

# Positive Post



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

## December in History

**December 24, 1952:**

*UN Security Council adopts the Anglo-American Resolution on Kashmir urging immediate demilitarization talks between India, Pakistan.*

**December 31, 1952:**

*Pakistan National Scouts instituted.*

**December 22, 1957:**

*Malik Feroz Khan Noon is sworn in as seventh Prime Minister of Pakistan.*

**December 7, 1970:**

*First General elections held. Awami League and Pakistan People Party emerge as leading parties in East and West Pakistan.*

**December 19, 1970:**

*Pakistan wins gold medal in Asian Games hockey, beating India 1-0.*

**December 20, 1971:**

*General Yahya Khan hands over power to Z. A. Bhutto, who takes over as President and Chief Martial Law Administrator.*

**December 30, 1973:**

*Z. A. Bhutto lays foundation stone of Pakistan Steel Mills.*

**December 27, 1975:**

*1976 is declared Quaid's Century year.*

**December 31, 1985:**

*Martial Law is lifted, amended 1973 Constitution revived.*

**December 2, 1988:**

*Benazir Bhutto is sworn in as first woman Prime Minister of Pakistan.*

**December 12, 1990:**

*Pakistan becomes 37th country to send expedition to Antarctica.*

**December 4, 1994:** Pakistan regains

*World Hockey Championship title after 12 years, beating Holland 4-3.*

## 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 University delegation visit to the European Parliament



Greenwich University's 25-member delegation led by the Vice Chancellor visited the European Parliament to promote educational and cultural exchange across the EURASIAN region. Member of the European Parliament Wajid Khan received the delegation from Pakistan and encouraged such exchange to strengthen people to people connections across borders. Seema Mughal, Vice Chancellor, shared that Greenwich envisions a shining Pakistan on the globe and we have taken a major step in that direction. She also underlined that Greenwich aspires to produce global citizens who could serve as the peoples' ambassadors to present the best of our national glory.

Pervaiz Losar, Chairman EUPak Friendship Federation, expressed his delight having facilitated the first-ever University delegation visit to the EU Parliament bound to enhance Pakistan's multi-lateral relations.

The delegation presented Pakistan through its historical residue, rich cultural diversity and artistic brilliance showcasing what best defines the nation. Ali Jilani, Head, Diplomatic Affairs, Greenwich University, responded to the negative portrayal of Pakistan elucidating through substantive evidence that the country is the greatest victim of terrorism and it is high time that the world recognized

its sacrifices for peace. He also pressed the EU to play an enhanced role in confronting some of the most unspeakable atrocities in the occupied Jammu & Kashmir. The delegate also explained regional peace would complement Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which offers tremendous potential for enhanced socio-economic development across EURASIA.

The students also shared positive insights into the recent improvements in governance and accountability, education, minority rights and gender equality in Pakistan, and expressed their optimism regarding the country's progress in the times ahead.

MEPs including John Howarth, Sean Simon, Alex Meyer and Nosheena Mobarak commended the University's efforts and emphasized that education and youth have a tremendous role to play in reimagining Pakistan. MEPs admired the country's resilience against terrorism and acknowledged its remarkable sacrifices for peace. The MEPs also advised that efficient diplomacy would help Pakistan showcase its true intellectual, socio-cultural and economic potential in the international arena. The interactions highlighted the importance of upholding democratic values, human rights and social justice to ensure pluralistic outcomes for the global community.

## Greenwich delegation visit to the Brussels Parliament



During a similar intervention at the Brussels Parliament, the 25-member delegation involving students and faculty led by the Vice Chancellor was warmly received by the Senior Vice President Mr. Fouad Ahdir who commended the efforts for advancing diplomatic and educational objectives. Senior Vice President of

the Parliament said that Pakistan needs such advocates to undo the propagandist media impression of the country and expressed his desire to visit soon. He also offered to dedicate a room at the Brussels Parliament where Pakistani cultural products could be showcased.

## Greenwich delegation visit to the Embassy of Pakistan



The delegation also visited the Embassy of Pakistan in Brussels where it was welcomed by H.E. Naghmana A. Hashmi - Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium European & Luxemburg. The delegation was taken for an exposure visit to the different sections and debriefed on the functioning of the Embassy.

