Special Feature

An overview of Pakistan-Philippines relations

he Philippines established diplomatic relations with Pakistan on September 8, 1949 through the opening of a Philippine Consulate in Pakistan. This was followed by the opening of the Philippine Embassy in Karachi in 1956. In May 1957, Pakistan's then Prime Minister Husseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy made an official visit to the Philippines. This was reciprocated by President Diosdado Macapagal in July 1962. During the administration of former President Corazon Aquino, Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo made an official visit to the Philippines in May 1988. In 1989, President Aquino, on two occasions, held bilateral talks with the late Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto who was able to visit the Philippines in 1995 as a guest of former President Fidel Ramos. In 1997, the gesture was returned by President Fidel V. Ramos, only the second Philippine Head of State to visit Pakistan almost 40 years after the first state visit of President Macapagal. State Visit of Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf to the Philippines took place on April 18 to 20 2005.

During 2005 visit by Pakistan's President, some agreements were signed namely; a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation to Combat Terrorism and Certain Other Crimes; Visa Waiver Agreement for Diplomatic Passport Holders; Cultural Exchange Program for 2005 to 2009; and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Philippine Trading International Corporation (PITC) and the United Marketing on the Importation of Medicines from Pakistan. President Musharraf and President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo agreed to cooperate against terrorism and to promote interfaith dialogue. On the 40th Anniversary of Al-Fateh Revolution of Libya, in September 2009 President Arroyo met Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani held a meeting in Tripoli.

Consultative mechanism

Both countries have a Policy Consultations Talks mechanism-4th round of which was held in Islamabad in early 2018 during the visit by Undersecretary Foreign Affairs Enrique Manalo to Islamabad. On March 8, 1997, an agreement was signed by both countries to create a forum for Policy Consultations at the level of senior officials. The Policy Consultation Meeting serves as a forum for the DFA and the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss bilateral, regional and multilateral issues, present the political and economic policies of both governments, coordinate joint efforts, explore new areas for cooperation, and facilitate the conclusion of bilateral agreements.

Economic cooperation

The Philippines and Pakistan signed two economic agreements, namely the Philippines-Pakistan Trade Agreement and the Philippines-Pakistan Agreement for the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investment, on September 29, 1961 and April 23,1999 in Manila, respectively.

RP-Pakistan Joint Economic Commission (JEC)

During the 2nd RP-Pakistan Policy Consultations held last April 1, 2004, both sides agreed to rejuvenate the trade and investment relations between the Philippines and Pakistan through an RP-Pakistan Joint Economic Commission or JEC at the Ministerial. The first JEC also met for the first time in 2018.

Philippines-Pakistan Trade Relations

Bilateral Trade in 2020 totaled \$154 million out of which Pakistan's share in exports to the Philippines stood at \$120 million. There was a decrease of 10 percent in trade volume compared to 2019 figures, mainly due to Covid-19. The highest trade balance a decade earlier stood at \$74 million in 2011 which has more than doubled in the past few years.

Top exports to Pakistan include garments, paper products, cosmetics, dairy products, processed fruits, coconut products, tobacco, electronic components and machineries, iron, steel, cement and chemicals. Top imports from Pakistan include housewares, Textiles, processed foods, dairy products, marine products, fresh foods, tobacco, textile yarns and twines, and industrial products.

Philippine-Pakistan Joint Business Council

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) of the Philippines specifically the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion initiated the establishment of the Joint Business Council of which an agreement has already been signed by federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Some Important Bilateral Agreements

- The Air Transport Services Agreement signed on July 16, 1949;
- Treaty of Friendship signed on January 3, 1951;
- Cultural Agreement signed on August 15, 1961;
- Trade Agreement signed on September 29, 1961;
- Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes and Income signed on February 22, 1980;
- Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Interior and Local Government of the Philippines and the Ministry of Interior of Pakistan signed on December 15, 1995;
- the Memorandum of Understanding between the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute (PNRI) and the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) in the Field of Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy signed on March 8, 1997;
- Memorandum of
 Understanding between the
 Philippine International
 Trading Corporation (PITC)
 and United Marketing on the
 Importation of Medicines from
 Pakistan.

