

Positive Post

A Publication by Department of Mass Communication & Media Studies and the Diplomatic Academy

Greenwich University



January in History

January 12, 1952:

Pakistan Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC), Headed by Founder Chairman Ghulam Faruque

January 1, 1955:

Pakistan International Airlines comes into being.

January 1, 1961:

Decimal coinage introduced in Pakistan.

January 5, 1963:

First trade agreement is signed between Pakistan and China.

January 10, 1966:

Tashkent Declaration signed between India and Pakistan.

January 30, 1972:

Pakistan snaps ties with Commonwealth on recognizing Bangladesh.

January 1, 1981:

Interest-free banking introduced.

January 3, 1981:

International Islamic University starts functioning.

January 3, 1982:

Pakistan defeats Argentina 12-3 in World Cup Hockey in Bombay.

January 15, 1983:

First three F-16 jets reach Pakistan.

January 25, 1983:

Wifaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Order is promulgated. Justice Sardar Iqbal is named, WM.

January 19, 1989:

Students unions are restored in Punjab.

January 12, 1992:

Labore-Islamabad Motorway project launched.

January 15, 1994:

Pakistan Television transmission gets access to 38 countries via satellite.

January 2, 2006:

Dr. Shamsah Akhtar assumes office of State Bank Governor having the first woman Governor of SBP.

Pakistan's standing in the global rankings

Overview

Pakistan observed a slight improvement in the overall international rankings in 2018 covering socio-economic and political outcomes of the country. Several elements complemented the prospects including successful democratic transition, efficient counter-terrorism measures leading to enhanced peace and security, and foreign direct investment inflows under CPEC, among others. Albeit, decoupling economic growth from human development suggests that the country needs to enhance its scores in health, education and standard of living by ensuring political will, equitable financing and efficient governance to ensure parallel growth for marginalized segments as well. Civil and political liberties must grow hand in hand to ensure a conducive environment for democratic dialogue and accountability which ultimately supports its nation building process.

DEMOCRACY INDEX

Pakistan ranked 112th out of 167 countries in the Democracy Index scoring 4.17 out of 10 in 2018 compared to 4.26 in 2017.

Index from 0 (authoritarian regime) to 10 (full democracy)

Compiled based on indicators covering: Electoral process and pluralism, Civil liberties, Functioning of government, Political participation, and Political culture.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

Pakistan ranked 150th out of 189 countries in the Human Development Index scoring 0.562 out of 1.000 in 2018 compared to 0.560 out of 1.000 in 2017.

Index from 0 (low development) to 1 (very high development)

Compiled based on indicators covering: life expectancy, education, and per capita income

PRESS FREEDOM INDEX

Pakistan ranked 139th out of 180 countries in the Press Freedom Index scoring 43.24 out of 100 in 2018 compared to 43.55 in 2017.

Index from 0 (most press freedom) to 100 (least press freedom)

Compiled based on indicators covering: pluralism, media independence, environment and self-censorship, legislative framework, transparency, and infrastructure.

TERRORISM INDEX

Pakistan ranked 5th out of 163 countries in the Terrorism Index scoring 8.18 out of 10 in 2018 compared to 8.40 in 2017.

Index from 0 (lowest impact) to 10 (highest impact)

Compiled based on indicators covering: Total number of terrorist incidents in a given year, total number of fatalities caused by terrorism in a given year, total number of injuries caused by terrorism in a given year and the approximate level of total property damage from terrorist incidents in a given year.

ECONOMIC FREEDOM INDEX

Pakistan ranked 131st out of 180 countries in the Economic Freedom Index scoring 54.4 out of 100 in 2018 compared to 52.8 out of 100 in 2017.

Index from 0 (repressed) to 100 (free)

Compiled based on indicators covering: Market openness, Regulatory efficiency, Government size and the rule of law.

Positive Post is a strategic effort to project achievement and contributions of Pakistan. While showcasing Greenwich University's cultural diplomacy initiatives, it also encapsulates a compilation of different developments complementing Pakistan's socio-cultural, economic and Political outcomes.

