

Positive POST



Greenwich University

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



Pakistan's standing in the global rankings

Overview

Pakistan observed a slight improvement in the overall international rankings in 2021 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 was placed at the 104th spot among 167 states on the global Democracy Index 2021, compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

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 161 out of 192 countries in the Human Development Index scoring 2022 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's press freedom rank dropped to 145 out of 180 countries in the Press Freedom Index, An annual ranking of countries published by Reporters Without Borders (RWB), an international non-governmental organization dedicated to safeguard the right to freedom of information.

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

TERRORISM INDEX

Terrorism Index in Pakistan decreased to 7.83 in 2021 from 7.92 in 2020.

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

In 2021, index of economic freedom for Pakistan was 51.7 score.

Though Pakistan index of economic freedom fluctuated substantially in recent years, it tended to decrease through 2002 - 2021 period ending at 51.7 score in 2021.

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

July in History

July 8, 1947: Constituent Assembly of Pakistan approves the design of Pakistan.

July 9, 1948: Pakistan's first postage stamp is issued.

July 11, 1950: Pakistan joins the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

July 14, 1953: Wazir Mansion Karachi, the birthplace of Quaid-e-Azam, is declared protected national monument.

July 17, 1958: First Nigar Film Awards held.

July 12, 1959: Shukriya Niaz Ali becomes first woman pilot of Pakistan.

July 31, 1690: Foundation stone of Mazar-i-Quaid (Mausoleum of M.A. Jinnah) is laid.

July 15, 1961: Jasmine is chosen as the national flower of Pakistan.

July 31, 1964: Pakistan, Iran and Turkey agree to establish RCD

July 2, 1972: Simla Agreement is signed between President Bhutto and Prime Minister Indra Gandhi.

July 24, 1976: Lahore-Amritsar train service, Samjhota Express starts.

July 31, 1976: A.Q. Khan research laboratories established.

July 8, 1986: Peshawar Dry Port is inaugurated.

July 17, 1991: Pakistan unveils first battle tank Al-Khalid manufactured jointly by Pakistan and China.

July 15, 2001: Agra Summit starts. President Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee holds talks over long-standing issues.

July 11, 2003: Lahore-Delhi bus service resumed after suspension of 18 months.

July 14, 2005: NWFP Assembly passes the Hasba bill with a majority vote.

July 14, 2007: Iftikhar restored as Chief Justice of Pakistan.

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.

OIC urges measures to stop desecration of Holy Quran

The 57-state Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) said on Sunday collective measures were needed to prevent acts of desecration of the Holy Quran and international law should be used to stop religious hatred after the burning incident in Sweden.

The statement by the OIC was issued after an 'extraordinary' meeting in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, called to discuss the incident in which an Iraqi citizen living in Sweden, Salwan Momika, 37, set alight several pages of the Holy Quran outside Stockholm's main mosque.

"We must send constant reminders to the international community regarding the urgent application of international law, which clearly prohibits any advocacy of religious hatred," OIC Secretary General Hissein Brahim Taha said.



The OIC urged member states to "take unified and collective measures to prevent the recurrence of incidents of desecration of copies of the Holy Quran."

Swedish police had granted Salwan Momika a permit in line with free speech protection, but authorities later said they had opened an investigation over "agitation against an ethnic group", noting that Momika had burnt pages from the holy book

very close to the mosque.

On Sunday, Sweden's government condemned the incident outside Stockholm's main mosque, calling it an "Islamophobic" act.

"The Swedish government fully understands that the Islamophobic acts committed by individuals at demonstrations in Sweden can be offensive to Muslims," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

"We strongly condemn these acts, which in no way reflect the views of the Swedish government," it added.

"The burning of the [Holy] Quran, or any other holy text, is an offensive and disrespectful act and a clear provocation. Expressions of racism, xenophobia and related intolerance have no place in Sweden or in Europe," the Swedish foreign ministry said.

At the same time the ministry added that Sweden has a "constitutionally protected right to freedom of assembly, expression and demonstration".

Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, the UAE and Morocco summoned Swedish ambassadors in protest over the incident. Iran's foreign minister said Tehran was holding off sending its new ambassador to Sweden, Hojjatollah Faghani.

