

Positive Post

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



Greenwich University
Pakistan - Mauritius

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.

Google pays tribute to Bano Qudsia on 92nd birthday



Google is celebrating Pakistani novelist, playwright and spiritualist Bano Qudsia's 92nd Birthday, on Saturday with a doodle.

Born on November 28, 1928 in Firozpur, British India, She was popularly known as Bano Aapa, which means Elder Sister.

Renowned for her message of love and hope, Qudsia earned enormous acclaim for Urdu classics like her television play Aadhi Baat and novel Raja Gidh.

She wrote 25 novels and founded her own magazine called Dastango. Some of her famous stories include Aatish-i-Zer-i-Paa, Aik Din, Amer Bail, Asay Pasay, Chahar Chaman, Chotaa Sheher Baray Log, Footpath ki Ghaas, Haasil Ghaat, and Hawa Kay

Naam.

Qudsia graduated from the Kinnaird College in Lahore and then joined the Government College University (Lahore) (GCU) to do her masters in Urdu literature which she completed in 1951.

She married writer Ashfaq Ahmed whom she had met at the Government College University in Lahore. The couple was considered inseparable in their social lives.

She was awarded Sitara-e-Imtiaz in 1983 and Hilal-e-Imtiaz in 2000 for her literary achievements

Bano Qudsia died at the age of 88 on February 4, 2017, at the Ittefaq Hospital in Lahore.

Courtesy: Saama

Sindh increases total marks for matric board exams to 1,100



The Sindh education board has increased the total marks for ninth and matric exams to 1,100 from 850.

There will be 550 marks for each grade now.

The matric board's research scheme of studies has prepared the model papers for both grades. According to

the matric board chairman, the model papers will help students and teachers in the preparation of exams. The papers have been prepared after consultations with senior private and government school teachers.

The new policy will be applicable for ninth grade from 2021, and from 2022 for 10th grade.

Courtesy: Saam

Exclusive: Stunt biker Marina Syed's journey to the big screen



Soon after the September 9 gang-rape of a woman on the Lahore-Sialkot Motorway, people began victim blaming and said the woman shouldn't have left her house at night.

Director Abu Aleeha's response to those people is his newest project Sheenogai.

The film has been written and directed by Abu Aleeha and stars newcomer Marina Syed, who rose to fame as a stunt biker.

She is a member of an all women biker club in Karachi called Rowdy Riders, where she teaches women how to ride motorcycles.

Her biking journey began in 2017, when she bought her first scooter on installments. She faced fierce opposition from her family, who sold the bike. She had to pay Rs30,000 to buy it back.

Syed then learnt to ride motorcycles without an instructor. "I have experienced so many physical

injuries because no one taught me how to do it," she told SAMAA Digital.

Five months later, she travelled from Karachi to Kashmir on a 200cc motorcycle. "When my confidence grew, I thought I should train other girls as well."

So how did she reach the silver screen? According to Syed, one of her students was a make-up artist and recommended her name for the film.

"She told me that I just had to ride a motorcycle in the film," Syed said, adding that she made it clear she didn't know how to act. "I didn't know what to do, but when I read the script, I realised that if I had to do it, I would have to understand the character," she explained.

Abu Aleeha and the film crew worked tirelessly for a month to make Syed understand the intricacies of acting.

In this video, Syed talks in detail about her journey from biking to being a movie star.

Courtesy: Saama



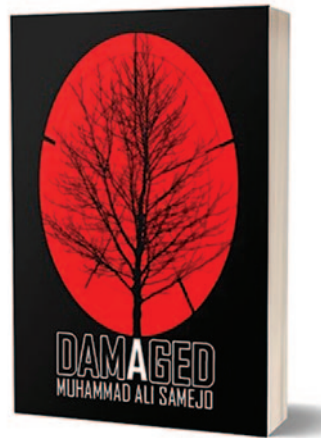
Pakistani author explores types of trauma in new book

The lack of conversation in society about people's fears, realities, past experiences, and mental health has inspired a Pakistani author to explore the topic in his new book, *Damaged*.

The 200-page anthology is an honest conversation about how our traumas never really escape us. "The fact that we don't have conversations about our traumas is what inspired me to write these stories," said Muhammad Ali Samejo while speaking to SAMAA Digital. "We don't talk about our fears, truths, and what has scarred our lives."

