Ningyo culture” have been displayed by exhibiting the diversity of the Japanese dolls. Japanese dolls traditionally known as “Ningyo” (which means human shape in Japanese) are a unique cultural symbol because of their rich history and association with the Japanese way of life.

They reflect the customs of Japan and the aspirations of its people, possess distinctive regional attributes, and over the centuries have developed in many diverse forms. Ambassador WADA, while speaking at the inaugural cer-

emony of the exhibition said that dolls have been an important part of the Japanese culture for centuries and they reflect the history of Japan from prehistoric to modern times. As this year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Pakistan, the dolls exhibition is a delightful occasion for the Pakistani friends to learn more about the Japanese dolls culture. The purpose of showing this exhibition is to give the visitors a close glimpse of the versatility and individuality of the traditional and cultural life of Japanese people, said the Ambassador. The exhibition will remain open for public viewing till 25th of Jan 2022.



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ICCI for economic empowerment of women to achieve inclusive growth

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The government should take policy measures to increase the economic empowerment of women that would set the direction towards gender equality, poverty eradication, inclusive economic growth and enable the country to achieve sustainable development. This was said by Muhammad Shakeel Munir, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) while addressing the last day of Roundtable Conference on Increased Economic Participation of Women Workers and GSP Plus Status organized by ICCI in collaboration with Trust for Democratic Education & Accountability and Women Workers Alliance.

Muhammad Shakeel Munir said that women were half of our total population and bringing more women in the mainstream of economy by increasing their share in the workforce was very important for the better future of the country. He said that women participation in the workforce in Pakistan was reportedly less than 25 percent while it was over 50 percent in many countries. He stressed that the government should take policy measures to increase women participation in the workforce that would have a positive impact on the economy. He said that the women should be provided easy access to education, finance and transportation that would increase their independence and economic empowerment. He lauded the efforts of Women Workers Al-



liance with employers, line departments and the parliament for creating more safe workplaces for women. He assured that ICCI would fully cooperate with the Women Workers Alliance to address the issues of women workers and improve their economic participation. He hoped that the collaboration between the Women Workers Alliance and ICCI would help to further strengthen Pakistan's position in the EU market under the GSP Plus regime.

Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan, Chairperson of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians said that Pakistan was not taking full benefit of zero duty tariff lines under EU's GSP Plus for exports and stressed that more efforts should be made to increase exports under this facility that

would also create new opportunities for women economic empowerment. Ms. Aliya Hamza Malik Parliamentary Secretary Commerce said that the government was working on new laws to improve the conditions for working women and these legislative measures would provide them better protection at workplaces. Wouter Plomp Ambassador of Netherlands appreciated the first of its kind joint effort of employers and women workers to improve the working conditions of working women in Pakistan. He said such efforts would be helpful in harnessing the potential of women and improve GDP growth of Pakistan. Mudasir Rizvi, Director Programs, Trust for Democratic Education & Accountability and others also spoke at the occasion.

Coordinator General COMSTECH Calls on Secretary General OIC in Jeddah

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator General COMSTECH, H. E. Prof. Dr. M. Iqbal Choudhary, called on Secretary-General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), H.E. Mr. Hissein Barahim Taha, at OIC General Secretariat, in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on Wednesday. Prof. Choudhary briefed the Secretary General OIC about the preparations for the 31st Executive Committee Meeting of COMSTECH, which is being held on January 27, 2022, in Islamabad, Pakistan, under the Chair of H.E. Dr. Arif Alvi, President, Islamic Republic of Pakistan/ Chairman COMSTECH. Secretary General OIC conveyed his appreciation to the Government of Pakistan for generously supporting OIC's Ministerial Standing Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH). He assured his complete patronage to COMSTECH which is among the key OIC institutions. Prof. Choudhary also briefed the Secretary General about the major programs and activities of COMSTECH in African OIC member states including: COMSTECH-IFS research grants to young African scholars, COMSTECH Consortium of Excellence Research/Training and Fellowship Program, COMSTECH Scholarships and Research Fellowships for Women Scientists in least developed countries in Africa. – DNA





ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan . Khazar Farhadov met with Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini, Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest. – DNA

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NOVA GROUP INAUGURATES ESPORTE COMPLEX

ISLAMABAD: Nova Group held the inauguration ceremony of Esporte Complex along with the inauguration ceremony of Badminton Court and Football Court in Nova City to promote the healthy life style in an eco-friendly environment. Chief guest Shoib Akhtar was given the opportunity to speak on the significance of sports as in the ceremony the physical and mental health along with the eco-friendly environment was focused. Esportes block is a proof of our commitment as Nova City will provide its residents with any and everything within Nova City. The chairman Mr. Junaid Afzal has distributed the certificates of association among his associates to appreciate their efforts and hard work. In the attendees, Nova Group (NOVA) has a clear vision to continuously contribute to the socio-economic betterment of Pakistan.