Greenwich partners 20th Anniversary of Pakistan Japan Business Forum



Governor of Sindh Mr. Imran Ismail and Consul General of Japan Mr. Toshikazu Isomura graced the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of Pakistan Japan Business Forum alongside various dignitaries and prominent business community representatives from both countries. Greenwich University's Head of Diplomatic Affairs Mr. Ali Jillani attended the event on behalf of the Vice Chancellor, Ms. Seema Mughal.

Mr. Jillani addressed the audience and congratulated Pakistan Japan Business Forum for having completed two decades of excellence. He shared that Greenwich University is recognized among the pioneers of tertiary education in Pakistan and now enjoys the status of an internationally acclaimed institution with services in educational leadership for over three decades. Greenwich's commitment to excellence by developing the competence and character of future generations has led to its rise from pioneer to premier in higher education, having produced artists, business leaders, composers, musicians, public servants, scholars and social scientists contributing to several aspects of human endeavor.

Greenwich characterizes a global persona promoting a beyond border approach to educational and cultural exchange. It is the only Pakistani University to have established an overseas campus in the Republic of Mauritius, to mainstream the marginalized African region into educational leadership, which has hosted students from 11 nationalities.

Greenwich has a strong diplomatic affairs component engaging with embassies, consulates, foreign missions and think-tanks around the world to reimage Pakistan through cultural diplomacy. Greenwich has the privilege of being the first ever University from the region to have taken a 25-member delegation to the European Parliament in 2018 to engage with the parliamentarians for reimagining Pakistan through its artistic brilliance, cultural diversity and contributions to several global commons like the United Nations Peacekeeping Missions. He shared that Greenwich also cherishes very strong ties with the Japanese consulate and regularly conducts collaborative events. The University's 35-member delegation visited Japan in 2015 and recently two Greenwichian kids had the pleasure of vis-

iting Kyoto under a cultural exchange program.

Mr. Jillani emphasized that as we near the completion of 70 years of diplomatic relations with Japan, it is a strategic imperative to enhance bilateral trade through technological transfer in the automobile and ICT industries vis a vis diversification of Pakistan's export potential through fora like Pakistan Japan Business

Forum. He also pressed the need to explore avenues for enhancing cultural and diplomatic ties between the two countries and offered the Consul General to reckon Greenwich as a key actor in the process. Finally, he congratulated Chairman Mr. Kaleem Farooqi for the Forum's 20th anniversary and Adpulse for having organized the event.



Pakistan Secures 17 Million Doses of AstraZeneca Coronavirus Vaccine

Pakistan announced Saturday it has secured 17 million doses of AstraZeneca's coronavirus vaccine through the World Health Organization's COVAX program to vaccinate its citizens against COVID-19. Additionally, the government said, a plane will fly to China on Sunday to airlift an initial tranche of the 500,000 doses of Chinese Sinopharm vaccine Beijing has gifted to Islamabad.

The coronavirus pandemic in Pakistan, a country of about 220 million people, is relatively under control. The South Asian nation detected the outbreak nearly a year ago and has since documented more than 543,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases, with close to 12,000 deaths.

Dr. Faisal Sultan, special health assistant to the prime minister, said Saturday that almost seven million doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine will be available for Pakistani citizens in the first quarter of the year and the rest within the second quarter of 2021.



Foreign Minister Qureshi says Sinopharm vaccine will be in Pakistan by January 31

Sultan said in a statement that the vaccination drive was expected to start next week, beginning with front line healthcare workers.

"COVAX's timely support and delivery of the vaccine is testament of global stakeholders' trust in Pakistan's preparedness for vaccine roll-out," he noted.

The WHO's COVAX is a global program to vaccinate people in poor and middle-income countries against the coronavirus. The plan aims to deliver at least two billion vaccine doses by the end of 2021 to cover 20 percent of the most vulnerable people in 91 nations across the globe.

AstraZeneca's vaccine has been developed with Oxford University researchers and it is being used as part of a mass immunization program in the United Kingdom.

Pakistan's drug regulator recently approved the vaccine along with the Chinese Sinopharm vaccine for emergency use in the country.

China authorized the use of its Sinopharm vaccine in early January, and it is currently in use in several countries, including Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.

Pakistan, in collaboration with China, is also conducting a Phase 3 trial of another Chinese anti-coronavirus vaccine from Cansino Biologics, Inc. The trial is nearly complete and Pakistani officials expect the initial results will be available early next month.

