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Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine



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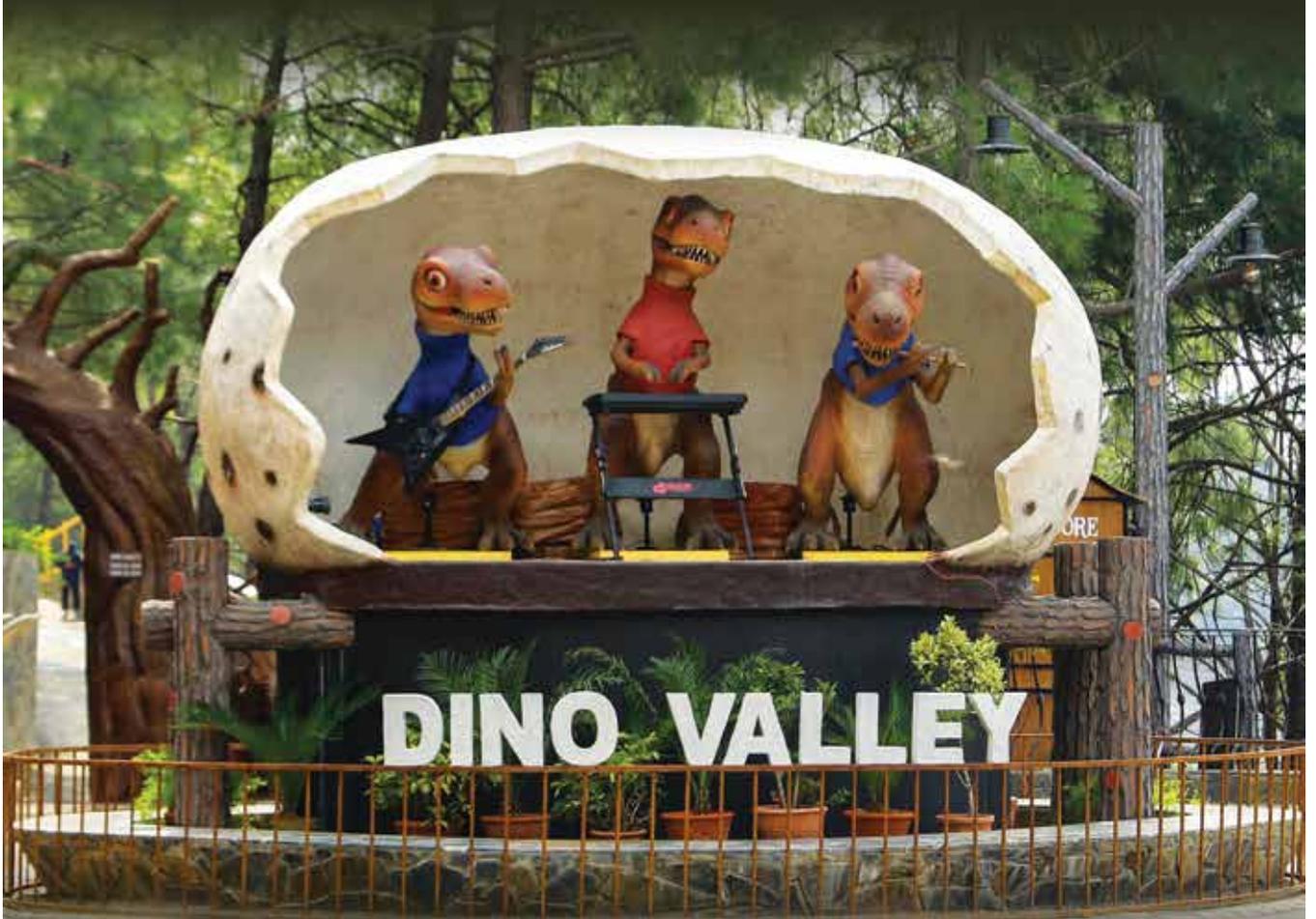
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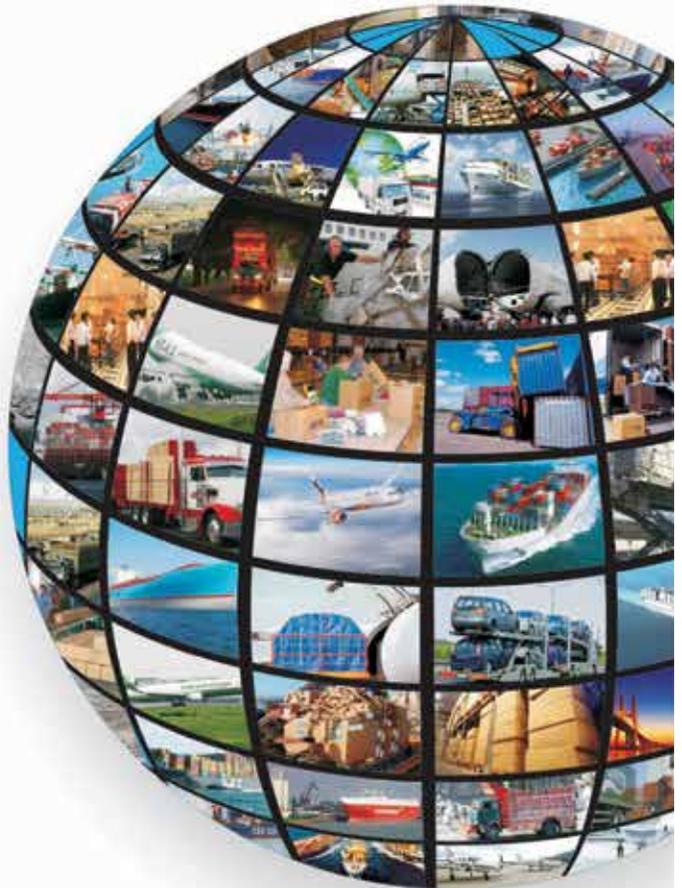
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The state of Pakistan economy and politics



AS it goes when misfortunes come, they come in battalions. Pakistan's political and economic condition has literally gone to dogs. While the nation was still trying to grapple with the monsters such as inflation; political instability, bad governance etc, then happened the Peshawar suicide blast that killed more than 100 people and left hundreds of injured. As per practice, the TTP has claimed the onus of the attack but it is still a mystery how the TTP or for that matter any other terrorist outfit pronounce that it has committed the crime. The news suddenly appears on a TV channel or social media and then spreads like jungle fire. Nobody has ever tried to verify the veracity of the claim. Same thing happened in the recent episode. The

TTP people denied any hand in the Peshawar blast but certain quarters are hell bent upon fixing the responsibility on it. The TTP may be involved, nevertheless those at the helm of affairs need to look into other possible threats as well.