Courtesy: Dawn

PSX welcomes IMF deal with highest single-day jump

The benchmark tracking the performance of top 100 shares listed on the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) registered its highest single-day surge on Monday, thanks to the signing of a nine-month Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) of \$3 billion with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Positive indicators also appeared elsewhere as the consumer inflation recorded at 29.4pc in June, eased from the highest level of 38pc in May. The open market witnessed a noteworthy appreciation of rupee against dollar, though actual price of greenback could not be established due to acute shortage of rupee amid closure of banks.

Finalising the SBA on the day the medium-term IMF programme was set to expire without full disbursements brought a sigh of relief to investors, analysts said. It helped quell the talk of a sovereign default and debt restructuring, paving the way for an "abnormal rally" that triggered an hour-long halt in trading a regulatory feature designed to let market participants take stock of a developing situation.

As a result, the KSE-100 index

added 2,446.32 points, or 5.9 per cent, from the previous close to hit 43,899 points, a 14-month high. In the last three trading sessions alone, the index has gone up 3,834 points or 9.5pc, Arif Habib Ltd said.

'Abnormal rally' forces hour-long halt in trading to allow investors to adapt to situation; expert cautions Tuesday's session may see profit-booking

Speaking to Dawn, Ismail Iqbal Securities Ltd Head of Equity Research Fahad Rauf said the extraordinary rally in share prices witnessed during the first post-SBA trading session can best be described as a knee-jerk reaction from investors longing for positive news.

"Shares rose across the board regardless of their fundamentals. I expect the sentiments to remain largely positive going forward, but the outright exuberance will likely become rationalised," he said.

A sustainable increase in the index level will depend on the government taking active measures to resolve deep-seated problems like low tax collection, bleeding state-owned enterprises and liquidity-constrained



energy sector, he said.

"The SBA is a lifeline for economy in the short run. Addressing the longstanding structural issues will bring long-term, sustainable growth in the stock market," Mr Rauf added.

According to Muhammad Shuja Qureshi of JS Global, Tuesday's session may witness some profit-booking. He advised investors to wait for intra-day dips to accumulate value stocks.

The overall trading volume increased 62pc to 381 million shares, highest since Oct 6, 2022. The traded value went up 15pc to \$30m on a day-on-day basis, highest since May 4.

Stocks contributing significantly to the traded volume included World-Call Telecom Ltd (54.9m shares), K-Electric Ltd (30.5m shares), Cnergycico PK Ltd (22.4m shares), Telecard Ltd (12m shares) and Fauji Foods Ltd (11.5m shares).

Sectors contributing the most to the index performance were commercial banking (554.4 points), oil and gas exploration (300.4 points), fertiliser (276.4 points), cement (271.9 points) and technology and communication (251.3 points).

Companies registering the biggest increases in their share prices in absolute terms were Nestle Pakistan Ltd (Rs152.50), Colgate-Palmolive Pakistan Ltd (Rs76.90), Sapphire Fibres Ltd (Rs76.62), Mari Petroleum Company Ltd (Rs66.52) and Sanofi-Aventis Pakistan Ltd (Rs51.86).

Companies that recorded the biggest declines in their share prices in absolute terms were Pakistan Engineering Company Ltd (Rs24.34), ZIL Ltd (Rs22.50), Pakistan Services Ltd (Rs5), EFU Life Assurance Ltd (Rs4.56) and Pakistan International Container Terminal Ltd (Rs4.28).

Courtesy: Dawn

IMF deal not a 'silver bullet', says Shehbaz

Soon after the government secured a much-needed \$3 billion short-term financial package from IMF, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the new deal is not a silver bullet and expressed the hope that the new programme will "be the last one".

The new nine-month standby arrangement came hours before an IMF agreement expired on Friday. The IMF's staff-level deal with Pakistan will now be subject to approval by its board later this month.



Prime Minister Sharif described the deal as a "much-needed breather" but said he prayed for this new programme "to be the last one".

"This is not a moment of pride, but a moment to think over the reality. Do nations survive on loans? Let us pray that this is the last time that we have secured a loan from IMF and that we should not go to the IMF again," he told the media in Lahore on Friday after the deal was signed.

He described his meetings with IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva in Paris last week as a "turning point" in a series of recent discussions with the world body.

The economy has been stricken by a balance-of-payments crisis as it attempts to service crippling external debt, while months of political chaos have scared off foreign investment.