The Ambassador said that the delegation's interventions will definitely leverage our cultural diplomacy and the process requires consistent efforts to reimage Pakistan at the international arena. The embassy shared different resources that could be used to portray Pakistan's positive image to the world and extended its support for the initiatives.



## Suniya Khan – The Only Pakistani Formula 1 Engineer

Suniya Sadullah Khan became the first Formula 1 engineer from Pakistan in 2012 and to date remains the only one.

As a design and race operations support engineer for the Williams Formula 1 Team, she was responsible for ensuring race mechanics achieved a 3.0s average pit-stop time and provided support to engineers at the race track.

Dawn caught up with her to talk about her experiences as an F1 engineer.

How did you get into engineering?

I was 12 when I watched my first ever Formula 1 race and fell in love. For me, it wasn't just the thrill of watching cars race each other at 250 km/h, I was fascinated by the constant technical and engineering skill involved in designing these race cars. It was then that I decided I wanted to work not just in motorsport, but for a specific team called Williams which competed in Formula 1.

As there was no specific path for a girl from Pakistan to follow to work in Formula 1, I realised I had to

forge my own path. This included studying science subjects at O and A Levels to getting scholarships from universities abroad and more importantly convincing my parents to let me be the first girl in my family to study abroad for my bachelors. I got a part scholarship at university but my financial circumstances were such that I worked part time for three out of the four years I studied in England, as a cleaner and a waitress.

During my masters, I studied and worked as a waitress during the week and worked for free as a mechanic on weekends to gain motorsport experience. Needless to say, my mother was horrified that her daughter was choosing to work as a mistri but, she still respected my decision.

Having studied the right subjects, was Formula 1 engineering an easy industry to break into?

I started with a bachelors in Aerospace Engineering and then went to Cranfield University in the UK for my masters in Motorsport Engineering and Management. For the group project we successfully

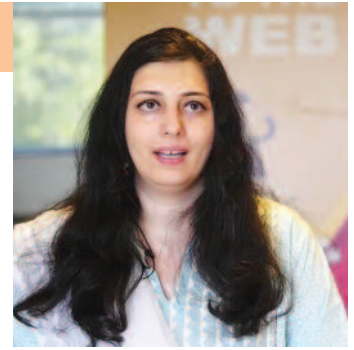
designed, built, tested and marketed a new front crash structure for a Formula Ford chassis

I finally managed to get an interview at Williams F1. A week after the interview, I was rejected as I didn't have enough experience for that position. However, the interviewer was impressed by my enthusiasm and thought I should apply for another role they had available.

The only problem, it was in admin whereas I had dreamt of becoming a race engineer. I took the job and decided to prove I could do more. Within six months, I was doing extra work with the race team. A year later, I was formally part of their race operations team as an engineer. I finally got there.

What was your role with the engineering team?

My work involved a lot of collaboration between different departments, creative problem solving and working to extremely tight deadlines. It also involved analysing data at the smallest detail looking for even 0.1s improvement.



Looking back, it wasn't just the technical skills that I developed in my time there but also the way to solve problems and work to tight deadlines under immense pressure.

My stand out memory was being tasked with reducing race pit-stop times (the time taken to change all four tyres on a car during a race). This involved working with the mechanics, the design engineers, the aerodynamicists and the drivers and their race engineers analysing hours of footage just to shave off 1 second per pit-stop. While I was there, we reduced the time from 3.5 seconds to 2.1 and after I left they reduced it even further to 1.8s that means 20 people managed to change the tires on a car in under 2 seconds perfect synchronisation.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## British Airways to resume Pakistan flights after a decade

British Airways will resume flights to Pakistan next year after a 10-year absence that followed a major hotel bombing, becoming the first Western airline to restart flights to the South Asian nation.

BA halted flights following one of the most high-profile attacks in Pakistan's history, the 2008 Marriott Hotel bombing in the capital, Islamabad, which took place during a period of devastating Islamist militant violence that swept the country.

But security has since improved, with militant attacks sharply down in the mainly Muslim country of 208 million people. In Islamabad, a web of road checkpoints dotted across the city for more than a decade has mostly been dismantled.

Richard Crowder, the Deputy British High Commissioner to Pakistan, told reporters in Islamabad BA's return was in large part due to "an improvement in the security environment in

this country".