Anyhow, the phenomenon of bomb blasts is nothing new for us. The Pakistanis have been bearing the brunt of this menace for decades. There are a number of conspiracy theories buzzing around after the blast, especially on social media, however this is the time to unite the nation instead of creating any divisions, as pleaded by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif during the Apex Committee meeting held in Peshawar on February 3, 2023. The Apex Committee meeting attended by the top military and political leadership sans PTI, further vowed to reinvigorate the fight against terrorism and extremism. By and large we tend to hear such vows and loud commitments after every such incident. After a while everything is forgotten and life returns to normalcy, at least till the time any other tragedy of similar or even greater magnitude takes place. That is how things work here unfortunately. After the 2014 Army Public School attack, the National Action Plan (NAP) was launched to crack down on terrorism and to supplement the anti-terrorist offensive in Federally Administered Tribal Areas. After the National Internal Security Policy 2014, it was the 2nd consensual policy document approved by the Government. The National Action Plan spelled out the specifics for the counter-terrorism drive in the country. There were 20 agenda items of National Action Plan 2014 and implementation of the death sentence of those convicted in cases of terrorism was at the top. But we know not even a single death sentence has been executed since then simply because Pakistan has agreed a moratorium on the death penalty with the EU particularly in order to reap benefits of the GSP +. Then in the Plan there was a provision to formulate a comprehensive policy to deal with the issue of Afghan refugees, beginning with registration of all refugees. Revamping and reforming the criminal justice system of Pakistan is yet another challenge the Action Plan envisaged to deal with. The criminal justice system in Pakistan is known to be faulty, exploitative and inequitable. Revamping of the system ostensibly is a key to improving law and order. The APS tragedy should have rung alarm bells within the ranks of powers-that-be but to the disappointment of all no serious efforts were made in this regard. Consequently the Peshawar episode took place. On the economic front the country is still reeling under distress. Thanks to the IMF, the government has finally issued a notification seeking details of the assets of the top bureaucrats – a creed which has always been treated as a sacred cow in Pakistan. Had there been no IMF pressure this kind of notification would have not been issued. People strongly believe that once the IMF tranche is through, the notification may immediately be withdrawn because in Pakistan we do not have a tradition and precedent of taking the influential people to task. The incumbent government is in no mood to hold elections in the Punjab and KPK provinces simply because it fears elections at this stage may turn out to be a disappointment for it. The delay would amount to constitutional disobedience, which may have consequences. This is yet another curse Pakistan has been going through ever since its inception. There is no doubt that a true and not a sham democracy is a panacea for all problems. Political chaos always paved the way for alien interventions. The prevailing political situation may constitute a fit case for yet another intervention. However, the political parties and particularly the sitting government can rule out any such possibility by dint of good governance and exercising intra-party and inter-party unity.

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.

An interview with the Ambassador of Belgium

CHARLES DELOGNE

New GSP+ will be 'more for more' process

Belgium hopes that Pakistan will be one of the beneficiaries of the new GSP+ process

Ambassador of Belgium to Pakistan Charles Delogne talked to Daily Islamabad POST, Centreline and Diplomatic News Agency (DNA). The ambassador talked about bilateral as well multi-lateral relations. Here is the text of his interview

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti





1: Let us begin with the bilateral relations, please share with us some salient features of Pakistan-Belgium ties with particular reference to trade and economic activities?

Our most complete statistics date from 2021: Belgium exported goods to Pakistan for 866 million EUR but this figure was boosted by the export of Covid-19 vaccines. Belgium imported goods from Pakistan for 457 million EUR, essentially textiles and rice.

The statistics during the 9 first months of 2022 show a more balanced picture but still an increase of the overall turnover: the Belgian exports to Pakistan amounted 487 million EUR while the Belgian import from Pakistan had a value of 463 million EUR.

I do not know the impact the floods will have on our trade relation this year. In total, Belgium is the 58th supplier of Pakistan and its 61st client. For those last figures, I used the statistics of the Belgian Trade Agency. According to the Pakistani ones, Belgium is the 5th trade partner of Pakistan.

2: Since January 2014, Pakistan has GSP+ status and a general view even among the business community is that Pakistan has not been able

to fully cash in on this facility because of certain internal factors. Do you think this impression holds any ground or you think Pakistan has made maximum utilization of this facility?

It is impossible to answer this question which is rather speculative. For sure, the European Union is the main trade partner of Pakistan with an overall turnover above 13 billion EUR in 2019, last year with full statistics.

This figure includes Pakistani exports of goods to the EU (7,5 billion EUR or 30 % of the total value of the Pakistani exports), the Pakistani imports of goods from the EU (5,5 billion EUR) as well as the import of services from Pakistan. But the European Union is much more than a trade partner or a development partner for Pakistan. In 2019, both signed a Strategic Engagement Plan that identifies a lot of fields of cooperation. In 2022, many high-level meetings witnessed the intensity of the EU-Pakistan relationship.

3: To be able to benefit from GSP Plus Pakistan ratified all 27 core international conventions on human rights, labour standards, environmental protection, and good governance.



Since this ratification, not much has changed on the ground in Pakistan. Do you think Pakistan may face serious challenges in December this year when the Status is going to be reviewed?

Implementation of these conventions by Pakistan is indeed of utmost importance. The discussion is going on within the European Union about a new GSP+ regulation that will normally enter into force in January 2024 and will replace the current regulation.

The big institutional change is that this new regulation must be approved by the European Parliament. This increases the political nature of the GSP+ which will be more than a mere trade agreement.

Follow-up mechanisms will be put in place and this supposes frequent political talks. To summarize, the new GSP+ regulation will be a “more for more” process and not a zero sum game. Belgium hopes that Pakistan will be one of its beneficiaries.

4: How do you see the world response towards Pakistan floods at the recently held Geneva donors’ conference? Please share with our readers the Belgian support extended to Pakistan in this regard?

The Geneva Conference went beyond the expectations of the Pakistani Government. Belgium did not announce any pledge for the reconstruction but in-

sisted on the importance of her contribution during the humanitarian phase of the floods in order to save lives. At the most critical moments of the floods, Belgium provided 300 tents to offer a shelter to 1.800 people and a water sanitation installation.

These contributions in kind must be added to the considerable budgetary support Belgium gives to UNICEF, FAO and ICRC through the techniques of core funding and flexible funding that allow the quickest reaction of these multilateral bodies to address humanitarian crises such as the floods in Pakistan.

5: Belgium is the NATO contact country in the region. How do you see NATO’s role with reference to peace and stability in Afghanistan?

Through the framework “Partners Across the Globe”, NATO and Pakistan developed cooperations in areas of mutual interest including emerging security challenges. Political dialogue and practical cooperation with Pakistan has expanded significantly in recent years, particularly with regards to Afghanistan.

Furthermore, the NATO Science for Peace and Security Program is open to collaboration with scientists and experts from Pakistan. The key priorities of this program include various priorities such as counter-terrorism, energy security, cyber defense, etc.

An interview with the Ambassador of Belgium

As a local NATO point of contact, the Belgian Embassy in Islamabad organizes meetings between some Pakistani personalities and the NATO embassies present in Pakistan and facilitates the visits of NATO delegations to Pakistan. The mandate of the Belgian embassy comes to an end in December 2023.

6: The EU is always looking towards NATO or other military forces whenever there is a need for that. As the founding member of the EU, don't you think the EU should have its own military alliance?

Keep in mind that some EU member states are not member of NATO and vice versa. This institutional reality explains the slow but steadily ongoing development of a European Policy of Defense. Belgium is a strong supporter thereof but, just like the other EU member states, she considers that the development of a European pillar of Defense can jeopardize neither NATO efficiency nor the Trans-Atlantic link.

As a result of this vision, the different European Defense missions that have taken place in several parts of the world continue to use NATO capacities but autonomously. There are things that the EU can do on its way such as the development of a European defense industry but interoperability with NATO remains crucial. Recently, the EU set up a revolving Peace Financial Facility that finances the EU military support to Ukraine. All these

considerations show you that NATO and the EU are complementary rather than competing.

7: How do you see the Russian invasion of Ukraine? Is there any possibility for Ukraine to be admitted into the NATO and EU any time soon?

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is a violation of the UN Charter and the international law and Belgium strongly condemns it. In their narrative, the Russians claim that a Ukraine's NATO membership would threaten their national security and that this justifies their two aggressions (in 2014 and 2022) against this country.

But let stick to the realities. First of all, NATO is a defensive alliance and not an imperial organization. Second, it is a sovereign right of a country to decide to apply to any international organization and Ukraine has constantly been viewing the Euro-Atlantic integration as its strategic goal since its independence in 1991.

EU and a NATO adhesions are based on the merits of the candidate country and, as far as NATO is concerned and before the war in Ukraine started, there was no unanimity among the Allied countries on the membership of this country.