Of late, MoU on Agriculture has been signed between the two countries in 2018. Likewise, MoU on Defense Cooperation is under active consideration between the two countries.

Associations of Pakistanis in the Philippines

i) The Philippine-Pakistan Business Council (PPBC)

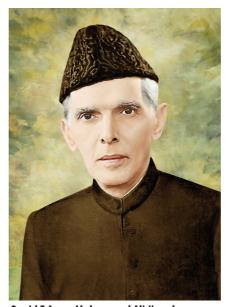
The PPBC is a non-stock, nonprofit association which envisions itself as one of the prime movers of growth on the Philippines and Pakistan trade relations. The Council intends to establish a strong channel of communications and strengthened network linkages with prospective business counterparts in Pakistan through the organization of events such as trade promotion conferences and seminars, exchange of business missions, participation in trade among others. Moreover, the Council aims to foster friendship and camaraderie among the business of the two countries. The PPBC was established towards the latter part of 2003. It was finally launched in September 2004.

ii) Pakistan and Philippines Friendship Association Inc.

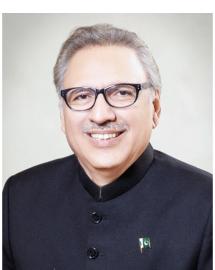
This is an Association of Pakistani businessmen and entrepreneurs residing in the Philippines (mainly in Manila and Subic Bay) which has been registered with the host Government's S&E Commission on January 15, 2021. It aims are evident from its title; to promote friendship, people to people contacts between the two countries as well as contribute in charitable causes as per the norms and laws of the host government and promotion of Pakistani culture and awareness.

iii) Pakistan Welfare Association

This is yet another newly established Association of Pakistanis living in various parts of the entire Philippines. It is purely non-political and non-profit entity formed, for the purpose of assisting Pakistani diaspora in the Philippines in distress and assisting them in settling down well as also for help in legal matters so as to promote goodwill, peopleto-people contacts, promotion of



Quaid E Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Founder of Pakistan



President Dr. Arif Alvi



Prime Minister Imran Khan

Pakistani culture and awareness about Pakistan. This Association has been registered on February 2, 2021. The Association also distributed rations during the last year's Covid's acute phase among deserving Pakistani and Filipino families.

Of late, PWA organized a welcome reception for the newly arrived Pakistan Ambassador in the Philippines His Excellency Dr. Imtiaz A. Kazi on February 5, 2021 which was attended, among others, by senior official from Law Enforcement Authorities/ Salam Center of the Philippines. Pakistani community also expressed their solidarity on this occasion as February 5 marks Kashmir Solidarity Day for Pakistani and Kashmiris under illegal occupation in IIOJ&K.

Diaspora/the Expat Community in Pakistan and the Philippines

There are an estimated 2,000 plus Filipinos in Pakistan which includes few hundred permanent residents married to Pakistani nationals, around 1000 documented working visa holders (in IT, hotel industry, nurses, therapists, religious missionaries, those employed in textile mills and road construction projects, and workers from UN and other international organizations) and some irregular/undocumented residents. Likewise, there is a matching number of Pakistani diaspora well settled in the Philippines (many of them married to local Filipinos) promoting goodwill and trade between the two countries.

Message by His Excellency Dr. Imtiaz A. Kazi Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

THE 23rd March which in Pakistan is referred to as Pakistan Day is celebrated by all Pakistanis including those living abroad with great zeal and fervor. On this Day 81 years ago, the Muslims of Indian sub-continent in a gathering held in the historic city of Lahore under the banner of All India Muslim League, resolved to achieve a separate homeland where they could live in accordance with their religious values, culture and traditions in a just and free society. The event gave renewed vigor to the political struggle of the Muslims of India which culminated in attaining an independent State under the dynamic and inspiring leadership of Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on August 14, 1947.