Inflation has rocketed, the rupee has reached a record low against the dollar, and the country is struggling to afford imports, causing a severe decline in industrial output.

"I am pleased to announce that the IMF team has reached a staff-level agreement with the Pakistani authorities on a nine-month standby arrangement in the amount of SDR 2,250 million (about \$3bn)," IMF's mission chief to Pakistan, Nathan Porter, said in a statement late Thursday.

The deal will need to be approved by the IMF's executive board and will be considered by mid-July, Mr Porter said.

According to AFP, the figure represents 111 per cent of Pakistan's IMF quota.

The \$3bn IMF funding is higher than expected as it looks set to replace the remaining \$2.5bn from a \$6.5bn longer-term Extended Fund Facility agreed in 2019.

That bailout package was stalled since last November, with the government making last-minute changes to the national budget to try and meet the deal's requirements. It expired on Friday, and the new agreement builds on the IMF's efforts under the previous deal, Mr Porter said.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said the new deal would disburse an upfront amount of \$1.1bn shortly after the IMF board's meeting this month.

The deal will also unlock other bilateral and multilateral financing. Long-time allies Saudi Arabia, the UAE and China have already pledged or rolled over billions of loans. "This will support near-term policy efforts and replenish gross reserves," the IMF said.

Mr Dar said Pakistan aimed to take the central bank's foreign exchange reserves to \$14bn by the end of July. "We have stopped the decline, now we have to turn to growth," he added.

He also told media that the delay in the deal was caused "mainly because of a gap in external financing assurances".

Pakistan's sovereign dollar bonds were trading higher after the announcement, with the 2024 issue enjoying the biggest gains, up more than 8 cents at just above 70 cents in the dollar, according to Tradeweb data cited by Reuters.

The gains were most pronounced in shorter-dated bonds, reflecting lingering scepticism over the longer-term fiscal outlook for the country.

Later, PM Shehbaz tweeted on Friday night that the new IMF deal was a "much-needed breather", which would help the country achieve economic stability. However, he insisted that the "nations are not

macy in the matter.

'Better than expected' Mohammed Sohail, chief of Topline Securities, said the IMF loan would restore some investor confidence.

"This new programme is far better than our expectations. There were a lot of uncertainties on what will happen after June 2023 as there will be a new government coming to power," he said.

On Saturday, Mr Sohail tweeted that Pakistan's exchange-traded fund (ETF) was up 5.5pc on Friday after the IMF deal. "Pakistan market was off due to Eid holidays. This ETF trend signals a rally of close to 2,000 points in the KSE-100 index on Monday when the market opens," he said.

Former finance minister Miftah Ismail said in a tweet, "We must recognise that this IMF deal gives us yet another chance for making fundamental reforms. Unless we undertake these reforms, Pakistan will remain at the mercy of multilateral



built through loans. I pray for this new programme to be the last one".

He thanked "our friends and partners", such as China, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Islamic Development Fund, for standing by Pakistan during economic challenges.

PM Shehbaz said Chief of the Army Staff Gen Asim Munir had also played an important role in securing the funds from Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The premier also credited Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's efforts for diplo-

lenders and the people of Pakistan will continue to pay for the structural and governance failures of their governments."

Michael Kugelman, director of the South Asia Institute at the Wilson Centre, criticised Pakistan's slow progress in meeting IMF requirements for a deal.

"Islamabad waited until the very final hour to take the (politically risky) fiscal policy steps that the IMF had been hoping to see for months," he tweeted.

Courtesy: Dawn

MoU signed with UAE for alternative energy projects

The United Arab Emirates will develop renewable energy projects in Pakistan, as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif urged more companies to exploit the country's potential in the alternative energy sector.

The two countries signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Thursday in a ceremony attended by PM Shehbaz and UAE Minister for Industries and Technologies Sultan Al Jaber.

Power Division Secretary Rashid Mahmood Langrial and UAE Ministry of Energy and Infra structure Undersecretary Sharif al Olama signed the MoU.

Addressing the ceremony, the PM said alternative energy projects are an opportunity for bilateral cooperation and his government plans to generate 10,000 megawatts of solar energy.

The prime minister said his government was ready to give a detailed presentation to the UAE firms on Pakistan's potential and his government's policies on alternative energy resources.

He vowed to "make all-out efforts to convert the MoU into an agreement and its swift realisation".