"We are entitled to receive 20 million doses, provided the results are positive and the vaccine proves to be effective," Sultan announced last week.

The Pakistani government says it plans to vaccinate at least 70% of the country's adult population to achieve herd immunity over the coming months

Courtesy:Voanews.com

Cyclists and boxers Lyari youth will always find a way

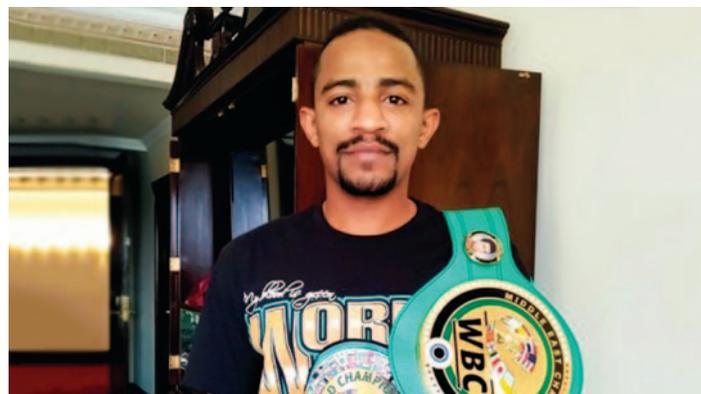
Karachi's Lyari has limited resources, but its youth's passion finds a way anyway.

Sixteen-year-old Sumera didn't have her own bicycle when she started, but her high ambitions eventually made her a national champion.

"I wanted to be a cyclist after I saw my cousin training for it," Sumera told SAMAA TV's show Naya Din Tuesday. "My uncle asked me if I wanted to start training too, and I said yes."

But not having her own bicycle was not the only challenge that Sumera faces. She has no parents and three siblings to look after all on her own, including an older brother with special needs.

"I go to school everyday," said Sumera. "After coming home, I prepare meals for my siblings and get them ready for madrassah. I then leave for my training."



When asked if it is easy for girls to pursue cycling in Lyari, Sumera talked about the discouragement that comes her way, especially from her neighbours.

"They ask me what use cycling will be," she said. "They also pass comments on my clothes [jeans and T-shirt]. There's also a lot of teasing."

But she doesn't let any of that overcome her passion. "Without letting it affect me, I pray to God

for more courage because I want to do something for my siblings and Pakistan."

Sumera's coach Asif says she performed better than many others when he took her on. He tries his best to get her the best bicycles when she's participating in competitions.

"I borrow the best ones [cycles] from other trainees," said Asif. He said he used to train boys too, but now trains girls only.

"I want all my trainees to bring international titles for the country," he said, requesting for cooperation and funds for his hard-working trainees.

Sumera's dream cycle costs Rs2.6 million.

'A punch can land anywhere'

Another inspiring story is that of Nadir Baloch, a boxing champion who has not only won four national titles, but also holds two international ones. He knocked out in December last year Afghan boxer Hassan in the eighth round of WBC Middle East championship. "I've been training for boxing since childhood," said Baloch. "Also, my uncle has represented Pakistan internationally."

When asked what a person needs to be a good boxer, Baloch said: "You need to be very strong because a punch can land anywhere."

Courtesy:Samaa

Workshop on MLA and Extradition Requests in Terrorism and other Predicate Offences

Pakistan's Action to Counter Terrorism (PACT) organized two workshops during January 2021 on Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition in Terrorism and other Predicate Offences in Islamabad and Karachi in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior.

Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) and extradition are often necessary tools to conduct effective adjudication and to prevent terrorist activities where traditional techniques for gathering evidence are often not adequate or accessible enough for timely intervention. MLAs, however, require a formal mechanism as well as channel either under specific treaties between states or through the established mechanisms such as the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC). The workshops aimed to train participants on the required practices and channels for MLA and Extradition, by increasing their knowledge and skills on preparing such requests to other jurisdictions.

Dr. Jeremy Milsom, UNODC Country Representative during the opening session highlighted that "Mutual Legal Assistance requests especially in terrorism cases have become even more critical as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic" and that there has been an increase in the number of requests initiated



by Pakistan during 2020 during the pandemic. His Excellency Thomas Seiler, a.i. EU Ambassador to Pakistan also delivered opening remarks in the Islamabad workshop in which he reiterated EU's commitment in supporting Pakistan overcoming the challenges posed by terrorism; Mr. Iftikhar Ali Shallwani, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Interior; and Mr. Muhammad Iqbal, Director General Counter Terrorism Financing, NACTA, both appreciated the support to Pakistan being delivered by UNODC and EU.