Pakistani officials hailed BA's move, saying it will offer confidence to other foreign investors and make the country less isolated.

"Once it gets around the world that British Airways has put its stamp of approval on Pakistan, it will put us one or two notches up as a country to do business with," said Commerce Minister Abdul Razak Dawood.

BA, which is owned by Spanish-registered IAG, is due to begin the London Heathrow-Islamabad service on June 2, with three weekly flights by the airline's newest long-haul aircraft, the Boeing 787 Dreamliner.

At present, only loss-making national carrier Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flies directly from Pakistan to Britain, but its aging fleet of planes is a frequent source of complaints by passengers.



Middle Eastern carriers Qatar Airways, Etihad Airways and Emirates have a strong presence in Pakistan and have been eating into PIA's dwindling market share. Turkish Airlines also lays on a regular service to Pakistan.

Islamabad has been running international advertising campaigns to rejuvenate its tourism sector that was wiped out by Islamist violence that destabilized the country following the 9/11 attacks in the United States in 2001 and the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan.

Pakistan was formed at partition at the end of British rule in India in 1947 and more than a million people

of Pakistani origin live in Britain. Robert Williams, Head of Sales for Asia Pacific and the Middle East for British Airways, said the carrier believes the route "will be particularly popular with the British Pakistani community who want to visit, or be visited by, their relatives".

Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari, a special assistant to Prime Minister Imran Khan, said "British Airways coming back after a decade shows you where we were and how far we have come". Slideshow (2 Images)

"Pakistan is becoming less isolated and more connected to the world, and that's the Pakistan we want to see."

*Courtesy: Reuters*

## Defence expo attracts large crowds on final day

The queues outside the National Coaching Centre gates were unending on Friday.

The fourth and final day of the 10th International Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS) 2018 organised by the Defence Export Promotion Organisation at the Karachi Expo Centre was open to the general public, who after getting their passes made took the shuttle which was leaving every five minutes or so to proceed to the venue.

There were happy children, some dressed in camouflage T-shirts smiling and posing on top of tanks, armoured vehicles and aircraft. Some of them were surprised to find out about other tanks besides the famous Al-Khalid and Al-Zarrar.

Keen youngsters were told by a nonagenarian ex-serviceman a gun must always be treated as loaded

Other productions of the Heavy Industry Taxila such as the command vehicle SAKB, the recovery vehicle Al-Hadeed, the logistics vehicle Al-Qaswa, the protection vehicle APC M113P and the armoured security vehicle Mohafiz IV/Interceptor also earned several fans. Some also got fooled by the inflatable smart decoys for deception, which seemed unbelievably realistic.

China's LY-80 Lomads guidance vehicle and firing vehicle, their IBIS-150 Radar and heavy mechanised bridge 84-A were also attracting big crowds.



Many students among the visitors pleasantly surprised the representatives at the stalls by asking them intelligent questions. The expertise with which they were handling the weapons made one ask if they had practice. "No, not really. When we were children we used to play with plastic guns. Now we realise how heavy the real ones can be. As for the handling bit, well, we have watched how people do it in the movies," said one youngster.

Among the young trying out weapons at the Turkish stalls, there was also an old man. "I am in my nineties," said the gentleman who introduced himself as F.H. Malik, a retired air-force officer. He said that he had served with the Royal Air Force before Partition.

The gentleman was great at explaining to the young visitors around him how to safely handle guns and how to always treat them as loaded in order to be careful. "Guns are not to be taken lightly even when you know they are unloaded," he told them while himself pulling the trig-

ger as he kept the weapon pointed downwards.

Class-fellows Bilawal and Subhan said they would love to own the 8mm pistol, adding that visiting IDEAS 2018 became part of their plan only this morning. "We had an entry test at the University of Karachi today, which got postponed. That was when we decided to head here and see if anyone would even let us in. But it was no problem at all. Everyone has been very nice," said Bilawal.

Mini thermal binocular unveiled  
Among the tanks, aircraft, weapons and equipment produced indigenously was Skua LR Long Range thermal binocular Tarsier Mini from Pakistan's first private infrared or thermal imager manufacturer SHIBLI based in Islamabad. Said to be a must-have on the battlefield, the binocular weighs even less than 1kg and thus can be easily mounted on any firearm, thanks to its Nato-standard Picatinny rail. Its qualities also include perfect engineering for maximum precision for close com-

bat and target acquisition.