For this purpose, Nova Group aims to do this by revolutionizing the culture of construction in Pakistan. Nova City aims to provide luxurious, comfortable, and affordable living with contemporary features in a safe and secure environment. Aspiring to offer a serene and diverse environment for future generations, by emphasizing on a smart life-style of tomorrow, we strive to create new benchmarks of healthy comfort and luxurious living in Pakistan. – DNA

JAPAN EXPANDS HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO AFGHAN REFUGEES

The assistance will be provided through WFP, UNICEF and UNHCR to directly address the humanitarian needs in areas such as healthcare, food and nutrition, protection, education, water and sanitation for the Afghan refugees and their host communities in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh provinces

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In response to the continued humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, Japan has decided to provide additional support of USD 3.72 million to Pakistan. This assistance will support Pakistan to prepare for a potential refugee influx into the country and address the protracted socio-economic challenges among the Afghanistan refugees and the host communities. For the last 40 years, Pakistan has hosted over 1.4 million registered refugees, and the demand for humanitarian assistance have soared since the sudden political turnaround in Afghanistan in August, while the pandemic has not been suppressed.

The assistance will be provided through WFP, UNICEF and UNHCR to directly address the humanitarian needs in areas such as healthcare, food and nutrition, protection, education, water and sanitation for the Afghan refugees and their host communities in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh provinces.

On 20 December, the Government of Japan officially announced its plan to contribute a total of approximately USD 109 million to address the escalating humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and the affected neighboring countries. The above-mentioned USD 3.72 million assistance is part of this plan.

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**DR. RAJA KAISER AHMED
REGISTRAR**

Saudi diplomacy needs flesh on its skeleton of sports and religion

James Dorsey

LIKE Qatar, after winning the right to host this year's World Cup, Saudi Arabia is discovering the pitfalls of seeking soft power, whether through sports or religion, without coming to grips with skeletons in its closet. Last week, France spotlighted the pitfalls when it questioned security in the kingdom following a mysterious explosion in a support vehicle carrying six members of the Sodcars Racing team exploded outside the Donatello hotel in the coastal city of Jeddah.

The explosion, days before last week's start in the kingdom of the Dakar Rally, severely injured French driver Philippe Boutron. The 61-year-old suffered 'burnt and torn' legs and was moved to a military hospital in Paris for further medical treatment after three initial operations in the kingdom. The other passengers escaped unscathed. The explosion cast a shadow over Saudi efforts to project itself as a prime venue for major international sports events. It also dented the impact of last month's visit to the kingdom by French President Emmanuel Macron and his meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Mr. Macron was the first Western head of state to engage directly and publicly with the crown prince since the 2018 killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul. Differences between France and Saudi Arabia over the cause of the explosion could raise questions about security in the kingdom as well as the crown prince's crackdown on potential rivals and any form of dissent.

Originally dubbed the Paris-Dakar rally, the race moved from North and West Africa several years ago for security reasons, first to South America and in 2020 to Saudi Arabia. France opened a terrorism investigation into the incident, but Saudi Arabia has insisted that its inquiry had found no initial criminal suspicions. The Saudi foreign

ministry said it was liaising with French authorities. The issue was likely discussed in a telephone conversation on Sunday between Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and his French counterpart, Jean-Yves Le Drian. Mr. Le Drian demanded earlier that Saudi Arabia provide "the greatest possible transparency." In addition, France warned its nationals in the kingdom to exercise "maximum alertness" in the wake of the blast. Sodcars chairman Richard Gonzalez supported French suspicions of a deliberate attack. "I saw everything. It was a deliberate act; there's no doubt about it," Mr. Gonzalez said. Saudi Arabia is widely believed to see sports as an opportunity to diversify its economy away from dependence on oil exports and as a vehicle for improving public health and a means to polish its badly tarnished human rights image. The explosion coincided with a second recent setback in Saudi efforts to distract from its human rights abuses not only through sports but also by projecting the kingdom as a religiously tolerant beacon of a 'moderate' interpretation of Islam and a leader in inter-