This clearly illustrates the fake narrative Russia uses to hide its own imperialist and colonial project. The future will tell us if the Russian war is a game changer for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations but, before that, this war must stop.

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INDEPENDENCE DAY OF SRI LANKA



Sri Lanka on path to economic recovery

High Commissioner of Sri Lanka Vice Admiral Mohan Wijewickrama says relations between Sri Lanka and Pakistan excellent





Centreline Report

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Sri Lanka Vice Admiral Mohan Wijewickrama has said Sri Lanka is the oldest democracy in Asia, in terms of universal suffrage, that was granted by Donoughmore Constitution in 1931, before achieving our independence being a British Crown colony for over a century. He expressed these views while speaking on the occasion of the Independence Day of Sri Lanka. Chief guest Rana Tanveer Hussain Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Mushahid Hussain Chairman Senate Defence Committee, Fmr Foreign Secretary Sohail Mahmood and a large number of diplomats and members of the civil society attended the event.

The high commissioner further said, the 75th anniversary of Independence is celebrated at a juncture when the country is quietly making an economic recovery with the generous support of our friends, after undergoing our worst political and econom-

ic instability, attributed mostly to the intolerable losses we experienced associated with Covid virus that plagued the humanity. The Independence Day of Sri Lanka is a great national event celebrated by Sri Lankans all over the country with parades and cultural pageants, combined with the spirit of patriotism and national pride, he added. He said, the Independence Day also holds much significance for our people as it reflects the history of great sacrifices made by Sri Lankans in the realisation of its freedom at various stages under the colonial rule and also to remember and pay tribute to all who made the supreme sacrifice to ensure the independence, sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. 'Nicknamed as the pearl of the Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka is famous for its scenic natural landscape, wealth of biodiversity, rich cultural heritage and above all for its hospitable people and its famous orthodox tea that is grown mainly in the mountainous terrain'. The high commissioner said, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremasinghe has em-

phasized that the top most priority of his government is to ensure economic revival from the situation the country experienced in 2022. 'Sri Lanka has chosen a neutral foreign policy, with its principle of friendship towards all and enmity towards none'. Hon Minister, Ladies and Gentleman While talking about bilateral relations he said, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have always been trusted partners with brotherly relations having historical linkages dating back to the period of Gandharan civilization. Since achieving independence both Pakistan and Sri Lanka have extended cooperation to each other in different sectors and share similar perceptions in various international and regional fora. He said, there had been frequent high-level visits by the leaders of both nations and the visit by Ms Hina Rabbani the state minister for Foreign Affairs in Pakistan, to participate at the forthcoming Independence Day Ceremonies in Colombo as an honoured guest has further complement our friendship.



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TRAVELING is a spiritual journey, it's about getting the first-hand experience, about knowing history, culture, people and their traditions whether along the warm nest of family or wandering in search of yourself. Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan is one of the gorgeous cities among the world, offering some traces of history let's say Saidpur Village, a visit holy visit to Peer Mehr Ali Shah Golra, walking beside the wildlife in the crisscross hills of Margalla, a brief exhibition of the various cultures at Lok Virsa, sports, shopping, hoteling and much more. However, before making the itinerary for Islamabad one must be thoughtful about the choice of hotel. Come with me to Islamabad Serena Hotel, where hospitality and luxury speaks itself. Positioned at the base of the Margalla Hills directly next to the Diplomatic Enclave, on 14 acres of land with sublime gardens and peaceful shore of Rawal Lake, with a decent distance from Islamabad International Airport. Visiting Islamabad Serena Hotel is more than just a comfortable stay at the 5-star deluxe hotel, it is vivid immersion into the culture, heritage, and lifestyle of Pakistan. A rich, vibrant showcase of classic design and décor, the architecture and interiors are a sheer display of traditional

Pakistani culture perfectly portraying the art and craftsmanship of local artisans. The 8 restaurants, 336 rooms and 51 suites at the Hotel inspire and soothe simultaneously, elaborated Islamic and Mughlai aesthetics are perfectly balanced with contemporary comfort. Custom-made furniture, arabesque marble patterns, ornate woodwork and splendid hand-woven carpets of the finest silk and wool thread infuse the space with a measure of local richness, whilst deluxe bedding and linens, Penhaligon's bath amenities, complimentary high-speed Wi-Fi, a colorful fruit basket and welcome drink upon arrival. Throughout your stay, the staff will provide the finest level of service and care, ensuring all your wishes and needs are met effortlessly; creating unique, personal and memorable experiences that will last a lifetime.

Deluxe Room: An oasis of tranquility, with views over the hotel's beautifully landscaped gardens and beyond the city. Offering the choice of a comfortable king or twin bed. With a working desk, safety deposit box and generously proportioned bathroom with luxurious bath amenities, this room ensures a truly relaxing stay. Moreover, beside with other amenities you will enjoy, a complimentary buffet breakfast in Zamana Restaurant, Airport transfers by the hotel and use of gym and swimming pool.

Executive Room: Mesmerizing views and

top-of-the-line amenities. With this room, you can enjoy complimentary access to Nazara Executive Lounge, 4 complimentary pieces of laundry per day, free local calls and a daily local newspaper, plus gym and swimming pool at the Maisha Health Club. A good aspect is that, your spouse can stay free and enjoy all of the same amenities including daily buffet breakfast. Select between a king bed or a twin bed in rooms featuring a safety deposit box and an elegant attached bathroom.

Junior Suite features enchanting garden views, a king bed, a working desk, an elegant attached bathroom and a safety deposit box, along with a host of indulgent amenities. You can take advantage of complimentary access to Nazara Executive Lounge, work out, or swimming in the heated outdoor swimming pool at the Maisha Health Club. Also, complimentary 4 pieces of laundry per day, free local calls and complimentary breakfast buffet.

Executive Suite offers similar features as of Junior Suite, however it's a little more spacious and comfortable. **Presidential Suites** with a private enclave encompassing an impressive 196.58 square meters of space. This extraordinary accommodation features the epitome of personalized service, and the fully furnished open air terrace, perfectly situated to provide breathtakingly beautiful views of the award-winning



gardens. Renowned Pakistani architect Nayar Ali Dada meticulously designed this suite to be truly worthy of world leaders. Decorated with antiques and artwork throughout its parlor, dining room and master bedroom, the suite exudes status and opulence. Distinguished by a high ceiling adorned with majestic chandeliers and elegant wood paneling, the suite features a spacious master bedroom, a separate living and dining area, an exquisite working desk decorated in beautiful detail, a modern kitchenette and stylish marble bathroom with a modern rain shower and Jacuzzi. The lavish interior of the suite combines custom-made furniture, arabesque patterns in marble, authentic woodwork, splendid handwoven carpets of silk and the finest wool, and silk fabric wall paneling to create a sophisticated environment reflecting the rich culture of Pakistan. Moreover, for exclusivity the suite has a private driveway tucked amongst the serene landscaped gardens, and a private elevator provides guests security unrivalled anywhere else in the capital. Splendid!

Dining:Uniting the finest of traditional Pakistani cuisine with culinary concepts from the Middle East and cultures around the world, Islamabad Serena Hotel offers a distinctive range of restaurants from which to choose. Invites you to explore a diverse variety of gastronomy crafted by a skilled culinary team. From casual buffet restaurants

and relaxing bars to signature fine dining restaurants, each restaurant showcases the sophisticated settings and impeccable service that make the stay so unique. A bakery and patisserie located at the lobby level near the shopping arcade. Stepping into Rakaposhi, you one can't help but be enchanted by the rich aromas of freshly baked French pastries, cakes and breads, ice creams, flavoured teas and specialty coffees. Choose for something a little more substantial, the club sandwich or beef tenderloin steak, perhaps, and pair your selection with one of the freshly squeezed juices or creative "mocktails."