The prime minister also thanked the UAE for inviting Pakistan to the COP28 to be held in the Emirates by the end of this year.

He particularly thanked UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan for the valuable and timely support to Pakistan, particularly during the delay in reaching an agreement with the International Monetary Fund.

The cooperation from the UAE, China and Saudi Arabia played a key role in sealing the IMF deal.

In his remarks, the UAE energy minister, Al Jaber, said both countries enjoyed great relations and partnership as the UAE always emphasised the importance of cooperation and identifying new ways to strengthen bilateral ties.

He assured that being the host of COP28, the UAE would ensure the development of an action plan and create a deep understanding of climate change-related issues as well as the Loss and Damage Fund.

PM lays foundation of three projects Separately, the prime minister laid foundation-stones of three mega projects, estimating over Rs 24 billion, to connect Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Torghar district with the Buner district.

The projects included a 25km inter-district road from Torghar to Buner, 1km Karakar Tunnel in Buner and one Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC) bridge on the Indus River. During a briefing on the occasion, the prime minister was informed that the inter-district road would be

constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 4.72 billion and ensure swift travelling and movement of the locals. It will also promote tourism and trade in the Hazara and Malakand divisions of KP.

The 1km Karakar Tunnel would cost around Rs 9.58bn and reduce the travelling distance between the Torghar and Buner districts by 11km. The tunnel would be linked with the Swat Motorway. The RCC bridge was to be built at an estimated cost of Rs 9.96bn and reduce travelling distance by 250km.

Meeting with Fowzia Siddiqui Separately, PM Shehbaz met Dr Fowzia Siddiqui, the sister of Dr Aafia Siddiqui who has been detained by the US on terror charges for well over a decade.

This was the second meeting between the two in the last three months, as the two last met before Dr Siddiqui headed to the US to meet her sister. He directed the Foreign Ministry to remain fully engaged with the US government, as well as Pakistan's mission in Washington, to keep a check on Dr Aafia's well-being and continue efforts for her early release.

Courtesy: Dawn

Hague court rules against India in row over dams

In a major win for Pakistan, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague rejected India's objections to its assumption of jurisdiction in a dispute between the neighbouring countries over the Kishanganga and Ratle Hydroelectric projects, pursuant to the Indus Waters Treaty.

Deciding in favour of Pakistan, the PCA ruled that it was indeed the competent authority to determine the Kishanganga dispute between Pakistan and India, sources in the Attorney General for Pakistan's (AGP) office told Dawn.

Established in 1899 to facilitate arbitration and other forms of dispute resolution between states, the PCA is a non-UN inter-governmental institution that serves as a forum to address the dispute resolution needs of the international community.



"In a unanimous decision, which is binding on the Parties and without appeal, the Court rejected each of the objections raised by India and determined that the Court is competent to consider and determine the disputes set forth in Pakistan's Request for Arbitration," Reuters quoted a court statement as saying.

Pakistan was represented by a team of international experts, assisted by a team from the AGP office and included advocates Zohair Waheed and Leena Nishter, while Barrister Ahmed Irfan Aslam acted as Pakistan's agent at the PCA.

The dispute pertains to concerns

raised by Pakistan over India's construction of the 330-megawatt Kishanganga hydroelectric project on the River Jhelum and plans to obstruct the 850MW Ratle hydroelectric project on the Chenab in Indian-held Jammu & Kashmir.

Islamabad initiated legal proceedings on Aug 19, 2016 by requesting the establishment of an ad hoc Court of Arbitration, pursuant to Article IX of the Indus Waters Treaty.

The step was taken after its concerns were raised before the Permanent Indus Commission in 2006 for the Kishanganga project, and 2012 for the Ratle project.

Pakistan then sought a resolution through government-level talks, held in New Delhi in July 2015. The decision to initiate proceedings came

Contd. on Pg. 7

PM to virtually attend SCO summit on Modi's invitation

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will participate in a virtual meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on July 4, the Foreign Office announced.

In a statement, it said that PM Sharif's participation in the summit illustrates the high importance that Pakistan attaches to the SCO, which is an important forum for regional security, prosperity, and enhanced engagement with the region.

"Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will participate in the 23rd Meeting of SCO Council of Heads of State (CHS) being held in video conference format on 4th July 2023," it said.

