



March in History

March 15, 1955:

The biggest post-independence irrigation project, Kotri Barrage was inaugurated.

March 8, 1957:

Foundation-stone of the State Bank of Pakistan building was laid in Karachi.

March 23, 1960:

Foundation of Minar-i-Pakistan was laid.

March 29, 1983:

Foundation-stone of Satellite Earth Station was laid near Rawalpindi.

March 25, 1992:

Pakistan won Cricket World Cup, defeating England by 22 runs in Melbourne, Australia.

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Holi, Diwali, Easter to be public holidays in Pakistan

Pakistan National Assembly passed a resolution with majority that allows Holi, Diwali and Easter to be observed as Public Holidays in the country.

As per this resolution, this would be the first time in Pakistan's history when minorities will have public holidays on their religious festivals.

Hindu lawmaker Ramesh Kumar Vankwani of PML-N moved the resolution that said the "government should take steps to declare Holi, Diwali and Easter as closed holidays for minorities".

State minister for religious affairs, Pir Aminul Hasnat Shah, speaking in the house, said that interior ministry has already given permission to

heads of government institutions to grant leave to minorities on their religious festivals.

Hope that the bhakhts don't attribute this also to Modi and declare that Modi controls Pakistan

Information minister Pervaiz Rashid said that Pakistan has more public holidays than any country in the world, therefore there is need to revisit the number of holidays.

He said he had no objection over holidays being observed on the religious festivals of minorities adding that no discrimination was meted out to the followers of different faiths and that the people share their grief and happiness regardless of the religion they are practicing.



Govt promoting tourism industry to revive economy, remove perceptions about Pakistan: Pervaiz Rashid

Minister for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage Senator Pervaiz Rashid said that the present democratic government under the leadership of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was committed to facilitate tourists as the promotion of tourism industry would not only help revive the economy but also remove any perceptions about Pakistan.

Addressing the launching ceremony of Islamabad Travel Guide Book written by Syed Sharafuddin here he said that the improved law and order in the country had certainly paved the way for positive changes to come, including a healthy influx of international visitors to Pakistan.

He agreed with the message of 'Islamabad Travel Guide' that people forming opinion about a place on the basis of isolated news stories and one off incident should not take too seriously the international travel advisories about Pakistan.

The minister recommended the youth to visit and explore tourism destinations in Pakistan to become a true patriot, to love their country and also to become an ambassador of peace, harmony and national integrity. "We are confident that tourism will flourish in Pakistan." He said that 'Islamabad Travel Guide' was a combination of both public information and experienced diplomatic advice about Is-



lamabad which aims to educate diplomats, international visitors and overseas Pakistanis, including local people not familiar with the federal capital, about what Islamabad offers to visitors in terms of historical background, lifestyle and facilities which are at par with those available in some of the most advanced capitals of the world.

He said that travelling in distant lands and observing the cultures and social practices of local people had always been a part of the classical Muslim heritage. This tradition was well established in Muslim societies long before such guides were written for the modern travellers, he added.

He said although there are millions of Muslim travellers who spend holidays in distant parts of the world each year, the travel guide industry, including the mentoring, training and setting of ethical standards for Tourist Guides remains in the hands of the West. In this context, 'Islamabad Travel Guide' is

a bold step to discover Islamabad from the perspective of the native, even though it is tailored for the European travellers, he added.

He hoped Pakistani writers will come forward to write travel guides about our cities and places of fascinating natural beauty which showcase the best of Pakistan to nature lovers, mountains and flora and fauna, a glimpse of which you can find in the water catchment areas and scenic spots of Islamabad's Margalla Hills National Park.

Former chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Chairman Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Kabir Khan, Director General Institute of Strategic Studies Masood Khan and Lt Gen (retd) Talat Masood and writer of the travel guide Sharafuddin also spoke on the occasion.