He remarked that people who are depressed often seek an escape button and remain guarded about their experiences. They don't want to talk about what's depressing them. "You cannot know you are feeling a certain way until you start talking about it."

With *Damaged*, Samejo hopes that people are able to confront their



fears. "The book has a lot to do with trauma," he remarked. "Some characters in the book are victims and others terrible, shallow humans who don't realise how destructive their intentions are."

The book can be ordered online on Auraq Publications or Amazon internationally. It costs Rs900.

In all the 15 short stories, the author explores the conversational style of

prose with discussions between two characters. Samejo believes that this style of prose is what makes the book different.

It features 30 characters that have been given the same amount of time and space to convey their stories. These characters could be your next-door neighbour, a morning show host, or a man you saw sitting in a café, with their own ways of coping with the damage. There are no right solutions, but only the best decisions, the author said.

The harrowing and life-changing conversations between the characters may be fictional but are grounded in reality.

The first story, titled Power, will introduce you to a psychopath who preys upon helpless women and keeps an album of his 'conquests'. But now he stands face-to-face with the person whose life he ruined, and realises only towards the end of their conversation that he no longer

holds the power he once cherished.

Talking about the publishing industry in Pakistan, Samejo said that as far as fiction is concerned, making a career out of it is difficult, but not impossible.

"Publishers hardly consider new authors even when they have a compelling story," he said. "Having yourself an audience at hand may lead to publishers to notice your potential."

He advised aspiring writers to create their Facebook and Instagram pages to share their work and reach as many people as possible.

Samejo is an English-language instructor at Berlitz Pakistan. He was the head of English Prose at Pakistan Bloggers, Writers, Readers and Poets, where he has been sharing stories from his soon to be completed novels *The Legends of Karachi* and *The Darkly Tales*.

Courtesy: Saama

81 Pakistanis Among World's Top 2% Scientists

Eighty one (81) Pakistani academics have figured in the list of the world's top two per cent scientists in a global list issued by the United States' Stanford University. The global list, compiled by Prof John Ioannidis and his team, carries names of 159,683 people from all scientific disciplines.

All these authors have been selected on the basis of an international evaluation of their research papers and classified based on career-long citation impact until the end of 2019 as well as for their citation impact in a single year (2019).

Eighty one (81) Pakistani scientists have figured in the list for their career-long citation impact while 243 Pakistani scientists have been included for citation impact in a single year. A report on this list has been recently published in PLOS Biology.

As many as 11 teachers of Islamabad's Quaid-i-Azam University



(QAU) have figured among the top two per cent researchers. Five scientists from the University of Haripur (UoH), including its vice chancellor, are also included in the list.

The QAU academics whose names have appeared in the list include Prof Bilal Haider Abbasi of Biotechnology, Zabta Khan Shinwari and Mushtaq Ahmad of Plant Sciences, Amir Ali Shah of Microbiology and Riffle Nasim

Malik of Environment Sciences.

The other names include Rashid Khan of Biochemistry, Masood Khan of Mathematics, Afzal Shah and Aamer Saeed of Chemistry and Abdul Haq of Statistics.

The UoH academics who figure in the list include UoH Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Anwar-ul-Hassan Gilani, Dr Khalid Zaman, Dr Hashim, Dr Shah Fahad and Dr

Mohammed Farooq.

UoH Vice Chancellor Prof Gilani is the only serving VC in Pakistan who has appeared in this list and who has been conferred three civil awards including Hilal-i-Imtiaz.

Three professors of the University of Punjab also figure in the list.

These are Prof Dr Muhammad Sharif of Nuclear and Particle Physics, Prof Dr Khalid Mahmood of Economics and Management Sciences and Prof Dr Muhammad Akram of Artificial Intelligence.

Talking to APP, QAU Academic Staff Association General Secretary Prof Dr Bilal Abbasi, whose name is also included in the list, said it is an honour for the entire country that a number of Pakistani scientists working in different universities have been named in top two percent scientists across the globe.

Courtesy: The Express Tribune

UNDP, Jazz to Work Together for Promoting Youth-Led Social Innovation in Pakistan

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pakistan and Jazz have signed a funding agreement worth USD 400,000 to promote youth-led social innovation in Pakistan through a series of SDG Bootcamps across the country.