While commemorating today the 81st Anniversary of Pakistan Day, I feel proud to feel that despite numerous challenges from within and outside, Pakistan has emerged as a strong, stable, dynamic and viable country showing progress in diverse fields, be it its pluralistic democratic institutions, judiciary, armed forces, education, economy, science or sports! I take this opportunity to congratulate all Pakistanis in the Philippines on this happy and momentous occasion. Though having chosen to living far away from their home country, they are serving as a great bridge in people-to-people contacts with the brotherly country of the Philippines. They are also a source of introducing Pakistan's quality products in fruits, pharmaceuticals, sports etc. in the Philippines thus becoming a source and contributor toward the overall progress and prosperity of not only Pakistan, but also of the Philippines. In fact, they are the true ambassadors of Pakistan in promoting and further strengthening our bilateral ties.

Pakistan accords great importance to its relations with the Philippines. Bilateral relations between our two countries date back to 1949. Spanning over several decades our relations have flourished in diverse fields. There is a reservoir of goodwill both in the public and private sector for Pakistan. Since my arrival in Manila five months ago, I have personally experienced this goodwill and am given the impression that Filipino brothers and sisters and quiet a sizeable number now living/married in Pakistan have experienced the same cordiality during their interaction and stay in Pakistan.

Of course, the global challenge of Covid-19 has given set back to the programs and speed that was expected in inter-state relations on a global scale, I am particularly excited to apprise the readers of this message that Pakistan-Philippines' biulateral trade in the year 2020 was \$156 million which is slightly lesser than the 2019 figures of \$172 million. As usual, three-fourths of this volume is the exports from Pakistan to the Philippines. The Kinnow season which is about culminate witnessed an increase to the tune of 1500 containers this year compared usual traffic of 1000 containers from Pakistan. We have witnessed import of cement and minerals coming from Pakistan as the largest import item, followed by our competitively p[riced but quality pharma products, fruits and textiles to the Philippines (US\$ 120 million worth exports to the Philippines in 2020). Rice is another commodity that friendship.

can create its niche in the Philippines

market.
Likewise,
we are
importers
of primary
material
products,
plants,
cigarette
paper, food
preparations
etc. from the



Philippines (to the tune of \$36 million in 2020). While presenting my Credentials at the Malacanang Presidential Palace on the Honourable President Rodrigo Roa Duterte in December last year, the President also spoke of the Philippines' desire to further promote our bilateral trade for which there is exists lot of potential and scope.

Foreign Minister of Pakistan Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi has launched the Economic Diplomacy Drive and all Pakistan embassies abroad have been tasked to focus on increasing bilateral trade and investment relations. My own interactions with officials in the Department of Trade and Industry have been useful and both countries can achieve tremendous surge in bilateral economic ties once Covid-19 eases out.

Philippines forms an important component of our 'Vision East Asia Policy' which aims at enhancing our relations with the whole region in diverse fields. I am sure, during my stay in this beautiful country, we will witness increased exchanges between the two countries at different levels. We look forward to keep the public and private sector both engaged for enhanced cooperation and fruitful bilateral relations between our two countries in the years ahead.

Already our cooperation in the Agriculture sector has witnessed progress following the conclusion of MoU sometime ago. Yet another MoU on Defence Cooperation is under active consideration between our two countries. We look forward to have sharing of our best practices and countering extremism and violence with the Salam Centre of the Philippines National Police. Pakistan has achieved considerable success in curbing militancy, extremism and terrorism during its more than a decade long war on terror and is willing to share its experiences and best practices with the global community in the long-term interest of regional and global peace and security. I would also wish and work to see that someday twinning of Makati/ Manila with the Karachi City of Pakistan takes place to bring our cosmopolitan cultures together. In the end, I would like to express my

sincere thanks to the leadership, Government and the people of the Philippines for their support and cooperation in the promotion of friendly relations between our two countries. My best wishes for our own compatriots living and working in the Philippines in promoting bonds of brotherhood with an important Asean member country. Maraming Salamat at Mabuhay! Long-live Pakistan- Philippines friendship.