The reception desk with young volunteers Yumna, Izma, Sonia, Ayesha, Sana, Saira, Maha, Rija, Asmara and others, all dressed in red, would make sure that everyone had the floor plan of the exhibition along with the latest gazette informing the day's programme.

The AK Regiment and Air Defence military bands were another lot doing a thankless job as day after day they sat waiting under the open sky and the harsh sun to get up and start playing inspirational tunes for any VIP who happened to pass by them. Afterwards, they would quickly take off their pagg turbans and bagpipes. "You should wear our turbans for two minutes to understand why we can't keep them on our heads for long," said Sagheer Ahmed, chief of the AK Regiment band.

"They are made from woollen material. The bagpipes are no different. Our ceremonial uniform can get quite uncomfortable in this heat," he said. But even though they put up tents and marquees with plenty of air-conditioners and pedestal fans to keep everyone cool and comfortable at the Expo Centre, the bands were not extended such luxury.

Police, Rangers and army men and women on duty outside also deserve a mention for even on the final day as they said that they had not gotten a chance to see the exhibition as yet.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## First cancer hospital to be established in Islamabad

The government has decided to establish the first state-of-the-art cancer hospital in Islamabad.

The decision was taken in a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Imran Khan on health reforms being taken in Islamabad, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the Prime Minister's Office.

The health secretary briefed the meeting about the health action plan and said for the last 55 years, Islamabad's hospitals have had 2,000 beds only. He said under the new Capital Health Strategy, the capacity was being doubled to 4,000 beds in five years.

The meeting was told that a state-of-the-art cancer hospital with 200 beds, a general hospital in Tarlai with 200 beds, three mother and child hospitals with 120 beds in Bara Kahu, Rawat and Tarnol will be established and the rural health units and basic health units will be upgraded by June 2020.

The meeting was told that recruitment of health professionals is underway in all hospitals and that nursing and associated medical science universities will be established in the Islamabad Capital Territory. KP Health Minister Dr Hisham Inamullah Khan spoke about the re-



forms introduced by his ministry during the last 100 days such as the expansion of the Sehat Insaf Cards, assessment of inputs in all health facilities, 95pc coverage of the measles immunisation drive, community-based complaints and grievance management system and media cell,

policies on quality of medicines and initiation of public-private partnerships with pharmaceutical companies to provide free care to around 0.5 million patients for four non-communicable diseases.

Punjab Minister Health Dr Yasmin Rashid said the Punjab Health Department was going to issue Sehat Insaf Cards in four districts – D.G. Khan, Rajanpur, Lodhran and Multan by the end of Dec 2018.

She said five mother and child hospitals were being established in the province along with a nursing college.

*Courtesy: Dawn*



## These 13 developments shaped Pakistan's economic future in 2018

After Islamabad witnessed a regime change, the newly elected government increased taxes on utilities and luxury goods to mitigate the deficit. Side by side, a significant depreciation in the value of local currency also played a role in increasing inflation.

Meanwhile, friendly countries came forward to rescue the country's economy. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) provided a lifeline of \$3 billion each to maintain foreign exchange reserves.

The KSA additionally provided a deferred payment facility of \$3bn, while the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development financed eight development projects in Pakistan with a total value of AED1.5bn, including AED931 million in grants.

During the first half of the year, a tax amnesty scheme was launched for foreign asset holders. During the outgoing year, stricter regulations were imposed by the State Bank of Pakistan and the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan on asset inflows and outflows.

The central bank also raised its policy (target) rate by 150 basis points (bps) to 10 per cent near the end of the year.

Here's a look at the major developments on the economic front throughout the year.

### 1. EU renews GSP+ scheme for two years

The Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) scheme passed smoothly through the European Parliament's Committee on International Trade (CIT) in February, enabling Pakistani exporters to enjoy preferential duties on exports for the next two years.

The continuation of the scheme is an award for Islamabad's progress in enacting new laws and developing new institutions for implantation of 27 core conventions of GSP+, especially the National Action Plan for human rights. A statement issued by the commerce ministry had said that the EU parliament expressed satisfaction on the progress achieved by Pakistan in enacting new laws and hoped that Islamabad would continue to engage with the EU and ensure to bridge implementation gaps during the next two years of reporting on GSP+.