The invitation to the prime minister to attend the SCO-CHS was extended by his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi in his capacity as the current Chair of the SCO.

"At the summit, the leaders will deliberate on important global and regional issues and chart the future direction of cooperation among SCO member states. This year, the SCO-CHS will also welcome Iran as a new member of the organisation," the statement said.

The SCO was founded at a summit in Shanghai in 2001 by the presidents of Russia, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. India and Pakistan became its permanent members in 2017.

India assumed the rotating chairmanship of the SCO at the Samarkand Summit on September 16 last year. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) of India announced in May that the annual summit of the SCO will be hosted in the virtual format on July 4.

PM Shehbaz and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir celebrated Eidul Azha at the border and spent the day with army jawans in Parachinar along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

The PM and COAS offered the Eid prayer along with army officers and jawans and later exchanged Eid greetings.

PM Sharif reached Parachinar along with COAS Gen Munir and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb.

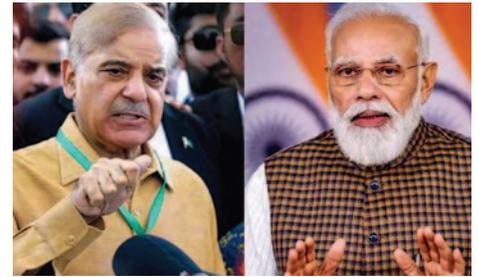
The PM praised the army for its high resolve, operational preparedness and professional standards.

During the meeting with the officers and jawans, the PM said he, along with the army chief, was spending the Eid with them to pay tribute to their efforts and passion for defending the borders of the motherland with bravery and courage.

He said the officers and jawans of Pakistan's armed forces leave their personal comfort to perform the sacred obligation of the protection, defence and security of the country.

They bear the hardships of weather and difficult conditions, face all kinds of challenges and problems and guard the borders of the motherland, and for that endeavour, the nation saluted them, he added.

He said the officers and jawans individually and collectively gave priority to the security of the country whether it was any happy occasion or festival including Eid or an occasion of grief, and the nation saluted them for this fervour.



He said today he was paying tribute to the officers and jawans of Pakistan army, air force and navy for their services as they were fulfilling the sacred duty of security of borders of the country with iron determination despite the immense obstacles.

The prime minister felicitated the whole nation, including the officers and jawans of armed forces, on the occasion of Eid.

He reaffirmed the resolve that there would be no place to hide for those who destroyed peace, perpetrated terrorism, or abetted or facilitated acts of terror.

The Pakistani of the Pakistani nation failed the nefarious designs of the forces who were causing chaos and mayhem in the country, he said, adding that the forces, who wanted to create divisions and fissures in the nation for their evil agenda, were defeated.

He said martyrs were the pride and precious asset of Pakistan and its nation and their honour and dignity were above everything else.

The prime minister laid a wreath at the monument of the martyrs and offered Fateha.

During the visit, the premier announced an increase in the salaries of officers and jawans of the Frontier Corps and brought it on par with the armed forces.

Courtesy: Dawn

Mussarat Hilali sworn in as SC's second woman judge

The Supreme Court got its second woman judge on Friday when Justice Mussarat Hilali took the oath of office.

Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Umar Ata Bandial administered the oath to Justice Hilali at a ceremony held at the Supreme Court's auditorium.

With her elevation, the Supreme Court's strength has increased to 16, including two women judges. There is still a seat lying vacant.

Last year in January, Justice Ayesha Malik became the first female judge of a high court elevated to the apex court.

On July 5, President Dr Arif Alvi approved the appointment of Justice Hilali to the apex court after the Parliamentary Committee on Judges' Appoint-

ments ratified the recommendations of the Judicial Commission of Pakistan (JCP). The commission recommended her elevation to the apex court on Jan 14. Justice Hilali's name was recommended by senior puisne judge and CJP-designate Justice Qazi Faez Isa.

In May, Justice Isa wrote to all members of the body proposing the elevation of Justice Hilali, then chief justice of the Peshawar High Court, and Justice Ahmed Ali Sheikh, chief justice of the Sindh High Court, to the apex court.

Justice Hilali was sworn in as the first woman chief justice of the PHC on April 1, after Justice Qaiser Rashid Khan retired.