Day one of both workshops focused on Pakistan's national framework in requesting MLA and Extradition followed by case laws. Presentations were delivered followed by question and answer session on the recently enacted MLA Criminal Matters Act 2020 and the Extradition Act

1972 by Mr. Tahir Awan, Deputy Secretary FATF, Ministry of Interior followed by presentation on a digital portal on requesting MLAs developed by Punjab Information Technology Board by Mr. Muhammad Ammar. Later in the day, Mr. Syed Atif Raza – Director UN from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented on various international, regional, and multi-lateral conventions which can more effectively be utilized by stakeholders for enhancing information sharing.

The second day of the workshops focused on the international practices of information sharing for MLA and extradition. A presentation was led by Mr. Sam Makkan, a British prosecutor, on UK's approach to international cooperation for asset tracing and recovery followed by presentation from Mr. Hyung Yoon of INTERPOL on

the role they can play in enabling and expediting MLA and extradition requests, leading the participants through various operational approaches employed and case examples. Experts from UNODC Vienna demonstrated the Mutual Legal Assistance Request Writer Tool (MLARWT), model forms on MLAR related to digital evidence, and SHERLOC (Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws on Crime) a web-based knowledge portal.

During the last session Mr. Tahir Awan, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Interior facilitated group exercises for preparing MLA and Extradition requests among the participants.

The Islamabad workshop was attended by officials of Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF, National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Federal Board of revenue (FBR), Counter Terrorism Departments (CTDs), and Ministry of Interior FATF Wing based in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Islamabad Capital Territory whereas the Karachi workshop catered to the officials belonging to NAB, Home department and CTDs based in Sindh and Balochistan. The workshops were made possible with the support of the European Union.

Courtesy: www.unodc.org

A large number of Pakistanis are optimistic about the country's economic future, Gallup survey

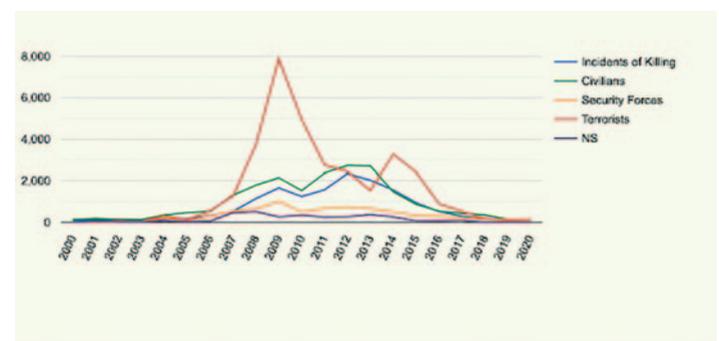
A new survey by Gallup Pakistan, a well-known research company, has found that 48% of Pakistanis are optimistic that the country's economy will improve in the year 2021, while 30% think that the economy will get worse.

The overall score of confidence in the economy in the future was 18%, the rate of Pakistanis hoping for improvement in the economic future has been declared better than the world average. While 48% of Pakistanis see 2021 as a year of economic prosperity despite corona and other economic difficulties.

Compared to similar surveys conducted in the past, the number of

Pakistanis optimistic about the government and the country's future was minus 38% during the PPP regime, leaving disappointed people aside. Although improved in 2009, the rate dropped to minus 8%. Negative 21% in 2010 and minus 13% in 2011, but after the PML-N came to power, the rate rose to 47% in 2014 and 50% in 2015.

Globally, the net score of those optimistic about the economic future is more than negative 21%. Compared to the aggregate opinion of 46 countries, Pakistanis optimistic about the economic future. Internationally, 25% of people expressed hope for economic improvement in 2021, while 46% said it was worse, 24%



said it was like that. The situation is as it is now and will remain so. When you look at neighboring India, 56% of the population there hopes for an improvement in the economic future, but in Afghanistan the rate is 23%. Ac-

cording to the report, Nigeria tops the list of countries most optimistic about their economies with 72%, while the most disappointed in the future is the 71% British, which is a worrying situation.