### 2. Tax amnesty scheme

In April, the then prime minister, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, announced a tax amnesty scheme through which people with undeclared income earned before June 30, 2017 on assets held within the country were allowed to declare them by simply paying a five per cent penalty.

People holding undocumented assets outside the country were also invited to declare them through the new amnesty scheme. Foreign exchange could also be brought back to the country by paying a 2pc penalty. Foreign liquid assets like cash, securities and bonds held abroad and in local dollar accounts could be declared with a 5pc penalty.

### 3. Reduced taxation under reforms

People who make between Rs1.2m to Rs2.4m were made liable to pay five per cent in income tax. The income tax for the Rs2.4-Rs4.8m bracket reduced to 10pc. Those earning over Rs4.8m annually were liable to pay 15pc tax on their income.

Additionally, the CNIC numbers of all citizens were made their tax number.

### 4. Chinese tech giant Alibaba breaks into Pakistani market by acquiring Daraz

China's biggest e-commerce company, the Alibaba Group, broke into the Pakistani market in May by fully acquiring the Daraz Group.

Founded in Pakistan in 2012, Daraz had since expanded to Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Nepal. It will continue to operate under the same brand, the press release had added.

### 5. In farewell budget, govt showers businesses with incentives

The budget showered incentives on business and industry in quantities never seen before, leading many to wonder where the revenues would come from to pay for all the handouts.

Most of the tax cuts directly benefited what some called Finance Minister Miftah Ismail's de facto constituency corporate, industry and banking circles. Also, for the first time, the development budget was slashed while large hikes were given to defence and all other heads under current spending, like subsidies, the running of government affairs and debt servicing.

### 6. First tax recovery made under Panama Papers investigation

In September, exactly two years after starting the exercise, the tax authorities reported their first recoveries under the investigations into assets held by individuals named in the Panama and Paradise papers.

Data from the Federal Board of Revenue, obtained by Dawn, showed that the Karachi and Islamabad Large Tax Units made the first recovery since the start of the exercise.

The FBR recovered a total amount of Rs6.2 billion out of total demand created in 15 cases. The recovery of the remaining amount of Rs4.64bn is under process.

### 7. PM Khan forms 18-member Economic Advisory Council

In September, the prime minister had constituted an 18-member Economic Advisory Council (EAC). Out of these 18 members, seven belonged to the government while 11 were from the private sector.

Ministers for finance and planning and development; the secretary of the finance division; the SBP governor; the Prime Minister's advisers on institutional reforms and commerce; and the deputy chairman of the planning commission were nominated as official members of the council.

### 8. Saudi Arabia pledges \$6bn package to Pakistan

Saudi Arabia in October stepped forward with a \$6 billion bailout package for Pakistan's ailing economy. The package included \$3bn balance of payments support and another \$3bn in deferred payments on oil imports.

It was agreed Saudi Arabia would place a deposit of \$3 billion for a period of one year as balance of payments support. It was further "agreed that a one-year deferred payment facility for import of oil, up to \$3 billion, will be provided by Saudi Arabia. This arrangement will be in place for three years, which will be reviewed thereafter".

### 9. PM forms Council of Business Leaders

In October, Imran Khan constituted a 22-member Council of Business Leaders (CBL), inducting prominent businessmen to ensure the availability of the

best professional advice to the government for resolving trade-related issues.

### 10. Pakistan's 'Doing Business' ranking up 11 notches

In November, the World Bank issued the 'Doing Business Report: Training for Reform 2019'. It showed that Pakistan improved its ranking by 11 points, moving from 147th to 136th position.

### 11. China agrees to almost double its imports from Pakistan

In November, Beijing agreed to increase its imports from Pakistan to \$2.2 billion by end of 2018-19 from the existing level of \$1.2bn and to \$3.2bn by end of next fiscal year. The development surfaced after the prime minister's first official visit to China.

Earlier in May, the currency swap arrangement (CSA) between the SBP and the People's Bank of China (PBOC) was extended for a period of 3 years in respective local currencies.

Both the central banks agreed to increase the CSA amount from CNY (Chinese Yuan) 10 billion to CNY 20bn and from Rs165bn to Rs351bn. The currency swap arrangement facilitates traders to do business with each other in local currency instead of the US dollar.