faith dialogue. The kingdom's projection suffered a defeat with the forced decision to move its King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (KAICIID) from Vienna to Lisbon. The centre hopes that the kingdom's lack of freedom of religion and tarnished human rights record will spark less controversy in the Portuguese capital. Supporters of the centre, part of a Saudi effort to garner religious soft power in competition with other Middle Eastern and Asian states, including the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Turkey, Iran, and Indonesia, have blamed anti-Muslim sentiment for the controversy surrounding it. Heather Wokusch, a consultant who has worked with KAICIID, noted that the centre had offered free of charge workshops to integrate Muslims into Austrian society and organized events to build capacity in peaceful dialogue and interfaith principles.

– Dr. James M. Dorsey is an award-winning journalist and scholar and a Senior Fellow at the National University of Singapore's Middle East Institute.

Government of Pakistan
Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP)
(INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES)

Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) intends to hire individual consultancy services against the following positions under National Social Protection Programme (NSPP) funded by World Bank;

Sr. No.	Position	Required Qualification & Experience
01.	EFCF Implementation Expert <i>(01 Position)</i>	<p>(i). Second class or Grade 'C' or 2.5/4 CGPA University degree (16 years of Education) from HEC recognized University / Institution in the discipline of Finance/Accounting/Commerce/Law or equivalent with minimum five (5) years post qualification experience</p> <p>(ii). Second class or Grade 'C' or 2.5/4 CGPA Bachelors degree from HEC recognized University/Institution with minimum twelve (12) years post qualification experience.</p> <p>(iii). Preference will be given to holders of certification in Fraud Examination in addition to above mentioned degree.</p> <p>(iv). Experience must be in most relevant field preferably in investigations anticorruption/development of methodologies/rule of law, financial discipline, Monitoring & Evaluation and Audit or related field of fraud examination /Investigations.</p>

- Detailed Terms of Reference (TORs) for the post and Application Form can be downloaded from www.bisp.gov.pk.
- A consultant shall be selected in accordance with the method contained in Part V of the World Bank's Guidelines for Selection and Employment of Consultants by the World Bank's Borrowers, January 2011 revised July 2014 which can be perused at the website: www.worldbank.org/procure.
- Only shortlisted candidates will be called for interview. T.A/D.A shall not be admissible.
- Remuneration would be negotiable commensurating to qualification and experience of the candidate.
- Attention of prospective individuals is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of Consultants' Selection Guidelines: whereby "Consultants shall not be hired for any assignment that would be in conflict with their prior or current obligations to other clients, or that may place them in a position of being unable to carry out the assignment in the best interest of the Borrower".
- Apply **ONLINE** at BISP's official website (www.bisp.gov.pk) within fifteen (15) days of publication of this advertisement, duly filled prescribed "Online Application Form" available on BISP's official website and upload the updated/detailed CV. **Last date to apply for the Post is 13th January, 2022.**

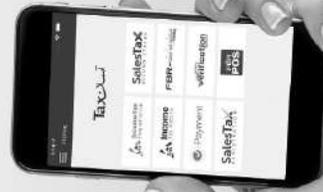
Director HR (HQ & Policy)
Room No. 221, Second Floor
BISP, F-Block, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad 051-9246325

PID NO 4405-21

قومی ذمہ داری نبھائیں - انعامات بھی پائیں

10 لاکھ روپے جیتنا چاہتے ہیں؟

تو شاپنگ کریں ایف بی آر POS رجسٹرڈ شاپرز سے اور جیتیں کروڑوں روپے کے ہزاروں انعامات ہر مہینے



پکی رسید مانگو - تصدیق کرو - انعام جیتو

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رسیدوں کو تعداد اندازہ میں شامل ہوگی

تصدیق / انعامی سکیم میں شامل ہونے کا طریقہ

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- FBR POS ایپ میں FBR POS Verify/INVOICE پر کلک کریں
- اب FBR انوائس نمبرورج کریں یا کوڈ اسکین کر کے سہولت تصدیق کریں
- 9966 پر ایس ایم ایس کے ذریعے
- متحدہ نمبر کرکے FBR Invoice Number INV (space) 9966 پر ایس ایم ایس بھیجیں



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- پہلا انعام 1,000,000 روپے
- دوسرا انعام (2 انعامات) 500,000 روپے
- تیسرا انعام (4 انعامات) 250,000 روپے
- چوتھا انعام (1,000 انعامات) 50,000 روپے

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