AMBASSADOR IMTIAZ AHMAD KAZI

Strengthening Philippines-Pakistan ties amid critical times

BY ARLO CUSTODIO

WHEN Pakistani Ambassador Imtiaz Ahmad Kazi presented his credentials in Malacañang in November last year, President Rodrigo Duterte remarked that trade relations between the Philippines and Pakistan must be strengthened.

"Let me extend our military-to-military exchanges and sharing of intelligence and best practices, particularly in countering terrrorism and violece," the Filipino president also told the Pakistani ambassador on their meeting.

For his part, Kazi expressed admiration for Duterte's resolute actions in ending the war in Marawi.

"We, in Pakistan, admire the consistent endeavors of your excellency toward restoration of peace and stability in the Mindanao region, which has brought increased trust and stability among the stakeholders, and significant prosperity for the people of the region and the country," Kazi said.

Duterte declared martial law in Mindanao in 2017, following a five-month siege of the country's Islamic city by Daeshaffiliated militants.

Previous postings Holding degrees in M

Holding degrees in MBBS, LLB, MA and Master of International Public Policy (MIPP), Kazi joined the Pakistan Foreign Service in 1989 at 24. He served at the headquarters as section officer in 1991, then as director, and becoming director general from 2015 to 2016.

In between those home assignments

In between those home assignments, he served in the country's missions in Iran, remaining on deputation with the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in Tehran from 1998 to 2000; Paris, France; Doha, Qatar; and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He was also a member of the National Defence University directing staff.

From 2012 to 2015, he was consul general in Frankfurt, Germany and

ambassador to Kazakhstan from August 2018 to October 2020.

Bilateral relations at the forefront Known foremost for its pharmaceutical and textile industries, Pakistan has been a good partner to the Philippines since it gained independence from British rule in 1947, with the Southeast Asian country among the first nations to recognize it with diplomatic relations established with a consulate in 1949.

After peaking in 2011 with a total trade worth US\$128 million, per record of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the figures declined and Ambassador Kazi wants the numbers buoyed back even amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We need more of Philippines' heavy machineries, auto parts and electronic components," he said, noting that he and his wife are very much at home in Manila since they find everything they need for home and cuisine like they were in Karachi, Pakistan's largest metropolitan area.

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, both governments had been cooperating with Pakistani nationals stranded in the Philippines accommodated on flights chartered for the purpose of bringing home nationals from Pakistan.

There are around 3,000 Pakistanis in the Philippines but could be more as there are those who never contacted the embassy in Manila with some already married to Filipinos.

Meanwhile, there are also around 2,500 registered Filipinos in Pakistan – composed mostly of professionals such as engineers in the IT industry, nurses, hotel staff, missionaries, workers in the textile mills and road constuction projects as well domestic helpers – a number of whom have married Pakistani nationals.

"Those married to Pakistani nationals automatically enjoy the benefits of a Pakistani citizen," Kazi informed.

Investment opportunities under China Pakistan Economic Corridor



RESOLUTION DAY

EZIFLY TRAVEL
INTERNATIONAL INC. IATA



Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project

CHINA-PAKISTAN Economic

The project is expected to positively impact the lives of millions not only in China and Pakistan but also in South, Central and West Asia by providing regional connectivity. For Pakistan,

CPEC is not merely an economic venture. It is an initiative to build peaceful and interconnected region with a vision of shared prosperity for all countries of the region.

The major features of the CPEC are a deep-water port at Gawadar in southern Pakistan, energy and infrastructure development projects and industrial zones. China Pakistan Economic Corridor is journey toward economic regionalization in the globalized world. It

founded peace, development, and win-win model for all of

The BRI, of which CPEC is a part of is expected to be completed in 2030 connecting Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia and South Asian region. It will spur enormous economic activity and people-to-people contacts across regions.

China Pakistan Economic Corridor is beacon of hope for the reigon, harbinger of peace, development and economic growth.



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan in Beijing on Nov. 2, 2018.