Courtesy: Samaa

Use of Digital Forensics in Counter Terrorism Cases

11 - 15 January 2021 - Lahore, Pakistan: The United Nations of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and European Union (EU) recognize the significance and scope of digital forensics which is rapidly expanding in the ever-growing arena of the digital world. Under the framework of Pakistan's Action to Counter Terrorism (PACT) Project, the UNODC Country Office Pakistan organized a five-day Basic Training on "Use of Digital Forensics in Counter Terrorism Cases" at the Punjab Forensic Science Agency (PFSA) from 11-15 January 2021 for Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Sindh, Punjab and Baluchistan. The aim of this training was to communicate familiarity on the collection, preservation, and use of digital forensics data for effective conclusion of cases in lines with the latest tools and technologies. The training was attended by twenty-six (26) officers from specialized technical units of the CTD Sindh, Punjab and Baluchistan.

The content of the training session



primarily focused on the introduction and scope of Digital Forensics; specifically, its identification, collection, preservation, and transportation. The trainees were given case studies to comprehend the concepts, using state-of-the-art mock crime scenes and other facilities at the PFSA. The course was delivered by the experts from the PFSA who provided hands-on training to the CTD officials on the tools and techniques used in the scientific examination, and the analysis of digital and cellular devices. The trainers guided the technical teams on how to perform a forensic investigation on digital evidence while maintaining the documented chain of cus-

tody for presentation as evidence in the court of law.

On the final day of the training, the participants were taken to the CTD Punjab for a study visit where they were briefed by Mr. Jawad Qamar, Deputy Inspector General of Police, CTD Punjab about the operations and performance of CTD Punjab. The DIG CTD presented statistics and success stories of intelligence-based operations for elimination of terrorists of proscribed organizations and effective prosecution of terrorists while making use of latest technologies. He further elaborated factors contributing to the reduction of incidents of terrorism, sectarian-

ism and extremism in Punjab Province. The participants were then taken to the technical wing of CTD Punjab where they were briefed on the tools and techniques they are using for criminal analysis and digital forensics. The participants lauded the efforts of CTD Punjab and appreciated the idea of bringing together officials from other provinces to share knowledge and experiences.

The closing ceremony of the training was attended virtually by Mr. Francois Zabol, Counter Terrorism Expert from EU Pakistan, Mr. Asif Saifullah Paracha, Member Policy NACTA from Islamabad and Dr. Muhammad Tahir Ashraf, Director General, PFSA who gave away certificates to the participants. All three officials gave their closing remarks in which they appreciated UNODC for organizing a meaningful training for CTDs from three provinces which provided a good opportunity for them to share knowledge and experiences.

Courtesy:www.unodc.org

Installation of E-gates at airports of Pakistan



Pakistan will no longer have to queue for boarding cards with the installation of e-gates at airports.

The Civil Aviation Authority has decided to introduce international travel facility for air travelers under which a gate will be installed at major airports of Pakistan.

E-Gates actually uses data in a biometric passport chip that contains information on faces, fingerprints, and irises. In this way, all the information is verified by modern electronic methods.

With the help of e-gate, passengers will automatically get their boarding card by scanning their passports and tickets, thus avoiding the hassle of standing in long queues for boarding.

With this method, passengers will be able to scan their own passport and ticket and get their own boarding card once verified.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has just announced the installation of e-gates at major airports in Pakistan, including Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore.

2,500 falcons are captured in Pakistan every year'



Falconry, a sport that employs birds of prey in hunting games, is centuries old. Unfortunately, it comes at the cost of thousands of falcons that are killed during the illegal wildlife trade.

Around eight different species of falcons are found in Pakistan.

Kamran Khan Yousufzai, a passionate falconer from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has helped the

Customs authorities curb the illegal trade of and recover hundreds of seized falcons. A smuggling bid involving 70 falcons was foiled by the authorities three years ago.

Kamran explains that there is a high demand in the Gulf region for falcons found in Pakistan, where a single falcon can be sold for as high as Rs4 million.

Pakistan economy to return to growth in 2021: Moody's report

The government and central bank responses and reforms will partially soften the pandemic's impact and help revive the economy: Moody's Investors Service

Pakistan economy will return to growth during the ongoing fiscal year 2020-21, but economic activity will remain below pre-outbreak levels, according to a latest report.