The training bootcamps will engage 800 social entrepreneurs in Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, and ICT/GB/AJK. Given the current COVID-19 crisis, one of the key focus areas will be to find innovative solutions to address the challenges posed by the pandemic. The most promising social venture ideas will be provided seed money to start their initiatives. During the event, Amir Goraya, Assistant Resident Representative of Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit, UNDP Pakistan, said, "There is a need to enhance the ecosystem of social entrepreneurship in Pak-



istan as it creates employment, addresses societal issues and contributes towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. The partnership between UNDP and Jazz presents an exciting opportunity to promote economic empowerment of vulnerable youth. Together, we will facilitate young entrepreneurs to enter this space and launch their creative ideas."

According to Syed Fakhar Ahmed, Chief Corporate & Regulatory Affairs Officer at Jazz, "Jazz supports various sustainable initiatives to strengthen the digital ecosystem and empower young people to make a positive difference through increased access to education, digital skills and social entrepreneurship. Through this initiative, we are aiming to further strengthen the

startup ecosystem and provide young people with opportunities to lead societal change and increase employment avenues."

This partnership is aligned with Pakistan's 2025 Vision with Jazz continuing its commitment to developing digital skills and literacy among the youth.

UNDP, through its Kamyab Jawan –Youth Empowerment Programme, is supporting the Government in developing innovative and sustainable entry points for social engagement and economic empowerment of young Pakistanis. One of the key components of the Programme is to support youth entrepreneurship which not only empowers young people economically, but also spurs change and ensures inclusive development of the country.

Courtesy:Pro Pakistan

Pakistani star Urwa Hocane And Mikhaal Zulfiqar Looking Absolutely Gorgeous in Mughal era bridal outfit



or some days now, news has been circulating on social media that Urwa Hocane and Farhan Saeed parted ways. But the couple has neither confirmed nor denied the news. People are shocked when they hear this sudden news.

If we talk about her age at that time,

she is 29 years old. On the other hand, she has taken a break from working in dramas and is currently busy producing her own film. And even after 3 years of marriage, she is deprived of the blessing of children. Urwa Hocane started her acting career by hosting. And then she started getting work in dramas. And

then, luckily, she started getting work in films. And her younger sister Mawra Hocane is also considered one of the top actresses.

Urwa Hocane and Mikhaal Zulfiqar's photoshoot for Fahad Hussyn's new

bridal outfit is going viral on social media. You will definitely appreciate seeing a new concept. So let's take a look at some of the highlights of the photoshoot.

Courtesy:ShowBiz Pakistan



PAF launches serial production of latest JF-17 Thunder Block III

The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) on Wednesday formally announced serial production of the most advanced variant of JF-17 Thunder Block III – a 4.5-generation aircraft with far more advanced technology than IAF's Rafael jets.

A ceremony at the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex, Kamra also witnessed the handing over of 14 state-of-the-art indigenously developed dual seater JF-17B Thunder Block-II fighter jets to the air force. On the other hand, Pakistan Navy Air Defence Units demonstrated their combat readiness through live firing of surface to air missiles (SAMs).

Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan, while addressing the handing over the ceremony of the newly-built dual seater JF-17B Thunder jets here at the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC) Kamra, termed the inclusion of jets in national fleet as a significant milestone achieved in the history of the country.

He said the JF-17 Thunder was proved as a battle tested aircraft during successful expression of mastery in Operation Swift Retort against IAF intrusion of territorial sovereignty on February 27, 2019.

The ceremony also marked the announcement of serial production of PAF's most advanced 4.5 generation JF-17 Thunder Block III jets. The air chief commended the in-time completion of the project by the Aircraft Manufacturing Factory (AMF) team of the PAC involved in the development of the advance generation of the dual seater JF-17B Thunder and Block-III jets version. "The year of 2019 has been very challenging due to the COVID-19 pandemic as it disturbed life all over the world. It also inflicted serious impacts on the PAC project of JF-17B Thunder Block-III as the entire complex has remained under lockdown."

Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar proudly said that PAC Kamra had upheld its traditions despite the most challenging times of the pandemic. "I would like to commend



the entire team and PAC leadership including chairman PAC and Managing Director AMF for their concerted efforts to meet the project deadlines." PAC, he said, was the backbone of PAF operational readiness and had displayed their capabilities to meet challenges with limited resources at the optimum level.