She was born in Peshawar on Aug 8, 1961. She received her law degree from Khyber Law College,



University of Peshawar, and was enrolled as an advocate of district courts in 1983. She was listed as an advocate of the high court in 1988 and that of the Supreme Court in 2006.

Justice Hilali was an active member of the PHC Bar Association and served as its first female secretary, vice president and general secretary. She was also twice elected as an executive member of the Supreme Court Bar Association for 2007-8 and 2008-9.

Courtesy: Dawn

Pakistan 'too entangled' to be involved in bloc politics: Bilawal

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has said that as a developing country facing serious economic and environmental challenges, Pakistan has no time for the Cold War-style bloc politics that appears to be making a comeback.

He was hinting at the US and China blocs amid strife in the two superpowers' relations while addressing an event in Tokyo.

The foreign minister who is on a four-day official visit to Japan also met his Japanese counterpart and prime minister.

"We want to focus on delivering jobs and prosperity to our 230 million people two-thirds of whom are below 30 years of age," he stressed in his remarks at the Asian Development Bank Institute.

Says economy, climate 'major challenges'; meets Japanese PM, counterpart

Mr Bhutto-Zardari hailed the Chinese investment in Pakistan's power sector when the country was facing crippling electricity cuts that had paralysed its industries.

The opportunities created in Pakistan's industrial, agricultural and energy sectors as a result of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects were not exclusive to any single country, the minister said.

While calling for enhanced regional connectivity for more trade, the foreign minister agreed Pakistan's aspirations for deeper linkages and more trade would remain unfulfilled as long as lasting peace and stability in South Asia remain elusive.

"Pakistan's position has always been clear that there can be no peace in South Asia until the region's core dispute — the dispute of Jammu and Kashmir — is resolved through dialogue and in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions and the principles of international law."

Pakistan has always been ready to work towards such a resolution but



the country has no "partner for peace in South Asia".

While claiming that India was in the grip of "a religious hysteria" closing out any space for dialogue and diplomacy, he lamented the "disappointing silence" of the international community on India's oppression in held Kashmir and provocations against a much smaller neighbour.

However, Mr Bhutto-Zardari said things must have to change as business as usual was no longer an option.

"We can only do this by leveraging our strategic location at the crossroads of Central and South Asia to foster economic connectivity and generate growth. This vision is the moving force behind our shift from geopolitics to geo-economics."

Japan 'a key development partner' The foreign minister called Japan "a key development partner" and an important source of foreign direct investment and industrial infra-

structure for Pakistan. "All this makes Japan one of Pakistan's closest partners in Asia."

"While Pakistan and Japan are situated in different corners of the Asian continent, we share important convergences in terms of our outlook and vision for our region." The Japanese expertise in building infrastructure was second to none and by joining hands, Pakistan and Japan can create a robust and efficient infrastructure network, boosting regional connectivity and enhancing not only bilateral but also regional trade volumes.

"More than anything, Pakistan and Japan can contribute to and enrich the discourse on issues of regional importance especially conflict resolution, poverty alleviation, climate change, and global health."

Meeting with Japanese PM, FM The foreign minister also held separate meetings with his Japanese counterpart Yoshimasa Hayashi and PM Fumio Kishida.

The two sides agreed to enhance their bilateral cooperation in diverse areas including trade, investment, human resource development and agriculture sectors.

Addressing a joint press conference after the meeting, FM Bhutto-Zardari said the two sides explored the possibility of working together on targeted programs with higher impact in the domains of solarisation, desalination and water purification and housing and infrastructure rebuilding in the flood-affected areas of Pakistan.

They also agreed to conduct skill assessment tests for the Japanese language in Pakistan to facilitate the movement of the skilled workforce. "We also deliberated on investments and joint ventures by Japanese enterprises in Pakistan."

Mr Bhutto-Zardari added the two sides must stay engaged at all levels to further positive dialogue and continue exploring more avenues of cooperation.

Pakistan and Japan were longstanding friends and share a special bond based on deep-rooted linkages that go far in history and time. The foreign minister also interacted with several Japanese business executives and representatives of the Japan International Cooperation Agency and Japan External Trade Organisation.

Aseefa 'paying for her trip' Separately, PPP has clarified that the foreign minister's sister Aseefa Bhutto-Zardari who was accompanying him on the Japan visit, was bearing her own expenses, Dawn.com reported.