### 12. Rs82bn plan launched to reduce rural poverty

The Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFSR) in December unveiled an Rs82 billion plan for the agriculture sector, with the aim of enhanced crop yield, improved water efficiency, livestock and fisheries development, and creation of agro-markets with the overall objective of uplifting small farmers and reducing rural poverty.

### 13. UAE pledges \$3bn to boost Pakistan's liquidity, reserves

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) in December announced its intention to deposit \$3 billion (equivalent to AED11 billion) with the SBP "to support the financial and monetary policy of the country".

The Abu Dhabi Fund for Development said in a statement that it will deposit the said amount in the coming days to enhance liquidity and monetary reserves of foreign currency at the bank.

*Courtesy Dawn News.*

*(Trimmed for strategic purposes)*

## Health programme launched in 1,700 Punjab schools

The Punjab government launched on Monday School Health and Nutrition programme in 1,700 schools of the province.

Punjab ministers Dr Murad Raas and Dr Yasmin Rashid inaugurated the programme at the Government Central Model School, Lower Mall, where Mr Raas said that the programme would provide education to students and take care of their nutrition to improve health.

He said the government had launched an android phone application with the help of the Punjab Information Technology Board and the Secondary Healthcare Commission to monitor the programme.

The programme will cater to students of 1,700 schools of the nine districts - Lahore, Bhakkar, Jhang, Dera Ghazi Khan, Rawalpindi, Rahim Yar Khan, Multan, Mianwali and Sargodha.



The programme will later also be extended to other districts of the province in the second phase.

"We are launching the programme to monitor the nutrition of the students and also want to know about their need. Under the programme medical checkup of the students will also be conducted periodically," he said.

The minister said health supervisors would help maintain cleanliness of the school and also monitor the health of the students for ensuring a healthy Pakistan.

He said education and health departments would improve the health and education of the students.

He said the government was com-

mitted to providing all basic facilities to the students of the schools at every level.

Mr Raas said they were working to provide quality education, nutrition and health facility to the students. "We will also ensure that school canteens provide fresh and good quality food on subsidized rates to the students," he said.

He said they had announced provision of clean water to the students by establishing 100 water filtration plants at schools under "The New Deal for Punjab" program.

He said they would also establish state of the art 100 libraries and 200 science laboratories in the schools of the province. Mr Raas said they were also reviewing transfer/ posting policy of the schoolteachers and would make it teacher's friendly.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## Upgraded aircraft, helicopters inducted into naval fleet



The Pakistan Navy (PN) inducted its first marinised and upgraded ATR aircraft and Sea King helicopters (Ex Mod UK) into its fleet at an impressive ceremony held at PNS Mehran on Wednesday.

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Zafar Mahmood Abbasi also attended the ceremony.

The first marinised ATR aircraft, a modern and widely-operated turboprop platform, has been retrofitted with state-of-the-art weapons and sensors which will substantially enhance the fleet air arm's operational capability commensurate with contemporary maritime warfare requirements.

The induction of the two Mk 3A/

Mk 4 Sea King helicopters acquired from UK into the PN's existing fleet of Sea King helicopters will further enhance its operational capability, particularly of troops' transfer. One of the helicopters is purpose built for search and rescue missions at sea and the other is optimised for troops-carrying role.

In order to ensure the quality training of aircrew, the Pakistan Navy also inducted a state of the art simulator of Z9EC anti-submarine warfare helicopter. This simulator will enable the aircrew to acquire training for anti-submarine and emergency handling in a cost-effective manner without endangering life and equipment.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## Another first for Pakistan



Ali Rez named 'South Asia Creative Person of the Year' at the Campaign Agency of the Year Awards

At the 25th Annual Campaign Agency of the Year Awards, which were held last night in Mumbai, India, Ali Rez, Regional Creative Director for Middle East & Pakistan, BBDO, was named the 'South Asia Creative Person of the Year 2018'. This is the first time that anyone from Pakistan has been honoured in such a manner; his agency, BBDO Pakistan, received a Bronze award for Campaign Agency of the Year at the event. Rez has won over 100 awards in 2018 for the agency, including

Cannes Lions, Clios, and the coveted D&AD pencil. BBDO Pakistan won at every one of the 12 international award shows they entered in this year, and were named Agency of the Year at AD Stars, and were also the runner-up Agency of the Year at Dubai Lynx. Rez's team also won the first Glass Spike at Spikes Asia, in addition to 10 awards.