Congratulations

to the

PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN

on the occasion of its

81ST NATIONAL DAY



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Military showcases might on Pakistan Day All government buildings creation of an independent state creation creation

WHILE Pakistan celebrates Independence Day on August 14, March 23 is celebrated as Yaum-e-Pakistan or Pakistan Resolution Day/Republic Day in commemoration of the Lahore Resolution passed in 1940, as well as the adoption of the first constitution of Pakistan in transition of the Dominion of Pakistan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on March 23, 1956.

With more than 220 million population – the world's fifth most populous country after China, India, United States and Indonesia – Pakistan has shown its military might every year when the National Day is celebrated, along with civilian parades in the capital city of Islamabad and provincial capitals with gun salutes.

All government buildings display the flag and other noted structures like the Lahore Railway Station, WAPDA House and the Provincial Assembly Building are decorated with lights, buntings and banners.

During the day, the head of state, in this case, President Arif Alvi (since 2018), confers national awards and presidential medals to outstanding Pakistanis. Wreaths are also laid at the mausoleumsof Muhammad Iqbal in Lahore and Muhammad Ali Jinnah in Karachi.

History of the celebration

Rejecting the concept of a United India, the Lahore Resolution was passed with the proposal of

creation of an independent state for Muslims. This paved the way for the establishment of Pakistan on August 14, 1947 as the world's first Islamic republic.

Government offices, banks, post offices, educational institutions and businesses are closed during the National Day.

However, with the Covid-19 pandemic affecting every corner of the world since last year, celebrations are tempered with the enforcement of health and safety protocols. Latest figures show Pakistan has successfully brought down the cases from its 6,533 daily average in June to 2,616 third week of March.

As of March 20, total number cases is 623,000 with recoveries of 580,000 and 13,799 deaths.

Pakistan – a country of ancient civilizations and modern Islamic culture

Official name: Islamic Republic of Pakistan (Islami Jamhooriya-e-Pakistan)
Capital: Islamabad

Largest city: **Karachi**Other major cities: **Lahore, Faisalabad ar**

Other major cities: Lahore, Faisalabad and Hyderabad
Population: 220 million (2020 estimate)

Population: 220 million (2020 estimate)
Officilal languages: English, Urdu
Main religion: Islam (96 percent)
Government: Federal parliamentary
constitutional republic

Climate: Mostly hot, dry desert; temperate in northwest; arctic in north
Area: 881,913 square kilometers – the 33rd

largest country in the world
Location: Bordered by India to the east,
Afghanistan to the west, Iran to the southwest,
China to the northeast and shares coastline
with Oman along the Gulf of Oman and
Arabian Sea

Topography: Flat fertile Indus plain in the east,

nurtured by the Indus River; highest mountains in the Himalayas in northeast; Balochistan Plateau in the south and west

This South Asian country is the site of several ancient civilizations – most notably the 8.500-year-old Neolithic site of Mehrgarh and the Bronze Age Indus Valley, the most extensive of the civilizations in the Old World.

Pakistan was the realm of empires and dynasties, including the Archaemenid; briefly that of Alexander the Great; the Seleucid; Maurya; Kushan; the Gupta; the Umayyad Caliphate; the Ghaznavids; Delhi Sulatanate; the Mughals; Durrani Empire; Sikh Empire; East India Company; and the British Indian Empire (1858 to 1947).

Sources: www.officeholidays.com, www. google.com, www.nationsonline.org and www. wikipedia.com.

FULL PAGE AD

Special Feature

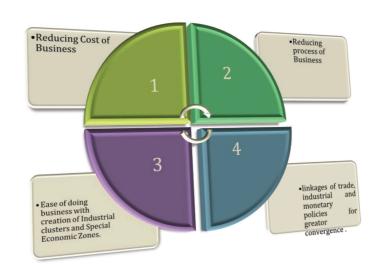
Invest in Pakistan

AKISTAN'S unique geo-strategic location, vast human and natural resources and growth potential provide an attractive incentive. Pakistan as an investment destination, offers friendly policies and commitment to maximize and enhance investors comfort and confidence level. Almost all sectors of economy are open to investment with attractive incentives and liberal policies.