Zamanais all-day dining restaurant serves buffet breakfast, lunch and dinner along with an à la carte menu. A fusion of ethnic Pakistani culinary specialties and sumptuous continental favorites crafts an unforgettable dining experience enhanced by views across the hotel's delightful water pools and gardens. You can choose from the à la carte menu or lunch and dinner buffets offering an array of specialty dishes.

On Sundays the Restaurant offers Brunch combining the finest international cuisines let's say Thai, Italian, Japanese, Chinese, Middle Eastern and Western along with traditional Pakistani specialties. Give your eyes the satisfaction of dishes cooked à la minute by chefs at live cooking stations, delivering food straight from the pan to the

plate. Moreover, there's option of a sumptuous Hi-Tea from 4:00pm-6:00pm. A mesmerizing dining journey in Dawat restaurant at Islamabad Serena Hotel. Where a meticulously crafted Pakistani menu with the signature warm hospitality and live music is waiting for providing you with a complete soulful experience.

Enjoy al fresco dining with live traditional music at Baradari, a seasonal outdoor restaurant serving traditional Pakistani BBQ meats including seekh kebab, fish tikka and chapli kebab along with delicious local dishes and freshly baked Tandoori naan.

Traditional Middle Eastern ambience awaits you in this exotically decorated restaurant with its intricate ceramic wall tiles and arched ceilings. Dinner at Al-Maghreb is a complete dining experience offering the opportunity to savor the myriad delights of Middle Eastern and Arabian cuisine. House specialties include the BBQ Lebanese mixed grill and lamb ayamzamazam.

Exotic flavors of Thai, Indonesian, Japanese and Chinese specialties at Wild Rice, bringing together cuisines from Southeast Asia, the live station and picturesque views make Wild Rice an unforgettable dining experience. Islamabad Serena Hotel combining the best of local culture and heritage with the amenities and services that discerning travelers seek, designed to make your holiday in Pakistan truly memorable.



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The Hero of Fight against Terrorism

Maj. Gen Qasem Soleimani

THREE years ago, at the dawn of the January 3rd General Lieutenant Qasem Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, along with his companion Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis and several of their retainees, were targeted by a US drone strike at the Bagdad airport. Shortly after the attack, the then president of the US, Donald Trump blatantly confessed to be involved in this terrorist action and to acknowledge ordering and commanding the assault. That night Gen. Soleimani was supposed to call on some Iraqi officials and to talk about the ongoing events in the region. Therefore, the delegation traveled to Iraq based on an official invitation to call on Iraq prime minister.

The assassination of Gen. Soleimani, except being a state terrorism against a high-ranking official military staff of the military forces of an independent country, was an obvious breach of international law and an act of aggression. Also, this was a hazardous maneuver that could negatively affect peace and security in whole of the region by eliminating a successful commander in fight against terrorism as well as by other consequences driven from the terrorist attack. In another point of view, the terrorist action was tantamount to breach of Iraqi sovereignty and an act of aggression against two members of the UN. This year is the third anniversary of the assassination of this valiant hero. It was just three years ago that Gen. Soleimani formally declared the termination of ISIS, and his dream came true when, at the time this terrorist group was totally enervated and at the edge of undermining.

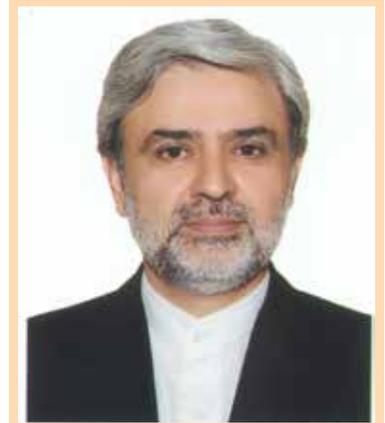
The bravery that Soleimani showed in the fight against extremism and terrorism catalyzed the annihilation of the ISIS in the region and brought peace and security not only to the already war-stricken geography of the Middle East, but also for the whole countries throughout the world including US and Europe. Soleimani reacted to the crisis of ISIS in the circumstances where the whole region had already been swept away by this atrocious terrorist group of ISIS as a result of which some countries were close to collapse. Many believe that if Soleimani had not mobilized an initiative against extremism and terrorism, the map of the region was not the way it's today. He undertook commanding counter-terrorist operations at a time when ISIS declared the Islamic Caliphate and committed the most hideous and unprecedented crimes in the human history against civilians and armies.

Here comes up a contradictory situation where, in different situations, the provenance of ISIS and some other terrorist

groups is revealed to be an American tactics. Trump's confessions, among others, in the electoral campaigns, regarding the origin of ISIS is an evident example. Soleimani was a well-known hero against terrorism who spent his whole life combating terrorism and aggression. So what is the case? Trump: we created the ISIS. Aftermath, he same Trump said I personally ordered the attack to Gen. Soleimani. The answer could be found in the double standard politicization adopted by America. The assassination of Gen Soleimani was an obvious breach of international law, human right, and morality that can no doubt bring about the international responsibility of the perpetrators.

Many jurists, diplomats, politicians and the experts of the international law daresay that the illegal assassination of a high-ranking military staff of a country is a threat to the peace and security of the whole region and the world. Because with the absence of the prudent commanders who have long experiences in fighting against terrorism, there still remains anxiety about the resurgence of the extremist groups like ISIS (Daesh) in the region. Moreover, the terrorist strike against him is an obvious violation of international law, human rights as well as an act of aggression against the sovereignty of another country. The act is regarded as one of the evident examples of state terrorism committed by a country against another and being accepted formally by high-ranking officials of the country and via the confession of the perpetrator himself in front of the cameras.

Three years had passed and now many speak about the "Soleimani School of Thought", he was a popular commander at the time, and is a legend and a personality beyond history right now. His supporters regard his assassination as the climax of his story and an inevitable end and goal to his devoted life. They say that his martyrdom is more destructive to those against whom he fought and more inspiring to those who loved him than his alive. being a philanthropist and a social and civil activist specially regarding the development plans and aiding the poverty, flood and quake stricken people in different regions, he was truly favored by many even his critics. The spontaneous overflow of people in the funeral ceremonies is a proof to the claim. He was committed to work for the human dignity and for the betterment and welfare of the people regardless of race, religion, nationality and their life style. In a video getting viral in the social media, he strictly addresses those who encounter different lifestyles regarding women coverage, arguing that they are our sisters and daughters and our human resources.



Syed Mohammad Ali Hosseini

The writer is the ambassador of the I. R Iran to Pakistan

Three years ago, he was brutally and unmanly assassinated in another country. Time and history are the best teacher and the fairest witnesses of the human mind court. Iranian officials promised that the crime will not be left unanswered, and the committers, supporters and assistants of this inhumane crime would be held accountable in a fair court of justice. However, the hideous terrorist act by the then US president was largely condemned by many including politicians, jurists, academicians and public opinion. Iran has declared to use its political, legal and international capacities in order to take action against the suspects and to prosecute the perpetrators of the crime in a fair court. During the last decades, hostility, terror and killing of the civilians have been the common pain of the two great nations of Iran and Pakistan. The two countries have suffered from this blight and many families have lost their loved ones. Thus, no nation like Iran and Pakistan understands the plague of terrorism. The people of these two Muslim nations feel the anxiety and the concern of terrorism, and a lot of pure blood of the youth of the nations has shed on this path. So far, many a martyrs in the two brotherly countries of Iran and Pakistan have devoted their lifetime and sacrificed their lives for the sacred cause of peace and security. In the ongoing threatening situation that we see, and with the disastrous prospective that looms large in the region, the Islamic World should take action with a convergent pattern and by putting aside its misunderstandings and misconceptions, mostly guttered by the foreigners, take to maintain the indigenous peace and security emanated from the region itself, before late.