The air chief also extended his gratitude to Ministry of Defence Production and Chinese Aviation Industry for their continuous support.

"The dual seat version of JF-17B and the production of Block-III marks the achievement of a significant milestone as it will play an important and significant role in geostrategic milieu due to the technology installed in the modern aircraft." He mentioned that the project's completion was not possible without the assistance of Chinese experts, engineers and technicians and this project had further solidified the Pak-China friendship and bilateral defence ties. The air chief acknowledged the role of media at all levels including print, electronic and social media for highlighting Pak-China friendship and collaboration under CPEC and JF-17B Thunder production. He urged the media to further promote the Pak-China ties and collaboration in a positive manner.

"PAF has demonstrated its capabilities time and again and is ever ready to thwart any aggression of the

enemy with a crushing response," the air chief expressed his resolve.

PAC Chairman Air Marshal Syed Nauman Ali briefed the participants over the project details and highlighted that JF-17 Thunder would be the shining symbol of cooperation between Pakistan and China. He said due to COVID-19 lockdown in PAC, technicians and experts completed the project in due time despite many odds where the Chinese experts supported extraordinarily PAC for meeting the programme targets. Air Marshal Nauman resolved that the PAC would stand committed to fulfill the sacred duty of augmenting fighting force and strength to defend the country's aerial sovereignty.

Speaking on the occasion, Chinese Ambassador Nong Rong said that PAC's successful acquiring of the capacity to build JF-17B Thunder Block-III aircraft has set up a perfect model of Pak-China friendship. "Pakistan has become self-sufficient in developing JF-17 Thunder and an advance fighter aircraft producing country in the world. JF-17 Thunder has finally become the backbone of Pakistan's defence." He hoped that it would further strengthen the defence ties between Pakistan and China. "Pakistan and China's close collaboration will bring more success in the future."

The PAC has developed the capacity to produce advance 4.5 generation JF-17B Thunder Block-III jets. The latest JF-17B was equipped with

long range superior radar system and advanced precise firing weapon that gave it a cutting edge over IAF-acquired Rafael jets' famous vast range to detect airborne targets.

The Chinese Aviation industry representatives addressed the ceremony via video messages and PAC school-children also presented a national song whereas the air chief visited the facility and observed the newly built aircraft.

Meanwhile, in an impressive display of firepower, Pakistan Navy Air Defence Units demonstrated their combat readiness through live firing of surface to air missiles (SAMs).

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, who was also present, expressed his complete satisfaction on the operational readiness of Pakistan Navy and its preparedness to defend the national maritime interests. During the Live Weapon Firing, the launched missiles successfully engaged the intended targets, the spokesman of Pakistan Navy said.

He said that successful firings had re-affirmed Pakistan Navy's war fighting capability and combat potential. The naval chief commended the officers and men for their commitment and professionalism. He emphasised on continued vigilance to thwart any aggression against the sea frontiers and provide a befitting response to any misadventure by the adversary.

Courtesy: The News

Half of revenue being used for debt repayment



Prime Minister Imran Khan on Sunday said the government has very little left to spend on the people because the half of revenue collections is being used for debt repayment. In a Facebook post, the Prime Minister said he is well aware of the needs of the people but

when corrupt rule the country, the entire system under which peoples' needs should be served is destroyed. He said, if we don't punish such people, what kind of examples we are setting for our children.

Courtesy: The Nation

\$10m for Pakistan 'gender programs'? 'America First' trends in furious response to pork-filled Covid 'relief' bill



The text of the latest COVID-19 stimulus bill has been posted and Americans are noticing more than just the small portion that bestows them with \$600 checks. In fact, the long-awaited and much-demanded stimulus checks, to help Americans deal with the pandemic's economic effects, make up a drop in the pork-filled bucket of taxpayer-funded handouts. Along with funding for

coronavirus vaccine distribution and Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans, there is an eye-popping array of outrageous spending – and funding to other nations. From climate change to horse racing, Congress has left no pork behind in the massive 5,593-page document that makes the \$600 stimulus checks, versus the \$1,200 checks in the initial

Heralding a next generation of rule of law reforms through the roadmap in Balochistan

December 2020 - Quetta, Pakistan: UNODC is privileged to build on its strategic partnership with the provincial Government of Balochistan through the generous support of the British High Commission, which has offered the impetus to take forward the next generation of rule of law reforms through the implementation of the Rule of Law (RoL) Roadmap in Balochistan. The Project is designed with the vision of bringing the criminal justice institutions in Balochistan at par with the global best practices.