Moody's Investors Service said the economy should return to modest 1.5 per cent gross domestic product (GDP) growth in financial year 2021, which ends on June 30.

"Pakistan economy will return to growth in fiscal year 2020-21, gaining a modest 1.5 per cent and accelerate to 4.4 per cent in 2022. The government and central bank responses and reforms will partially soften the pandemic's impact and help revive the economy," according to the rating agency's latest report.

Last year, Pakistan economy contracted for the first time in 68 years by registering 0.4 per cent negative growth due to outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. It posted 1.9 per cent growth in fiscal year 2018-19 compared to a record-high 5.8 per cent GDP growth in 2017-18 when the Imran Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf came to power for the first time in Islamabad.



Economic activity will remain below pre-outbreak levels, although the economy should return to modest 1.5% growth in fiscal year 2021. GDP growth will accelerate to 4.4% in 2022.

Long-term credit growth potential is strong, given Pakistan's large unbanked population.

Profitability will come under some pressure in 2021 after a huge 625-basis-point interest rate cut last year. Private-sector lending to grow between 5% and 7% in 2021, below inflation expectations of 8%.

Moody's Investors Service further said the long-term credit growth potential is strong, given Pakistan's large unbanked population.

The State Bank of Pakistan, the central bank, has targeted 65 million active bank accounts, with total deposits accounting for 55 per cent of

GDP, through increased use of mobile bank accounts, biometric verification systems and QR codes.

"Despite a difficult environment, the government's credit profile is stable due to ongoing reforms and increasing policy effectiveness – a positive for the banks given their outsized holdings of Pakistani government debt link their credit profiles to that of the government," says Constantinos Kypreos, a Moody's senior vice-president.

The rating agency expects the slow economic recovery to affect loan quality, with nonperforming loans (NPLs) are expected to rise over the coming months from a sector-wide level of 9.9 per cent of gross loans in September 2020. Banks' foreign operations, export-oriented industries and companies reliant on government payments and subsidies will be hit hardest, but loan repayment holidays and other government support

measures should help contain some risks, the report said.

Meanwhile, banks' profitability, which has materially increased during 2020, will come under pressure on lowered margins, higher loan-loss provisions given the challenging operating environment, and subdued business generation.

"Profitability will come under pressure this year after a huge 625-basis-point interest rate cut in 2020," the rating agency said, adding that private-sector lending to grow between five per cent and seven per cent in 2021, below inflation expectations of eight per cent.

Moody's said Pakistan's banking system reflects banks' solid funding and liquidity, although a challenging – but improving – operating environment will weigh on asset quality and profitability. It projects rising asset risk as non-performing loans will rise from a sector-wide level of 9.9 per cent of gross loans as the economic slowdown takes its toll on borrowers' repayment capabilities.

"Deposit-based funding and good liquidity buffers also remain strengths, while the probability of government support in a crisis is high, even if its ability to do so is limited by fiscal challenges," said Kypreos.

Courtesy:Khaleej times

An ex-policeman is playing Chaudhry Aslam in a film

Chaudhry Aslam, the feared Karachi police official who was killed in an attack, is getting a film made on his life. He is played in Chaudhry The Martyr by Tariq Islam, a former policeman who used to work under him.

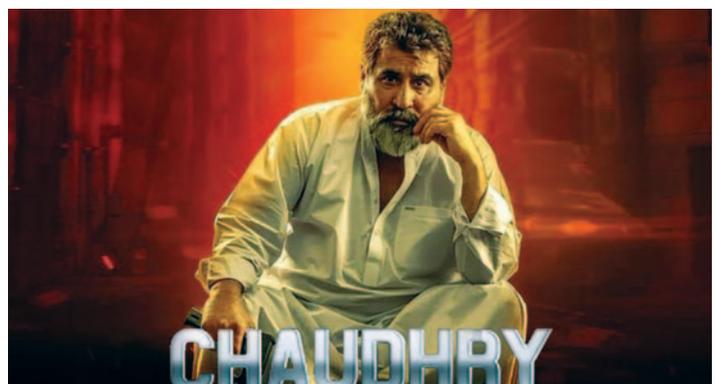
Director Azeem Sajjad confirmed this to SAMAA Digital. The film has famous actors like Shamooin Abbasi and Saleem Mairaj. Model Zara Abid is a part of the cast too. The film's trailer has just been released and it's wild. It has women belly-dancing for some reason, various shots of policemen busy chasing criminals in black Vigos, or presenting them in courts when they're not killed in an encounter.