Buddha relic in Taxila Museum on display

The relic in gold plated bullet proof showcase is gifted by Thailand: Ambassador Chakkrid



WAH CANTT: Ambassador of Thailand to Pakistan Chakkrid Krachaiwon on Tuesday inaugurated gold plated gallery with bullet-proof glasses to display the holy bone relics of the Lord Buddha at Taxila Museum on Tuesday. The gallery was gifted and installed by Thai government with multiple security and safety features for better safety and security of the unique relics. Speaking on this occasion, Ambassador of Thailand to Pakistan Chakkrid Krachaiwon has said that the installation to mark the 71st year of Thai-Pakistan diplomatic relations. He said that the container in which the holy relics is preserved is designed as a symbol of good will and long-lasting diplomatic and cordial relations between two friendly countries that have the similarity of culture and history. "This gallery is a symbol of interfaith harmony between different faiths and cultures".

Ministry of foreign affairs Additional Secretary Asia and Pacific, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said on this occasion that Thailand and Pakistan relations are deep-rooted. The gallery presentation, the three-month-long Chief Buddhist monk of Sangha Supreme Council of Thailand, Most Venerable Arayawangso, who along with his disciple, pilgrimage to Pakistan is proof of the fact that along with diplomatic relations, the



cultural relations are on the fast track. We see more prospects of enhancing relations, especially religious tourism. Speaking on this occasion, the Punjab Department of Archeology Deputy Director Muhammad Iqbal Manj said that since the inauguration of the Taxila Museum in 1928, the holy relic for the first time has been displayed in a separate gallery in a special one-meter-long bulletproof glass. He said that with the state-of-the-art security features- the threat of theft of the holy relic was now out of the question.

He said that the holy relic of Lord Buddha was discovered in a silver casket containing a silver inscription. The inscription is written in the ancient Kharosthi script that was once common throughout Gandhara. The inscription states that Urusaka of Noacha placed bone relics of the Buddha in his chapel at Dharmarajika. The excavation was carried out by the then Surveyor General of British India Sir John Marshall during excavations carried out from 1912-16 in Taxila from Dharmarajika Stupa. - **Agencies**



Pakistan keen to expand ties with Italy

Italian envoy calls on Dy Chairman Senate

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Italy to Pakistan Andreas Ferrarese called on the Deputy Chairman of Senate Mirza Muhammad Afridi. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest. The Deputy Chairman Senate said that Pakistan was keen to expand relations with friendly country Italy. He said Italy was very important coun-

try in the European Union adding a large number of Pakistanis were working in Italy. Mirza said both countries can cooperation in various sectors. He also briefed the Italian ambassador about the working of the Upper House. The Italian ambassador thanked the Deputy Chairman Senate for receiving him.

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PESHAWAR: CEO Serena Hotels South and East Asia Aziz Boolani and Mrs Boolani posing for a picture with Imran Aziz Qawwal and staff of the Serena Hotel Peshawar. – DNA



MEHFIL-E-SAMMA AT PESHAWAR SERENA HOTEL

Legendary Qawwal Imran Aziz Mian performs at the Mehfil-e-Samma

PESHAWAR: Imran Aziz Qawwal performs at the Peshawar Serena Hotel. – DNA

PESHAWAR: Tourism Promotion Services (Limited) Pakistan hosted a “Mehfil-e-Samma” with the legendary Qawwal Imran Aziz Mian to celebrate its latest acquisition ‘Peshawar Serena Hotel’ to its portfolio of Luxury Hotels, Resorts, Forts, Palaces in South and Central Asia. The beautifully organised musical evening began with a meet and greet that included prominent personalities from the corporate sector, business community and media houses. The evening was an ode celebrating Serena Hotels arrival in the oldest city of Pakistan. The management of Serena believes that Peshawar has untapped potential for tourism and boosts a rich cultural heritage, which will help in extending the tourist circuit in the province but will also allow regional connectivity for tourists and business travelers through its vast portfolio of hotels in Islamabad, Peshawar, Kabul, and Dushanbe. The hotel shall serve as a gateway to Central Asia, taking the brand portfolio to a whole new level. The management of Serena Hotel has retained the employees of Pearl Continental Hotel and have been working upon the restoration and conservation of the existing 1970s building, with intention to add on to the existing structure. Serena is well associated with conservation projects, with the Heritage Circuit being

a part of the Serena Palaces and Forts that have been restored and renovated and are now being utilised as a historical hotel, the proceeds of which is handed back to the community in an annual ceremony. A provincial job fair is planned to provide the youth with opportunities to become a part of the Serena family, where internships, mentorship programmes and management training will be offered to the students of the region, showcasing Serenas’ ethos of community development, and capacity building. The management has been actively engaged with the community, through the corporate social responsibility platform called ‘Jazba-e-Khidmat’, which is an initiative to provide donations and support to flood affectees of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region. Now through the Peshawar Serena Platform, the management will be distributing ration bags to the nearby areas affected by the catastrophic flooding of 2022. The evening marked the beginning of many more events that are in the pipeline for Peshawar Serena Hotel and set the tone for the future. Celebrating the rich cultural heritage and legacy of the city of flowers, through Serena Diplomacy initiatives i.e., public, cultural, sports, adventure. These initiatives by Serena Hotels have been creating an inclusive environment for the underprivileged and underserved communities, wherever they operate.

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SERENA HOTELS
PESHAWAR



France provides €120 mn (28.5 Billion PKR) soft loan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Kazim Naiz, Secretary of Economic Affairs Division (EAD), H.E. Mr Nicolas Galey, Ambassador of France, and Mr. Philippe Steinmetz, Country Director of the French Development Agency (AFD), signed the Credit Facility Agreement of €120 million to finance the Keyal Khwar hydropower project. This 128 megawatt facility is located in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), near the city of Pattan. This soft loan will support the Water & Power Development Authority – WAPDA - in its mandate of hydroelectricity sector development in Pakistan. The funding will also help enhance the competitiveness of renewable power generation. Such benefits will contribute improving affordability and scaling up the energy supply. These will be achieved while also mitigating the impacts of power generation on climate and environment, in line with the policies of the Government of Pakistan. The Keyal Khwar hydropower project harnesses the energy potential of a tributary of the Indus River.



The 128 MW hydroelectric plant will produce 420 GWh/year, 25% of which will be peak load.

This funding provided by AFD will help:

1. Mitigate the flood-affected area of KPK and rehabilitation of the infrastructure while building the hydropower project.
2. Define environmental and social (E&S) management measures in line

with international standards through study grants provided by AFD

3. Replace thermal power plants and avoid the equivalent of the emission of 182,000 tons of CO2 per year, once the scheduled commissioning of the plant is completed in 2028.

4. Improve the quality of life for 600,000 inhabitants.

The project will contribute to the Government of Pakistan's strategy to develop green energy, reduce greenhouse gas emission, in line with the French Government's agenda of promoting climate-friendly projects and with the French pledge and commitments announced at the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan which took place in Geneva on January 9, 2023. France, through the French Development Agency, is providing technical and financial support in several sectors such as energy, water and sanitation, urban development, rural development, health and cultural heritage. Since 2009, €1 332 million has been committed to Pakistan. The clean energy sector has mobilized a total of €930 million.