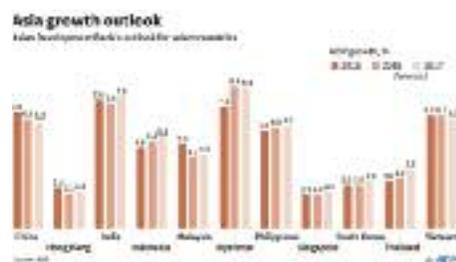
*By: Jahanzaib Ashraf BS48 5371
Courtesy: Business Recorder*



Pakistan economy will continue to pick up: ADB

Pakistan's economy will continue to pick up during the current fiscal year as reform and stabilization measures provide lift, with higher foreign exchange reserves, and softer inflation and oil prices also supporting the overall macroeconomic outlook, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said in its annual economic report released on Wednesday.

The 'Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2016' forecasts growth of 4.5 per cent for fiscal year ending June 2016, and 4.8pc for fiscal year 2016-17, assuming continued macroeconomic stability, expected improvement in energy supply, and planned infrastructure investment tied to an economic



corridor project linking Pakistan with China.

Further implementation of structural reform will consolidate recent gains in macroeconomic stability and improve the investment climate amidst the improving

security situation, especially in Karachi, the report notes.

The report says growth in industry is expected to be driven by strong expansion in construction and continued moderate expansion in mining, utilities and manufacturing, growth in large-scale manufacturing accelerated to 3.9pc in the first half of 2015-16 from 2.7pc in the same period of last year, supported by low prices for raw materials, improved gas and electricity supply, and expanded construction, as well as lower interest rates.

*By: Deepak Kumar BS40 3503
Courtesy: Express Tribune*

Dreams of thunder for Pakistani Seeking Formula 1 glory

Saad Ali is in pole position to become Pakistan's first Formula 1 driver, a seemingly impossible target in a country with no race tracks and where all sport sponsorship money is poured into the national obsession — cricket.

The 28-year-old faces significant hurdles before he can become one of 22 elite drivers at the pinnacle of motorsport, but a decade after his “clueless” beginning as a college dropout hooked on racing, he is edging towards his target.

“As a kid I was always interested in cars, but there was no racing in Pakistan, it was not even on television,” he says.

He competed in the Formula Gulf 1000 series in 2014, reaching the podium to take third place twice in one weekend in Abu Dhabi.

Describing that race as a “big stepping stone”, he adds it was “proof to me that this is something that I could pursue and achieve”.



Now he must conquer the Formula 3, GP3 and GP2 classes, seen as stepping stones on the road to Formula 1.

“Getting there is extremely tough, extremely hard, extremely competitive,” he says.

“For motorsports you need that expertise,

you need those mechanics, you need facilities, infrastructure, you need that architecture to actually perform,” he says.

Right now, he has to make do with a simulator at his home, where he practises his manoeuvres.

*By: Deepak Kumar BS40 3503
Courtesy: Express Tribune*

Asia's biggest Peshawar Mor Interchange to be opened on 23rd March

Following countless deadlines given for the completion of Peshawar Mor Interchange being dubbed as the Asia's biggest Interchange is finally near to see the light of the day as the date of 23rd March has been set for its inauguration to be performed by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

According to officials concerned, construction work on the interchange has almost been completed and it is ready for inauguration. Rs 6 billion project was initiated to supplement the already up and running Rawalpindi-Islamabad Metro Bus project. To the commuters of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, it will provide signal free access to commuters. According to officials initially, the interchange and the metro bus project was supposed to be completed by December 2014 but the interchange project faced delay because firstly there was an issue between NLC and NESPAK over its design and afterwards snail pace of work for different reasons.



The location of the G-9 interchange, referred to by the residents and locals as Peshawar Mor Interchange is crucial and central. The massive amount of traffic from M-2 coupled with thousands of commuters traveling between the twin cities use this road. In the past long queues of traffic was a regular feature at this place and therefore there is no denying that an interchange was severely needed at the Peshawar Mor.

According to officials, the total length of the overhead, underground and ramp roads of the interchange is approximately 14 km and it features eight flyovers. The officials said that they project will not only resolve the woes of the commuters but also add charm to the already beautiful city.