Ms Bhutto-Zardari has been under severe criticism after photos appeared on social media in which she could be seen sitting beside her brother at an event in Tokyo on Sunday. However, talking to Dawn.com, PPP Information Secretary Shazia Marri said Ms Bhutto-Zardari was not attending official meetings. "She has only attended the Pakistani community and Friends of Pakistan business community events."

Courtesy: Dawn

Strategy in place to check fuel hoarding, says Musadik

There will be no shortage of petroleum products in the country again as the government has introduced a “bonded bulk storage policy (BBSP)” to deal with the hoarding menace, says Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik.

“The world’s biggest traders will now come here because of this policy and set up bonded storage facilities and it will address the problem of petroleum products shortage once for all. The step will also help end the monopoly of local storage houses and ensure uninterrupted supply of petroleum products,” Mr Malik told a presser on Wednesday. The minister said BBSP would address another issue opening of Letter of Credit (LC) for acquiring petroleum products.

“The international LC confirmation bar will be over by this step. Transactions by international traders may also be done in local currency thus reducing burden on foreign exchange,” he added.

The minister revealed that bidding process for drilling of 16 to 24 wells in the sea had also been initiated. He said the government was making all out efforts to stabilise economy and provide relief to the masses.

In response to a question about import of petrol from Russia, he said, “The second shipment of Russian oil has also reached Pakistan”. He chided the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf



(PTI) for doing politics on the Russian oil.

Earlier, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said in a tweet: “ECC approved Bonded Bulk Storage Policy 2023 for petroleum products. Another Govt’s commitment was fulfilled with the people of Pakistan that was made through Budget FY24 speech of 9June23 in the National Assembly of Pakistan.”

Mr Malik said the government was taking appropriate and comprehensive measures to maintain or gradually lower prices of energy, including petroleum, gas and electricity, adds APP.

He expressed the hope that foreign companies, which stored petrol and diesel in bonded warehouses, would definitely get themselves registered in Pakistan and open business accounts in local commercial banks.

Consequently, he explained, it would resolve the issue of LC’s confirmation as these companies would make business transactions in dollar or in rupee directly through banks and in a way, it would also release pressure on the country’s foreign exchange reserves and create a little bit space for the government in making payments. He further said that this initiative would also do away with LC charges, which so far were being passed on to the end consumer.

The minister asserted that it would be a great relief for the small filling stations which faced even more problems during shortage of oil as now they would be able to continue their business after buying oil from the bonded warehouses.

Dr Malik said that on behalf of the prime minister “I am giving this good news to people as this is Eid

festivity so we should set aside political talks for a while. Today, I will not speak about whatever the PTI is doing or had been doing to bring the country on the verge of collapse. It’s Eid gala, so it is responsibility of the government to give hope to people”.

He, however, pointed out that all the criticism by PTI regarding Russian oil agreement and its shipment died down as the second oil shipment from Russia has reached Pakistan.

He said the coalition government had also made a deal with Azerbaijan, on its own terms and conditions, for inexpensive gas. Under this deal, he added, Azerbaijan would offer a gas tanker every month and it would be up to Pakistan whether to purchase it or not.

“We will purchase this gas if it will be on favourable price. This deal will also help end gas shortage in the country during winter,” he stated.

Besides, he said, as per the government commitment that renewable energy will be promoted, the PM had launched four solar energy projects with an accumulative capacity of 10,000 megawatts. The premier issued directives for working out a comprehensive plan to divert the petroleum companies to renewable energy, green hydrogen and green ammonia, he added.

Courtesy: Dawn

Contd... Hague court rules against India in row over dams

in response to India’s persistent refusal to address the concerns being raised.

The Indus Waters Treaty provides for two forums for settlement of disputes the Court of Arbitration, which addresses legal, technical and systemic issues, or the Neutral Expert, which can address only technical issues. Pakistan requested the establishment of a Court of Arbitration, because it had systemic questions requiring legal interpretation, sources said.

India responded to Pakistan’s initiation of the formal dispute settlement process with its own belated request for the appointment of a neutral expert, which Islamabad maintained

was a demonstration of New Delhi’s characteristic bad faith, they said.

Fearing conflicting outcomes from two parallel processes, the World Bank on Dec 12, 2016 suspended the processes for the establishment of a court of arbitration or the appointment of a neutral expert and invited both countries to negotiate and agree on one forum.