UN Women to support GEWE in Pakistan

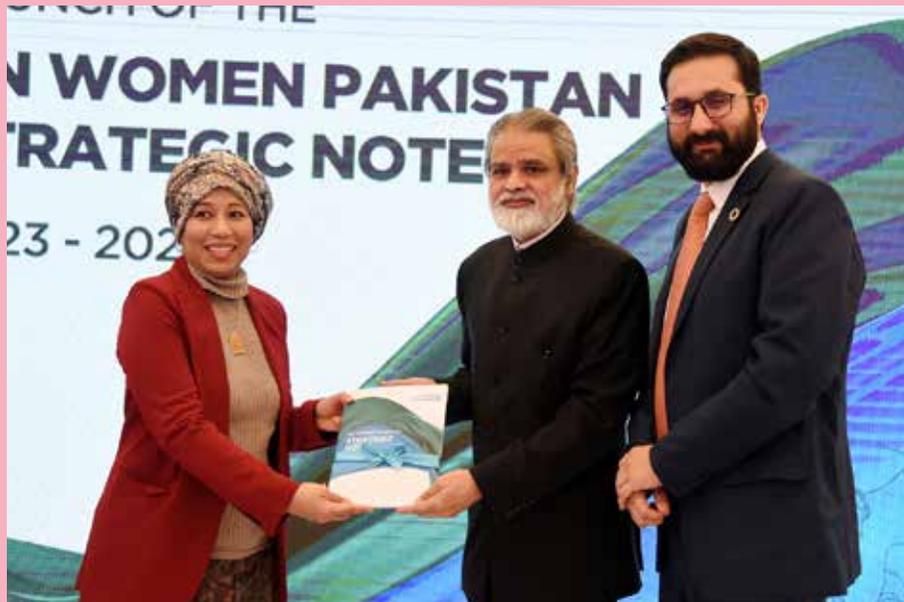
D.N.A

ISLAMABAD: The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN) has announced the launch of its Strategic Note (SN) to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women & girls in Pakistan. The objective of the launch event was to inform all stakeholders and partners of its strategic priorities for the period starting from 2023- 2027. While welcoming the participants, Country Representative, UN Women Pakistan, Sharmeela Rassool emphasized “The UN Women Strategic Note consists of 5 output areas contributing to a single outcome that is advancing gender equality and women empowerment. UN Women Pakistan aims to position women as change agents in every sector and creating environment for them to become their own solution architects.”

The SN is formulated and developed through an inclusive process and is aligned with UNSDCF- 2023-2027. In addition, the SN guides the UN Women’s work in the country.

While congratulating UN Women on the launch of Strategic Note, Head of Resident Coordinator’s

Country Representative, UN Women Pakistan, Sharmeela Rassool emphasized “The UN Women Strategic Note consists of 5 output areas



Office, Mr. Shah Nasir Khan said, “Gender equality and women empowerment is a guiding principle that applies to everything the UN does. I applaud UN Women on the launch of its Strategic Note and wish its implementation will shift power structures and the economic, social, and political systems that perpetuate discrimination.” In his keynote speech honorable Chief Justice Federal Shariat Court, Dr. Syed Muhammad Answer said, “Women and girls play an important part in the development of any country. I commend UN Women and congratulate the entire team on launching this important plan which will ensure women and girls living secure and prosperous lives which, are free from any form of violence and benefiting from non-discriminatory legislation.”

The thematic focus of the SN Outcome aligns with the thematic priorities of the UN Women’s Global Strategic Plan (SP) and includes both traditional and emerging areas of work: normative frameworks, data architectures, innovative gender financing, access to goods, services and resources, voice agency and leadership and social norm change. Embedded into the SN structure are linkages and complementarities across the five outputs, including cross-cutting UN system coordination, which results in an SN outcome that is envisioned to be greater than the sum of its parts. The chairperson, NCSW Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar, Secretary Ministry of Law and Justice Mr. Raja Naeem, Team leader European Union Mr. Sven Ruesh, Dr. Maha Noor Deputy Ambassador the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Ms. Saadia Khan, Commissioner, SECP along with UN Women team also spoke at the launching event.

Outgoing Egyptian Defence Attache hosts farewell reception

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Defence Attache of Egypt Col Mahmoud Hassan hosted a farewell reception to say goodbye to his friends. A large number of DAs from various countries attended the reception. The Dean of COSA Col Nicolas Presson and the incoming Defence Attache of Egypt Brig. General Mohamed Saad were also present. Col Mahmoud in his speech thanked his colleagues for extending to him fullest cooperation during his tenure in Pakistan. He said will remember for ever time spent in Pakistan – a country his considers his second home. He also wished good luck to his successor Brig General Mohamed Saad and introduced him to other colleagues. Brig Gen Saad in his remarks recognized services of the outgoing Egyptian Defence Attache and wished him best of luck in his future career. He said he was looking forward to working with his colleagues from COSA and the Pakistani friends. He hoped defence relations between Egypt and Pakistan would further be cemented.







ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels hosted its annual Invitational Golf Tournament in collaboration with Margalla Greens Golf Club, under the Sports Diplomacy Initiative, on the 4th of February 2023. The Categories included Diplomatic, Government & Armed Forces, Corporate and Women. The weather was ideal for the golfers who thoroughly enjoyed the game under sunny weather. The event started with a lavish breakfast followed by the tee off. The players displayed amazing skill and technique in all categories, a total of 120 golfers participated,

including 12 seasoned women golfers.

Dr. Arif Alvi, President of Pakistan, graced the occasion as the guest of honor and also participated in the tournament along with the Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral M Amjad Khan Niazi NI(M) S Bt prominent members of the community including ambassadors, the business sector, honorable members of the armed forces, bureaucrats and corporate sector.

The golfers competed on the golf course under four different categories. Serena Hotels honored the winners of the competition with priz-

SERENA HOTELS & MARGALLA GREENS HOST INVITATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT 2023



es that included stays in the Heritage properties and other Serena Hotels properties across Pakistan. Addressing the closing ceremony the president emphasized the need to promote healthy and nature-based activities in the country. He said the game of golf brings man closer to nature, exercise and physical activity is essential for human health.

The President Dr. Arif Alvi lauded Serena Hotels management, on organizing the successful tournament and their continuous effort in promoting tourism and a softer image

of Pakistan via engaging national and international communities.

Aziz Boolani informed the participants about his hotel's sports diplomacy initiative for the promotion of sports in Pakistan, especially golf. The president of Pakistan dr. Arif Alvi appreciated the sports diplomacy initiative of the hotel for conducting a successful golf tournament in Islamabad. The event culminated with a glorious prize distribution ceremony followed by an exquisite spread for guests and participants. – DNA



Pakistan, Kazakhstan agree to enhance trade relations

Mahnoor Ansar

ISLAMABAD, Ambassador of Kazakhstan for Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin called on Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar here on Thursday and agreed in principle to sign Kazakhstan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement. The two discussed potential opportunities for trade and cooperation between Kazakhstan and Pakistan, including the conclusion of several transit trade agreements, said a press release issued here.

The Minister remarked that the government is keen to further strengthen bilateral economic and trade ties between the two countries, and expressed confidence that the two sides would expedite the process of concluding the agreements.

Syed Naveed Qamar observed that Pakistan will host the next session of the Joint Working Group on Trade in the coming months to discuss issues in bilateral trade and undertake measures for enhancing economic integration. The minister remarked that the MoU between KAZAKH INVEST & Qaz Trade from Kazakhstan and Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) and Board of Investment (BOI) from Pakistan signed on 23rd December, 2022 will further enhance Trade and Investment activities between the two sides.

Ambassador Kistafin appreciated the Minister for his support and expressed optimism that the agreements would be finalized soon. Besides this agreement, the Ambassador also showed keen interest in Pakistani sports goods, furniture, and tourism. Subsequently, Syed Naveed Qamar, invited the Ambassador as “Guest of Honor” on the 18th Trade Fair of the OIC member states scheduled to be held from 16-18th June, 2023 in Lahore with the theme of women entrepreneurship. He also invited Kazakh Government to establish a “Special Pavilion” at the OIC’s Trade Fair.