The phenomenal progress made by the RoL Roadmap Project in the most fragile and conflict-sensitive province of Pakistan was unanimously recognized in the 4th Steering Committee stock take held in Quetta on 16 December 2020. With the PC-1 in place, the Rule of Law Roadmap received accolades of appreciation from stakeholders, acknowledging it as the flagship Project of the Government of Balochistan (Gob) that enjoys a high-level commitment by the political and administrative leadership through the allocation of PKR 300 million in the current fiscal year for its implementation.

The roadmap offers a governance



platform to align the work and enhance performance of Criminal Justice Institutions through applying a results-based approach based on evidence to inform policy decisions. Driven by this concept, UNODC has offered technical support to the GoB, working in close collaboration with the Home Office in Balochistan to establish the governance structure, which comprises of the Steering Committee (SC), Delivery Unit (DU) and the Technical Working Groups (TWGs). This ensures robust management of interdependencies amongst CJIs through cultivating a collaborative mindset for policy-making and interdepartmental cooperation to deliver efficient and effective services to citizens.

UNODC's Representative, Jeremy Milsom appreciated the momen-

tum and urged the stakeholders, through the platform of the Steering Committee, to continue maintaining a forward-looking approach to deliver this exemplary project which has been a source of learning for other provincial rule of law roadmap chapters. Mr. Ziaullah Langove, Minister Home & Tribal Affairs, reiterated the commitment

of the GoB in making the rule of law reforms meaningful and sustainable.

The findings of the impact survey on citizens' perception and baseline data were presented during the meeting. They provide a yardstick for criminal justice institutions to measure their performance and progress against the RoL roadmap's provincial targets.

In short, the Rule of Law Roadmap has made tremendous strides and with the successful conclusion of the 4th stock taking and realization of PC1, the seeds are planted for setting the course of the criminal justice sector along a transformative journey of evidence-led policymaking and service delivery.

Courtesy: www.unodc.org



Mahira Khan and Marina Khan's message this wedding season has our hearts

"There is a line I wrote which Marina delivers: today the heart finally allowed me to live. That sums up what we wanted to say."

'There is a right time and a certain age for marriage.'

Such is the idea we've heard most of the people in our society preach. Marry early, so you can adjust in a new family. Marry young, to safeguard your deteriorating beauty. Nevertheless, marry in and around your 20s.

However, Mahira Khan doesn't seem to agree. This winter season (or wedding season in Pakistan, as we call it), the Raees superstar collaborated with the Dhoop Kinare legend Marina Khan to refresh our memories with the concept of companionship one that transgresses all barriers of age and time.

"I hope you all enjoy this I hope we can all celebrate our hearts and the



choices it makes," said the Humsafar star, as she went on to post the two-minute clip of the festivity, having us all warm and fuzzy.

"There is a line I wrote which Marina delivers: Aaj is dil ne mujhe jeenay ki ijaazat de di (today, the heart finally allowed me to live).

That sums up what we wanted to say this Mashaadi," she added, as the video celebrated love and union in all its glory.

Like us, many took to appreciate the refreshing concept, admiring the simplicity of how it was done with very little words, yet, with so much ease.

The video has been directed by Shehrazade Sheikh and styled by Maha Rizvi, and the beautiful outfits were courtesy Sania Maskatiya with Ali Javeri responsible for the traditional jewellery, local brand Miaasa for the shoes.

Music for the video was done by Azaan Sami Khan.

Celebrating love, loneliness, togetherness, support and most importantly, the reversal of roles filled with courage, we can't help but surely agree, this was a beautiful concept giving us the reminder we collectively need: "celebrate choice".

Courtesy:Image.dawn.com

Welcoming a New Year at an Ancient Festival in Pakistan

Chawmos, a festival of Pakistan's tiny Kalash community, is a portrait in contrasts: solemn ritual and joyous dancing, gender segregation and public flirtation, togetherness and isolation.