At the forefront is Aslam.

Tariq Islam manages to look a lot like Aslam. He has a white beard, wears a white shalwar kameez that would remind you of Aslam, but has flat acting and expressions.

Islam told that the producer approached him over two years back about a possible film on the slain policeman. Former Sindh police chief Kaleem Imam supported the project, and DIG Maqsood Memon has lent creative help.

The filmmakers held a ceremony in Karachi for the trailer's release, where senior police officials, including Maqsood Memon, were



present.

Chaudhry's Aslam widow Noreen Aslam thanked the film's producer for the project. She recalled how her husband was fearless in the face of terrorism.

Chaudhry Aslam, infamously known as the "encounter specialist",

was feared by terrorists and gangsters alike. He killed at least 80 suspected terrorists and arrested many high-profile criminals in his 30-year career.

Aslam was killed in January 2014 in a remote-controlled bomb attack at Lyari Expressway in Karachi.

Courtesy:Samaa

Founder of modern Lahore's great-great-granddaughter becomes US senator

Kesha Ram, the great-great-granddaughter of Sir Ganga Ram, hopes to carry forward his legacy as she has become the first woman of colour to take oath as a state senator in Vermont, US.

Sir Ganga Ram is considered the founder of modern Lahore. He was an Indian civil engineer and architect who served as the executive engineer of Lahore at the end of the 19th century.

He was behind the construction such as the Lahore museum, Aitchison College, Mayo School of Arts, Lahore High Court, GPO Govt College's Chemistry Block and Mayo Hospital's Albert Victor Wing, among other iconic buildings in the city.

Thirty-four-year-old Kesha was sworn in as a state senator on January 6. As a tribute to her heritage, she wore shalwar kameez during the swearing-in ceremony.

Ram responded to a tweet by the



US Consulate General Lahore congratulating her on her appointment and said someone told her when she came to Vermont that people in Lahore said prayers for her great great grandfather daily.

"I didn't understand his impact, particularly in healthcare and women's education, until that day. Thank you all for helping me understand his legacy so I can continue it," she wrote.

Courtesy: Samaa

Hadiqa Kiani's Qawwali racks up a million views after release



Hadiqa Kiani has forayed into the Qawwali genre with her debut *Jaanay Iss Dil*.

Jaanay Iss Dil was released by SufiScore on YouTube, and amassed over a million views within just hours. It has been composed by Ustad Dildar Hussain, who was the tabla player for the legendary Ustad Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

The Boohey Barian singer said that this month [January] has been nothing short of a dream for her, referring to both her acting and

Qawwali debut.

"My first Qawwali titled *Jaanay Iss Dil* was released a few hours ago," said Kiani. "I could not be grateful to you all for the love and support you have given."

The Qawwali features Zohaib Hassan on sarangi and Kiani's brother Irfan on harmonium.

Kiani had shared a teaser from her Qawwali on January 23

Courtesy: Samaa

Transgender model Rimal Ali joins PTI in 'vengeance'



Transgender model and actor Rimal Ali has been appointed the Gender Discrimination Coordinator of Pakistan Tekreeb e Insaf's Welfare Wing.

The announcement comes just days after she was kidnapped and tortured in Lahore. According to *The Express Tribune*, she has joined the ruling party in "vengeance" and to "strengthen the community".

Habib Malik Orakzai, president of the Central Welfare Wing, wished her luck, saying that he expects Ali to "work hard for the people's welfare".

Ali said she will keep working in the showbiz alongside her political activities. "I am engaged in various projects. In the coming days, my fans will see me in dramas and more films."

Ali said she received appreciation when her career began and she had the opportunity to work with big names in the entertainment industry, including Mahira Khan. She added that she is struggling to find work like many other artists, as the industry is a "bit disturbed due to COVID-19".

Rimal made her film debut with *Saat Din Mohabbat In* (2018).