ICCI for promoting Pak-Syria trade and economic relations

Dr. Ramez Alraee, Ambassador of Syria said that his country is eager to promote trade and economic cooperation with Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Faad Waheed, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that Pakistan and Syria are two brotherly Islamic countries and they can complement each other's economy in many fields, therefore, they should focus on promoting trade and economic ties to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. He said that the bilateral trade between Pakistan and Syria is quite negligible, and that it can be improved by promoting business linkages between the private sectors of both countries. He expressed these views while talking to H.E. Dr. Ramez Alraee, Ambassador of Syria during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Faad Waheed briefed the Syrian Ambassador about the key industries and major exportable products of Pakistan that can be

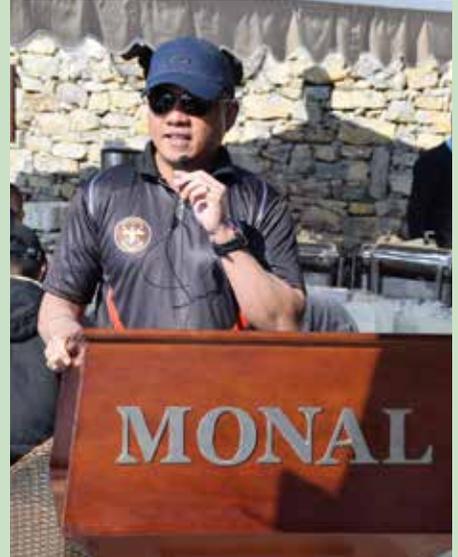
very beneficial to the Syrian consumers. He highlighted the importance of frequent exchange of trade delegations to explore untapped areas of mutual cooperation between the two countries and reiterated the commitment of ICCI to work with the Syrian Embassy to improve business and investment relations between Pakistan and Syria.

Speaking at the occasion, H.E. Dr. Ramez Alraee, Ambassador of Syria said that his country is eager to promote trade and economic cooperation with Pakistan, which is very important to reduce unemployment and improve living standards of people. He said that Syria and Pakistan enjoy good political relations that should be transformed into growing business relations to achieve mutual economic benefits. He said that Pakistan can cooperate with Syria in many sectors including energy, infrastructure development,

IT and many other fields. He stressed that a delegation of ICCI should visit Syria to see the potential for business and investment opportunities and assured that his Embassy would provide them all possible support and cooperation. He also thanked Pakistan for providing support to Syria at international forums and reaffirmed that he would work to further strengthen trade and economic bonds between the two countries. Engr. Muhammad Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that Pakistan considers Syria an important country for trade and said that he would lead a delegation of ICCI to Syria to explore business collaboration with Syrian counterparts.

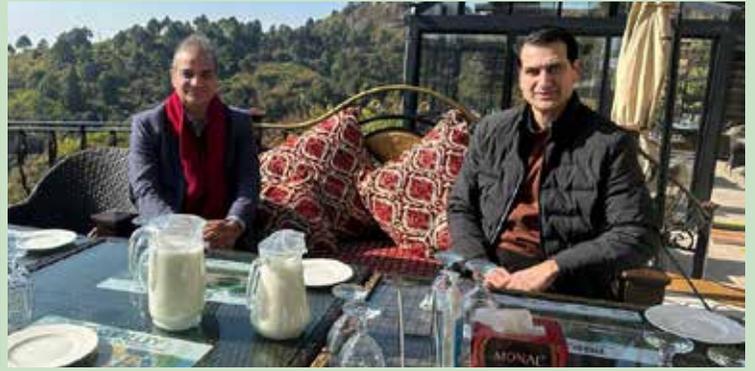
Mian Shaukat Masud, Dr. Muhammad Usman, Parveen Khan Durani and others also spoke at the occasion and shared useful ideas to improve business relations between Pakistan and Syria.





MONAL GROUP ORGANISES SUNDAY BRUNCH FOR DEFENCE ATTACHES







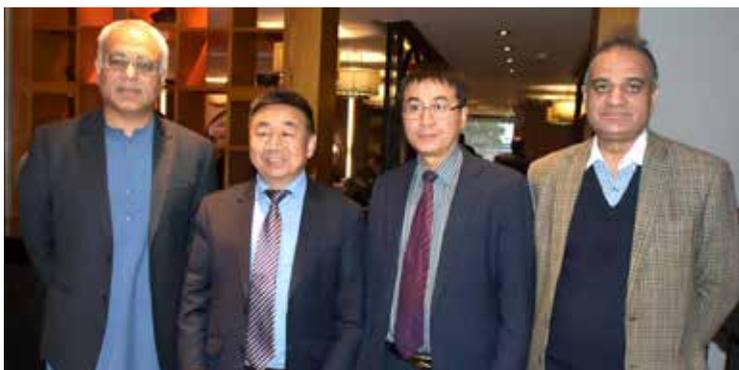
MONAL GROUP CELEBRATES ADVENT CHINESE NEW YEAR IN STYLE

D.N.A

Addressing the ceremony, Luqman Ali Afzal spoke about the importance of China as a friendly country and global business partner in the post-Covid world. Whilst congratulating the Chinese delegates on the occasion of the Chinese New Year

ISLAMABAD: Monal Group Of Companies Hosts Chinese Embassy Officials for Cake-Cutting Ceremony to Celebrate the Start of The Chinese New Year 2023. The Founder and CEO of Monal Group of Companies Luqman Ali Afzal hosted a high-level delegation of officials of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China for a cake-cutting ceremony and lunch on the occasion of the advent of the Chinese New Year 2023 (The Year Of The Rabbit). The guest of honor at the ceremony was the Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Security, Mr. Faisal Karim Kundi. The delegation from the Embassy was led by Mr. Xing Lijun, Head of the Cultural Section at the Embassy and accompanying him were La Jielian, Chairman of the Chinese Association of Pakistan, Zhao Li Ru, Vice President of ZTE, as well as Lee Zu, Assistant Head of the Cultural Section at the Embassy. The Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Security Faisal Karim Kundi spoke about the time-tested brotherly relations between Pakistan and China as well as the potential benefit to both countries from the ongoing work on the CPEC Project which is bound to bring prosperity to the region. He added, China was the future and it was in the interest of Pakistan to have close and brotherly relations with China. The minister appreciated efforts of the Monal group in bringing peoples of Pakistan and China even close through the culinary diplomacy.

Addressing the ceremony, Luqman Ali Afzal spoke about the importance of China as a friendly country and global business partner in the post-Covid world. Whilst congratulating the Chinese delegates on the occasion of the Chinese New Year, he also announced a 20% goodwill waiver for all Chinese patrons visiting Monal and Asian Wok restaurants in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore and Peshawar starting from January 20th till February 10th, 2023. Xing Lijun, Head of the Cultural Section of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in his address thanked the management of the Monal Group Of Companies for hosting the event in honor of the Chinese New Year 2023 and said that person-to-person exchanges such as this event are essential in ensuring long lasting brotherly relations between the two countries. The ceremony concluded with lunch being served to the distinguished guests and media persons at the event.