Members of the Kalash, a polytheist community of 4,000, dancing and singing during Chawmos, a New Year festival, in Balanguru, a village in Pakistan's Rumbur Valley.

RUMBUR, Pakistan In a remote valley in northern Pakistan, hemmed in by sheer rock walls and high pastures, members of a tiny community gathered.

The Kalash are a group of about 4,000 people who live in the mountains of the Hindu Kush, where they practice an ancient polytheistic faith. Each year, they come together for Chawmos, a New Year festival that coincides with the winter solstice and is marked by dance, animal sacrifice and highly prescribed roles for men and women.

The two-week festival is a portrait in contrasts: snow and fire, solemn ritual and frenzied activity, gender segregation and public flirtation, community and isolation.

While the coronavirus has forced the world to adopt social distancing, the Kalash have practiced being a community in isolation for millenniums.

The Kalash, whose wooden houses cling to the craggy hillsides of three valleys in Pakistan's often unruly northwest, are the country's smallest minority group. The overwhelming majority of Pakistan's more than 200 million people practice Islam.

Courtesy:New York Times

China to provide 1M+ doses of virus vaccine to Pakistan



China assured Pakistan that Beijing will provide more than one million doses of COVID-19 vaccine to Islamabad for emergency use.

This came in a phone talk between Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, according to a statement by Pakistan's Foreign Ministry.

Qureshi said that Pakistan had approved Sinopharm vaccine for emergency use in Pakistan and expressed hope for its early availability from China.

Responding to Qureshi, Wang said China would work to provide over

one million doses of the vaccine to Pakistan for emergency use.

Earlier Thursday, Pakistan government decided to purchase 1.2 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine from Chinese state-owned company Sinopharm.

The two foreign ministers also discussed the regional security, bilateral issues including progress of multi-billion China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Wang also extended an invitation to Qureshi to visit China at his earliest convenience, which the latter accepted.

Courtesy:AsiaPacific

These Pakistanis are on Forbes Asia's 100 Digital Stars list



Forbes Asia's inaugural list of top celebrities across the Asia-Pacific region includes Pakistani actors Mahira Khan and Aiman Khan, and singer Atif Aslam. They have taken the digital world by storm. Advertisement



The Forbes Asia's 100 Digital Stars list highlights singers, musicians, and film and TV stars who have garnered millions of followers across their social media platforms, making them as famous online as they are on the stage or screen.



Forbes says that it spotlighted those celebs who managed to remain active using social media, interacted with their fans, raised awareness about the coronavirus outbreak and inspired optimism. These individuals used their fame to help others.

It says that Mahira uses her Instagram and Facebook accounts to raise awareness about mental health issues, violence against women and breast cancer.

Aslam has been asking his fans in Pakistan to stay home to contain the COVID-19 spread. Forbes believes that Aslam's "Asma-ul-Husna" that he released in May revived hope during the pandemic. It has got over 22 million YouTube views.

On the other hand, 21-year-old Aiman is the most-followed Pakistani celebrity on Instagram. She has nearly 8 million followers.

Indian celebrities that made to the list include Akshay Kumar, Shah Rukh Khan, Alia Bhatt, Amitabh Bachan, Hrithik Roshan, Neha Kakkar, Shahid Kapoor, Madhuri Dixit, Katrina Kaif, Anushka Sharma and Shreya Ghoshal.

Courtesy: Samaa

Who was the most-searched person in Pakistan in 2020?

Pakistan searched the most for the big cricket events in 2020, which will go down in recent history as the most epic fail of a year. As you already know, the number 2 most searched word on Google was the C word (Hint: it is linked to vaccine).

Every year Uncle Google treats us to a snapshot of who we are as Pakistan. He is too miserly to actually give us real-time trending searches (more important countries get the privilege) but we can pull the top 10 by December when it releases the data.



Much to our surprise, and delight, when we explored the No. 4 most-searched keyword, Google Classroom, across Pakistan's cities, it turned out to be: Wah! This was followed by the kids in Bhangril, just at the edge of Islamabad. The kids in Quetta searched for Google Classroom the least. When Google put together data for Sindh's cities, it appears that this was enough to rank it at the top region for this keyword search.

Courtesy: Samaa

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