The traditional as well as non-traditional sectors of our economy offer the business community great opportunities to invest in the country and earn the maximum returns. The Food Processing, Logistics, Automobiles, Information Technology and Information Technology enabled Services, Housing & Construction,

Manufacturing, Financial Business, Oil & Gas Exploration, Trade, Tourism, and Textile sectors are some of the areas, which are ripe for the foreign and domestic investment, or the mutual benefits of all.

With the mandate of Board of Investment (BOI), Investment is promoted, encouraged and facilitated both local and foreign investment.



Pakistan has introduced various reforms to improve business climate through its Ease of Doing Business Initiative. Under the existing situation, when Covid-19 is affecting almost every country

around the globe, enabling business environment is required to exploit the available opportunities and to neutralize the negative effects of the pandemic on SMEs. Introducing such initiatives like

online company registration, online payment of taxes, and e-registry etc. will definitely be a catalyst in this direction. The government of Pakistan is cognizant of various challenges to its economy and is undertaking every possible effort to overcome these challenges within the shortest possible time.

Some of the attractive incentive packages provided by the Government are tabulated under:

Industrial Cooperation under **CPEC**

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a 2,700 km of economic corridor with high level infrastructure development linking Urumgi in Western China to Pakistan's centers of Lahore, Islamabad, Karachi and ultimately the Gwadar port, through a network of roads, railway and other modes of communication and transportation.

Policy Parameters	Manufacturing Sector	Non-Manufacturing Sectors		
		Agriculture	Infrastructure & Social	Services including IT & Telecom Services
Govt. Permission	Not required except 4 specified industries *	Not required except specific licenses from concerned agencies.		
Remittance of capital, profits, dividends, etc.	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
Upper Limit of foreign equity allowed	100%	100%	100%	100%
Customs duty on import of PME	5%	0%	5%	0-5%
Γax relief (IDA, % of PME cost)	25%	25%	25%	25%
Royalty & Technical Fee	No restriction for payment of royalty & technical fee.	Allowed as per guidelines - Initia	l lump-sum upto \$100,000 - Max Ra	te 5% of net sales - Initial period 5 years

Improvement in Ease of doing business

Much more reforms have been implemented and some are under implementation through 6th Reform Plan. These reforms will further improve business facilitation and overall EoDB ranking. Some of them are as under:

- Online Processing of Complaints by NEPRA
- Bank Account **Opening Facility** through SECP e-service
- National One window for Trading Across Border
- Establishing Notice Based Collateral
- registry • Simplifying tax administration &
- regulations Automating Payment
- of Stamp duties • Commercial courts
- and automation in Karachi
- Amending regulations for Minority investors
- Creating awareness on Bankruptcy laws

It is a driving force for economic growth and taking the fruits of CPEC to the lesserdeveloped regions of Pakistan. The aim is the transformation of trade corridors into Economic Corridors. For this purpose, during the 6th meeting of Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) held in December 2016, Board of Investment (BoI) was designated as lead agency on **Industrial Cooperation** (IC) Chairman Bol was designated as the convener of the Working Group on IC from Pakistan's side. An MoU on Industrial Cooperation was signed on 20-12-2018. As result of the meeting, Nine (09) sites were noted as prioritized SEZs.

- 1. Rashakai SEZ: Nowshera Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
- 2. Dhabeji SEZ: Thatta, Sindh
- 3. Allama Iqbal SEZ: Faisalabad, Punjab
- 4. Boston Special Economic Zone: Quetta, Balochistan
- 5. Moqpondass SEZ: Gilgit, Gilgit-Baltistan

6. ICT SEZ: Islamabad City Territory

- 7. Jinnah Industrial Park on Pakistan Steel land: Port Qasim, Karachi
- 8. Mirpur Industrial Zone: Azad Jummu & Kashmir
- 9. Mohmand Marble City: Mohmand Agency, KP.

After

implementation of the early harvest projects, the ground is set to generate positive socioeconomic impacts of CPEC by enhancing industrial collaboration. This will help create efficient and competitive industrial clusters to attract investment and to diversify exports.