Campaign's Agency of the Year awards have taken place since the early nineties, and recognise inspiring leadership, management excellence, outstanding business performance, and other achievements in advertising and brand communications.

*Courtesy: Dawn*



## Taliban Appear Ready to Discuss Peace Talks, Except With Afghan Officials

KABUL, Afghanistan Representatives from the Taliban, the United States and several Asian countries gathered in the United Arab Emirates on Monday for what officials cautiously described as important meetings that could lead to formal talks to end the 17-year war in Afghanistan.

The optimism fostered by months of urgent American diplomacy was dampened by the Taliban's apparent refusal to meet with a delegation of the Afghan government, although Afghan officials said late Monday that they had not given up hope that the two sides would talk.

The Taliban said in a statement on Sunday that they would meet representatives of the United States as well as Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the United

Arab Emirates. Those countries, American allies that have varying levels of influence over the Taliban, have been at the center of a Trump administration push to help shape the peace process.

Afghan officials said late Monday that conversations to arrange a meeting were continuing. Senior officials met the other delegations and discussed the need for "direct engagement of the Afghan government with the Taliban," said the Afghan national security adviser, Hamdullah Mohib.

Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman, said that Taliban representatives had "no plans to meet and will not meet with the representatives of the Kabul administration."

The Taliban have long refused to



hold formal talks with the Afghan government. The militants have insisted on first brokering an agreement with the United States, which the group sees as the force that toppled their government in 2001.

The group seems to have shown more flexibility in recent weeks after a series of meetings with Zalmay Khalilzad, the American envoy assigned to bring everyone to the table.

Taliban representatives participated in a conference on Afghan peace hosted by Russia last month that was also attended by a delegation from the Afghan side.

In addition to meeting the Taliban on several occasions, Mr. Khalilzad has been visiting countries in the region and trying to persuade them to push the insurgents to the table.

*Courtesy: The New York Times*

## Five bridges open on Gilgit-Skardu road



Five bridges were opened on the under-construction Gilgit-Skardu road.

The 175-kilometer road is being reconstructed by the Frontier Works Organisation, which got the contract last year.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of Alam bridge, which connects Gilgit-Skardu road with Karakoram Highway, in Skardu, Commander FCNA Maj-Gen Ehsan Mehmood said that Gilgit-Baltistan was part of Pakistan and its people had unprecedented contributions and sacrifices for the defence and development of the country.

Acknowledging the sacrifices and services of GB, the force commander said that CPEC had further increased the region's importance.

He hoped that with execution of CPEC, there would be considerable socioeconomic development in every district of the region.

He reiterated that Pak Army would continue supporting the federal and Gilgit-Baltistan governments in resolving problems of the common people, besides assisting them in completion of ongoing development projects.

Gen Mehmood also lauded the role of FWO for completing mega development projects in the region.

On the occasion, FWO director general Maj-Gen Inaam Malik Haider said the important project would be completed within a record period.

After completion of the project, trade and tourism activities will get boost in Baltistan division, he added.

Senior minister Akbar Taban, education minister Ibrahim Sanai, GB Council Member Ashraf Sada, civil and military officials were also in attendance.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## Indian pilgrims perform rituals at Katas Raj

A grand reception was held for Indian pilgrims at the fabled site of Katas Raj on Tuesday, which was attended by 112 pilgrims from different states of India.

They arrived at Katas Raj, one of the holiest sites of Hindus, on Monday on a three-day visit.

The pilgrims were led by Shiv Partab Bajaj who has been regular visitor to Katas Raj for the last three decades.

Speaking on the occasion Mr Bajaj thanked Pakistan government for maintaining major holy sites of Hindus.

"This land is sacred to us and we are happy that Evacuee Trust Property Board of Pakistan is maintaining and preserving our fabled site," he said in an emotional tone.

Commenting on the plight of fabled pond which ran dry last summer Mr Bajaj said the pond had eight feet deep water which was enough for the pilgrims to get Ishnan (holy bath).

"We are thankful to Chief Justice of Pakistan who took notice of the drying up pond and we look forward to its permanent solution", Mr. Bajaj maintained.

The authorities are filling pond from three different tube-wells located in the vicinity of the pond.