Courtesy: Samaa

The end of Pakistan's energy crisis is near



According to a senior journalist, the end of Pakistan's energy crisis is near. According to details, a message released by senior journalist and anchor Kamran Khan on the social networking site Twitter claimed that the end of the energy crisis in the country is now near.

Kamran Khan said, the memoranda signed with IPPs will soon take the form of strong agreements.

The senior journalist said that the IMF has also given its approval to sign agreements with IPPs to resolve the energy crisis. Final decisions in this regard have also been taken in a meeting chaired by the Prime

Minister in the presence of the Army Chief.

It should be noted that the sources said that in case of an agreement between the government and the IPPs, not only the circular debt will be eliminated but also the electricity prices will come down.

Revision of contracts with IPPs will make electricity cheaper by Rs 40 per unit, revision of contracts will provide relief to power consumers to the tune of Rs 300 billion in 3 years. Will run Electricity will be 74 paise cheaper in 2022 and 66 paise per unit in 2023.

Courtesy: trendspak.com

Pakistani builder making 'exact' copy of Paris in Gujranwala

A developer is launching a 'complete' replica of Europe's popular city of Paris outside Gujranwala but five times smaller.

Le Paris Housing Scheme is being planned by a sister company of Master Tiles and Ceramics.

The scheme is spread over 4,800 acres or 19.4 square kilometres. The original Paris, in contrast, is spread over 105 square kilometres.

Le Paris will have its own 200m Eiffel Tower, which will make it the biggest replica in the world. The original Eiffel Tower is 324 metres tall. If built, Le Paris's Eiffel Tower will outdo Bahria Town Lahore's replica, which stands at 80 metres. The housing scheme will also have replica Arc de Triomphe and a road it is calling Shanzelize street (after Avenue des Champs-Élysées).

France's AREP Group and Renzo Piano Building Workshop will be undertaking the town planning, design and architecture.

"Pakistanis will not have to go to Europe," said Bilal Sandhu, the marketing manager. "The city will give affordable houses but will be replete with facilities just like the real Paris."

The company is asking people to register with the company for Rs110,000 for plots measuring five, seven and 10 marlas, one and two canals and shops and apartments. "The people who register will be given priority and will also benefit Rs30,000 in the price to be paid for the property. This means they will eventually be paying Rs140,000, after adjusting Rs110,000 of the registration



fee," he said.

The developer will provide 40,000 low-cost houses for the less privileged.

Around 17% or 800 acres will have low-cost houses. The company did not share details of the prices of different categories and the location of the site.

The balloting will take place on March 31 and Sandhu claims the company will hand over possession within three years with development work completed.

Builders and developers have become active since the Prime Minister's Construction Package announced certain incentives to stimulate the construction sector and dozens of allied industries such as steel and cement in a bid to improve the economy, which contracted for the first time in 68 years.

Moreover, there is a massive need for housing in Pakistan around 11 million. Demand is increasing by 700,000 houses every year.

The law was recently amended for the construction sector to extend the amnesty scheme for another six months. The FBR will not be inquiring about sources of income from builders and investors till June 30. A one-year extension has also been given for the completion of construction projects.

Projects under the scheme can now be completed by September 30, 2023 instead of the original deadline of September 30, 2022. Under the amended ordinance, those who purchase housing units or plots also get a six-month exemption in revealing their source of income.

What does the PM's construction package offer?

Builders and developers can save

around six times on taxes if they register under the prime minister's construction package as it has a fixed regime. "This saving on tax will add up to whatever profit you make," explained the FBR's Abdul Hafeez while addressing a seminar on the 'PM's Package on Naya Pakistan Housing Scheme' at the Association of Builders and Developers House on October 7.

People can also whiten their legally earned money under the package as they will not be asked for a money trail. But money earned illegally or received through bribes cannot be laundered through this process.

People earn and save money through legal means but may not pay tax on it.

This temporary scheme is so that their wealth can come into circulation, he explained. The scheme is not for government employees.

Builders and developers can register with the FBR by June 30, 2021 after the extension for both existing and new projects. FBR officials have been trying to reach out to builders and developers across the country to explain the benefits.

Analysts have been attributing high cement sales to the construction package. Over 60 allied industries get a boost when construction does well. Low-cost housing projects developed by the Naya Pakistan Housing and Development Authority will be charged almost 90% lower taxes.

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