The officials also said that the seven storey control and command centre of Metro Bus Service has also been completed in Rawalpindi and the offices and computer system of the metro service will soon be shifted there. The building will provide parking facility to the metro bus passengers. Three floors of the building have been allocated for parking.

The officials also informed that close circuit TV cameras installed on the route of the metro bus service would be monitored from the main office.

*By: Abdullah Sheikh BS43 3808
Courtesy: Pakistan Observer*

Pictures of Pakistan Day Parade to bring out the patriot in you

The nation is celebrating the 76th Pakistan Day on Wednesday with a renewed pledge to make the country stronger by eliminating terrorism and achieving sustainable economic growth and greater political stability. To commemorate the occasion, a joint military parade was held at the Parade Ground near the landmark Shakarparian hills in Islamabad.

Pakistan Day commemorates the passing of the Lahore Resolution, when a separate nation for the Muslims of The British Indian Empire was demanded on March 23, 1940.

Here we look at pictures of the Pakistan Day Parade held on Wednesday morning.

Courtesy: Express Tribune





My college gave me the confidence to lead: Sana Mir recalls her alma mater days

It is a rare honour to return to your alma mater as a hero and see the pride in your teachers' eyes while the students there look up to you. The captain of Pakistan's women's cricket team Sana Mir was lucky enough to enjoy such moments.

Sana, who now lives in Lahore, touched base in Karachi along with a few other teammates from the city, when they visited the Defence Authority College for Women, where the old student was hailed as the 'Silver Star', at the college's silver jubilee year.



Eager to see her again, Sana's Urdu teacher, Dr Rubina Sarwar, shared with Dawn that she could feel a kind of restlessness in the girl's spirit from early on. "She wanted to go play but she would be worried about missing her lessons, too. But I would tell her that it was fine and she could catch up. I'm so glad I said that," the teacher smiled at the memory.

Praising her teammates as they share the success of the Pakistan women's team, Sana introduced the ones present starting with Javeria Wadood Khan, or Jerry as she is popularly known as. "I became a part of the team as a bowler in 2008 hoping to hit instant stardom. But then in 2010 my bowling action was termed 'suspicious'.

The ICC tested me again in Australia and I failed the test. Suddenly I hit fame but not

the way I had imagined. I decided to give up cricket but my mother reminded me that I was not a quitter. She encouraged me to try my hand at batting. So I made a comeback as an opening batswoman and am not so bad at it either," she said, giving the students a little lesson in perseverance.

Abdullah Sheikh BS43 3808
Courtesy: Dawn News



'Ashiqi Angar brought Chitrali music to the fore'

While working on a project together, singer-songwriter Zoe Viccaji and actor-director Adnan Malik came across 25 year old Irfan Ali Taj whose vocal abilities and slick playing of the rubab and guitar left them more than impressed. Months later, Viccaji and Taj were ready to put out their first ever collaboration together, Ashiqi Angar.

Taj said the song was written by a fellow Chitrali songwriter, Mir Saleem, who is part of Taj's former band, QashQarian. "The song really is the first to come out from the plains of Chitral into the mainstream. It has brought our music to the fore," he said. The Urdu lyrics have been penned by Abdullah Haroon and Viccaji can be seen crooning to the lines in the video.

With the Chitrali and Urdu lyrics both alluding to a longing

for the beloved and the composition deriving heavily from folk music of the highlands, the video has ironically been filmed at a beach somewhere along the coastal part of Pakistan.

According to Taj, the song delves into two different philosophies. "The Chitrali lines signify the concept of ishq-e-majazi whereas the Urdu lyrics denote ishq-e-haqiqi. The song talks about how love does not kill you but makes you stronger, making you capable of achieving bigger things in life," he said.

With Ashiqi Angar already out, Taj is currently working on forming another band called Siachen. He has plans of releasing another single, Teri Talash, in which he will experiment with dhol, shehnai and other Eastern instruments. In his own words, it is a "masterpiece in the making".