"I am hopeful that the present Pakistani government would look into this issue and would allow more and more pilgrims to visit Katas Raj," he said.

Chairman Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) Tahir Ehsan stressed that cordial relations between Pakistan and India were inevitable for the collective development of the region.

"We are trying our best to maintain the religious sites of Hindus and Sikhs in their original shapes," he maintained and added that utmost arrangements had been made to accommodate the Indian pilgrims.

ETPB's Deputy Secretary Syed Faraz Abbas told that the complex would be ready in six months.

Deputy Commissioner Chakwal Abdul Sattar Esani welcomed Indian pilgrims and assured them that they would not have any problem during their stay at Katas Raj.

*Courtesy: Dawn*

## These artists highlight social issues and personal memories through their artwork

An exhibition featuring social malaise and personal memories opened at the Nomad Gallery.

Two young artists Mohsin Shafi and Saadia Hussain exhibited their works at No Man's Land. Their pieces were a combination of mixed media, photography, text, painting and collages that capture fleeting imagery from history, societal conflicts and the inner self.

The exhibition generates nostalgic narratives in both the personal and the collective imagination.

The curator of the exhibition and Nomad Gallery's director Nageen Hyat said: "Intrinsically linked, the forms in the both artists' work aim to create an interface between seemingly divergent understanding of assimilation and culture, reflecting a very personal ideology as well as a fluid sense of self, moving between text and image, the sacred, the mundane, and the profane."

Mr Shafi's work is a dialogue on social issues between the art and the viewer. With a master's from the National College of Arts in Lahore, he has practiced with mixed mediums, such as collages, installations, prints and photography, using multiple images with text in the background in hand-cut paper in synthetic frames.

In his 'Intermission' and 'Kaleidoscope' series, Mr Shafi subtly highlights the marginalisation and persecution of vulnerable segments of society, such as women, religious minorities and transgender people.

He told Dawn: "Art is an effective tool to reflect on social issues, class contradictions and the vanishing cultural heritages. With collective work and personal practice, I try



to reclaim and use public spaces which have been encroached upon by retrogressive forces."

Using his work, Mr Shafi deconstructs narratives about and stereotyping of women. In one part of the 'Kaleidoscope' series, he shows four men serving a woman holding a commanding posture, to depict feminism and the strength and empowerment of women.

'We Are Family', showing two clerics embracing each other and with lots of posters in the background with religious texts as are common during religious months and festivities, is a comment on the cultural and religious diversity which should be celebrated rather than exploited.



He uses worn out, invisible, small and ordinary objects and unassuming images in his art.

Mr Shafi said: "I exploit my unadulterated access to the deepest emotions embedded beneath the surface, only to explore the whispered secrets of dreams and long buried memories. This is my burden, my struggle constant, in hopes to validate the 'I.'"

In 'Inside James Bond' he questions the blurred edges between identity and the intentions of identity. "I investigate the dark recesses of the relevant human psyche, to explore a reality of ghouls and monsters. This I assume to be an effort to recreate my world, in a no man's land."

These artists highlight social issues

and personal memories through their artwork Ms Hussain's work includes paintings and photo construction in mixed media on digital print, and is based on family photographs and personal snapshots.

Courtesy: Dawn 'Four Soldiers' and 'Unknown Soldiers' contain images borrowed from acquaintances and even taken from social media to create the illusion of a complex reality.

She has also painted women in traditional royal dress and jewellery, and blurred images and spaces by overlapping figures to depict the trauma, love and resilience of women in patriarchal society in pieces such as 'Ladies with Love and Roses', 'The Wait' and 'The Centre Man'.

Ms Hussain's work is focused on translating the pictorial language and reinterpretation of photographs into her own visual vocabulary, Ms Hyat said.

"These are disturbing interpretations of familiar subjects, slumbering histories and buried traumas. These perceived images hence become facets of my current persona, both real and imagined," said Ms Hussain, who is a visiting professor at NCA Lahore where she also completed her masters.

Through a play with an image and text, she has attempted to communicate multiple interpretations of a narrative and the one true meaning. In doing so, she poses more questions than answers.

She said that for her, photography is way to tell a story and evoke a feeling, and her goal is to translate history into a story of which fantasy is an essential element.

Courtesy: Dawn

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