ARMED FORCES DAY OF THAILAND Pakistan, Thailand enjoy excellent relationship

Thailand and its armed forces have always defended their homeland: Air Marshal Irfan Ahmed





D.N.A

ISLAMABAD: Air Marshal Irfan Ahmed, Deputy Chief of the Air Staff has said Thailand and its armed forces have always defended their homeland against any misadventure. He said importance of independence of any nation can never be over-emphasized. "I must mention here that independence can never be preserved without strong armed forces. The Royal Thai Armed Forces Day therefore is an important annual event", he added. Air Marshal Irfan made these remarks while speaking on the occasion of the Armed Forces Day of Thailand. Ambassador of Thailand

Chakkrid Krachaiwon and the Defence Attache Col. Thanai Permpul also spoke on the occasion. A large number of guests hailing from various walks of life and the defence attaches of various countries attended the event. Air Marshal Irfan further said, he was extremely glad to be part of the Thai Armed Forces Day. He also thanked the Ambassador and the Thai Defence Attache for inviting him as the Chief Guest. He said Pakistan and Thailand have an enduring friendship for the last 71 years. The historical state of Takht Bahai in Mardan and Buddhist remains in Texlia carry huge sentimental value for the Thai people and Pakistan always welcomes the Thai people with open arms.

Palm oil export to Pakistan

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Faad Waheed, Acting President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said that Pakistan is a major importer of palm oil from Indonesia, but Indonesia has placed curbs on the export of this commodity, which has created lot of concerns in the cooking oil and ghee manufacturers in Pakistan as it would lead create shortage of this food item in our country and create more problems for the consumers. He appealed to the Indonesian authorities to reconsider their decision and restore the normal export of palm oil to Pakistan. He said this while talking to H.E. Adam M. Tugio, Ambassador of Indonesia during his visit to Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Faad Waheed said that Pakistan and Indonesia are two important countries of the Muslim world and a lot of opportunities are waiting for their private sectors to enhance cooperation in multiple fields. He said that both countries should facilitate regular exchange of trade delegations and encourage their investors to explore investment opportunities in each other country to achieve mutually advantageous economic benefits.

He highlighted Pakistan's prospective industries for cooperation with Indonesia including information technology, tourism, pharmaceuticals, textiles, cooking oil and others. He reaffirmed ICCI's commitment to strengthen liaison with the Indonesian Embassy in order to im-

prove business linkages between the private sectors of both countries.

Speaking on the occasion, H.E. Adam M. Tugio, Ambassador of Indonesia said that his country is now focusing on biofuels to meet the rising domestic demand, which has prompted the need to reduce the export of palm oil. He said that Pakistan can export many products to Indonesia including pharmaceuticals, surgical and medical equipment, footballs, leather products. He said that both countries have good scope to enhance cooperation in the hospitality sector. He said that Pakistan has great potential to promote religious tourism. He said that the business community of Pakistan should identify areas of its

comparative advantage and he would connect them with Indonesian counterparts to improve bilateral trade. He said that a private airline of Indonesia would start direct flights with Pakistan that would help improve people-to-people and business-to-business relations.

Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI thanked the Indonesian Ambassador for visiting ICCI and said that close cooperation between ICCI and his mission would help improve business relations between the two countries. Mian Shaukat Masud, Fa-seeh ullah Khan, Maqsood Tabish, Dr. Muhammad Usman, Ashfaq Chatha, Rizwan Chheena and others were also present on the occasion.

ICCI appeals Indonesia for reconsidering curbs





ISLAMABAD: CEO Serena Hotels South and East Asia Aziz Boolani along with Ambassadors of Italy, Czech Republic, Turkey handing over funds for the flood victims to the Chairman NDMA. – DNA

Fundraiser galas by Italian, Czech, Turkish, Thai embassies

Serena Hotels hand over funds to NDMA

With instrumental efforts of Quetta, Swat and Peshawar Serena Hotels, and the regional team; ration bags and tents were dispersed to the affectees

Staff Report / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels strongly believes in helping vulnerable communities through its various initiatives under the ambit of its corporate social responsibility; known as Jazba-e-khidmat. Monsoon 2022 brought an unprecedented onslaught of floods known as Super flood that had a catastrophic impact on millions, submerging the 1/3rd of Pakistan. The floods affected all four provinces and approximately 15% of its population. At the beginning of 2023, an estimated 5 million people remained exposed to or living close to flooded areas. In the Sindh Province, an estimated 89,000 people remain displaced with limited access to food sources and shelter. Not all floodwaters have receded, combined with the onset of severe winter cold that brought a new set of problems for the

people living in the flood affected areas. Hence, the importance of meeting critical needs while investing in recovery to prevent additional disaster impacts and help people rebuild their lives is imperative and the need of the hour. Funds were raised with the help of the guests and associates along with different diplomatic missions, where fundraising galas were hosted with the Czech, Turkish, Italian, and Thai Embassies. Serena Hotels matched the amount raised with their monetary contribution to double the donated funds. With instrumental efforts of Quetta, Swat and Peshawar Serena Hotels, and the regional team; ration bags and tents were dispersed to the affectees of the said cities and their adjoining areas. Serena Hotels collected a substantial amount which was handed over to the National Disaster Management Authority for aid to the affectees, so that they could be utilised for rehabilitation of the affectees.

Palestinian envoy Calls for two-state Solution

The Palestinian ambassador sincerely thanks the people of and successive Pakistani governments for their steadfast support



ISLAMABAD: The Palestinian ambassador to Pakistan, Ahmed Jawad Rabie, said that implementing UN Resolution 181 — which provides for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — was the only way forward to resolve the long-running intra-Arab conflict. Palestinians and Israeli Jews. During an exclusive interview the Palestinian ambassador said that the UN and world powers in general facilitated the emergence of Is-

rael out of nowhere in 1948 (under Resolution 181) but left the Palestinians in a quandary just to face fodder. The Israeli artillery and bombardment, which has left tens of thousands of Palestinians dead and hundreds of thousands injured over the past seventy-five years or so. He said that the Israeli forces continue to kill Palestinians in the occupied West Bank with impunity, and that the world is looking forward without doing

anything to stop the bloodshed of innocent Palestinians, including children and women.

Almost daily, Rabie said, Israeli forces raid homes, apartment complexes, streets and villages to hunt down and kill unarmed Palestinians, who have few weapons to confront the powerful and armed Israeli forces. He said that Israeli forces have set up 700 checkpoints in the occupied territories, including the West Bank. He said Israeli forces have 12 checkpoints between Hebron and Beitlum, just 12 kilometers away. As well as between all cities and villages. “From this point of view, you can understand how the Palestinians live in a completely suffocating and suffocating environment,” Rabie said.

The Palestinian ambassador said that the world, especially the United States and other world powers, claim to work for a two-state solution, but, in practice, they have failed to rein in Israel, which continues to seize more Palestinian lands. and implementation of settlements. “Israel, through these illegal settlements, wants to change the demographics (of Palestine), and they are working on the plan with the world watching as a spectator. He said that the Israelis even uprooted trees in the Palestinian territories and

uprooted three million olive trees. He said that Israel is working on a plan to expel the Palestinians from their lands, The ambassador said the Palestinians want their own independent state and have pushed the issue in the internal forum, including at the United Nations and the International Court of Justice.

He said that Al-Aqsa Mosque is under continuous Israeli occupation and allows Muslims to pray in the Grand Mosque with difficulty and harassment and attempts to divide Al-Aqsa Mosque. He said that Western and other countries are talking about resolving the Palestinian issue, but in practice they have done nothing to establish an independent Palestinian state according to the resolutions of international legitimacy, the

“The Palestinian ambassador said that the world, especially the United States and other world powers, claim to work for a two-state solution, but, in practice, they have failed to rein in Israel, which continues to seize more Palestinian lands. and implementation of settlements. “Israel, through these illegal settlements, wants to change the demographics (of Palestine), and they are working on the plan with the world watching as a spectator”

Security Council and the United Nations. He said that Tel Aviv has been under Israeli occupation since 1948 and Jerusalem since 1967 and that more and more Palestinian lands are being illegally occupied. The Palestinian ambassador expressed his

sincere thanks to the Pakistani people and successive Pakistani governments for their unwavering support for the Palestinian cause, noting that the Palestinians always go to Pakistan when they are in deep trouble.

– Courtesy Worldech.net

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