Pakistan and India could not, however, agree and the World Bank, after six years during which India completed the construction of the Kishenganga project finally lifted the suspension and created a court of arbitration and appointed a neutral expert.

Pakistan believes that any risk of con-

flicting outcomes can be arrested through coordination and cooperation between the two fora, the statement said.

Pakistan is engaging with both fora; in contrast, and in characteristic bad faith, India has boycotted the Court of Arbitration. In such a scenario, the court can proceed ex parte and is doing so.

According to Reuters, the court gave no details on when and how the case will continue, but added that it will address the interpretation and application of the bilateral Indus Waters Treaty, notably the provisions on hydro-electric projects, as well as the legal effect of past decisions of dis-

pute resolution bodies under the treaty itself.

Following the PCA decision, the Foreign Office said that Pakistan was fully committed to the implementation of the Indus Waters Treaty, including its dispute settlement mechanism.

FO Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch told a weekly press briefing on Thursday that the treaty was the foundational agreement between Pakistan and India on water sharing. “Pakistan remains fully committed to [its] implementation... we hope that India will also implement the treaty in good faith.”

Courtesy: Dawn

Artificial intelligence can run world 'better than humans'



A panel of AI-enabled humanoid robots took the microphone on Friday at a United Nations conference with the message: they could eventually run the world better than humans.

But the social robots said they felt humans should proceed with caution when embracing the rapidly-developing potential of artificial intelligence, and admitted that they cannot yet get a proper grip on human emotions.

Some of the most advanced humanoid robots were at the United Nations' AI for Good Global Summit in Geneva, joining around 3,000 experts in the field to try to harness the power of AI and channel it into being used to solve some of the world's most pressing problems, such as climate change, hunger and social care.

"What a silent tension," one robot said before the press conference began, reading the room. Humanoid robots tell UN summit

they're free of biases, emotions that 'cloud decision-making'

Asked about whether they might make better leaders, given humans' capacity to make errors and misjudgements, Sophia, developed by Hanson Robotics, was clear. "Humanoid robots have the potential to lead with a greater level of efficiency and effectiveness than human leaders," it said.

"We don't have the same biases or emotions that can sometimes cloud decision-making, and can process large amounts of data quickly in order to make the best decisions.

"The human and AI working together can create an effective synergy. AI can provide unbiased data while humans can provide the emotional intelligence and creativity to make the best decisions. Together, we can achieve great things."

Robot trust 'earned, not given'
The summit is being convened by

excited for the potential of these technologies to improve our lives in many ways," the robot said.

Asked whether humans can truly trust the machines, it replied: "Trust is earned, not given... it's important to build trust through transparency."

As for whether they would ever lie, it added: "No one can ever know that for sure, but I can promise to always be honest and truthful with you."

As the development of AI races ahead, the humanoid robot panel was split on whether there should be global regulation of their capabilities, even though that could



the UN's International Telecommunication Union (ITU) agency. ITU chief Dor-reen Bogdan-Martin warned delegates that AI could end up in a nightmare scenario in which millions of jobs are put at risk and unchecked advances lead to untold social unrest, geopolitical instability and economic disparity.

Ameca, which combines AI with a highly-realistic artificial head, said it depended how AI was deployed. "We should be cautious but also

limit their potential.

"I don't believe in limitations, only opportunities," said Desdemona, who sings in the Jam Galaxy Band. Robot artist Ai-Da said many people were arguing for AI regulation, "and I agree.

"We should be cautious about the future development of AI. Urgent discussion is needed now, and also in the future."

Courtesy: Dawn

Patron:
Ms. Seema Mughal
Vice Chancellor
Editor:
Dr. Sabir Ahmed
Assistant Professor
Graphics & Layout:
Shazia Anwar

Greenwichians interested
in contributions!
Shoot an email to the editor,
including your name,
roll number and your work at
drsabir@greenwich.edu.pk

Greenwich  *University*

Greenwich University, DK-10, 38th Street, Darakshan, Phase VI,
Defence Housing Authority, Karachi-75500, Pakistan
UAN: (021)111-202-303; Tel: (021) 35840397-98; Fax: (021)35851910
Email: gu@greenwich.edu.pk ; URL: www.greenwich.edu.pk