By: Abdullah Sheikh BS43 3808
Courtesy: Express Tribune

Reincarnation of Grease



Director, and founder of Made for Stage Productions (MSP), Nida Butt brings back the 1978 American classic, featuring John Travolta and Olivia Newton-

John, about friendships, romances and adventures of a group of high school kids in the 1950s.

Courtesy: The News

US Consulate Karachi pays tribute to Pakistan's women of strength

As Women's History Month draws to a close, US Consulate General Karachi has paid tribute to notable Pakistani women who are "excelling in their respective fields and breaking all stereotypes".

The black and white video, which has been viewed 166 thousand times so far was shared on the US Consulate General Karachi's Facebook

page on Thursday.

The video features Pakistani women from all walks of life along with the hashtag #everywoman, including Bilquis Eidhi, writer Bina Shah, classical dancer Sheema Kermani, first female Hazara lawyer Jalilah Haider as well as physicist Nergis Mavalvala, among others.

By Deepak Kumar BS40 3503
Courtesy: Express Tribune



Another gas discovery in Badin

Petroleum Exploration (Private) Limited, a private sector concern, has announced that it has discovered natural gas in the Badin-IV south block in Sujawal district of Sindh.

It reached the depth of 2,297 metres on February 3 where the well flowed 16 million cubic feet of gas per day with well-head pressure at 1,400 psi. The well also flowed 26 barrels of



According to a statement, the Badin south joint venture with Petroleum Exploration as the block operator drilled an exploratory well – Aminah-1 – on January 6 in an effort to test upper sands up to the depth of 2,500 metres or 100 metres inside the upper sands, whichever was shallower.

condensate per day.

The Badin-IV south joint venture has so far made two discoveries – Ayesha-1 and Aminah-1 – which will together produce approximately 25 million cubic feet of gas per day.

By Deepak Kumar BS40 3503
Courtesy: Express Tribune

Russian Army to hold first mountain drills with Pakistan this year

The Russian Army's Commander-in-Chief Oleg Salyukov on Friday announced that Russian ground forces will hold its first ever military exercises with Pakistan in the coming year, according to TASS news agency.

The Russian Army is scheduled to hold seven international drills in 2016, including the "the first ever Russian-Pakistani special drills in mountainous terrain."

"As part of interaction with our foreign colleagues in 2016, we have scheduled seven joint exercises with the involvement of the relevant units of foreign states," the Russian Army Commander-in-Chief said.

The Russian Army will also hold joint anti-terror command and staff exercises of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, as well as a Russian-Vietnamese exercise, Salyukov added.

Read: Russia to provide counter-terrorism training to Pakistan

"The Peace Mission-2016, the joint drills of peace-keeping forces of the Collective Security Treaty Organization code-named Indestructible Brotherhood, the Frontier-2016 joint command and staff drills, the Indra-2016 Russian-Indian exercises and the Selenga-2016 Russian-Mongolian drills will be held," the commander added.



Shanghai Cooperation

Pakistan and India both joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in July last year. The group is dominated by Russia and China, and also includes former Soviet republics in Central Asia.

Pakistan's full membership to the powerful SCO was approved by its Council of Heads of State at its 15th Summit.

Russia sees the organisation, ex-

panding for the first time since its creation in 2001, as a counterweight to Western alliances.

Also read: Russia lifts arms embargo to Pakistan: report

Russia had lifted its embargo on arms supplies to Pakistan in June 2014 and signed a bilateral defence cooperation agreement with Pakistan to strengthen military-to-military relations in November 2014.

Later August 2015, the two countries signed a landmark defence deal which includes the sale of four Mi-35 'Hind E' attack helicopters to Pakistan.

By:Umer Ahmed BS48 5349
Courtesy: The Dawn



Saad Saeed Photography



Mustafa Qureshi Photography

Vast just like us.

Greenchians interested in contributions! shoot an email to the editor, including your name, roll number and your work at eesha@greenwich.edu.pk

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