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Inbound air traffic allowed at full capacity

The National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) on Wednesday 3 Nov. decided to allow inbound air traffic at full quantum from Nov 10, but retained five countries in category C.

Meanwhile, Covid-19 claimed 11 lives and infected 561 more people on Wednesday 3 Nov.

In another development, the World Health Organisation (WHO) allowed emergency use of another vaccine, taking the number of validated vaccines to eight.

The NCOC, in a statement, said owing to mass vaccination undertaken by various countries, a downward trend had been observed in all Covid-19 indicators across the globe.

"After enforcement of obligatory vaccination for inbound travel in Pakistan with effect from Oct 21, Covid-19-related travel policy and health/testing protocols have been revised. Inbound air traffic will now operate at full quantum with effect from Nov 10, 2021," it said.

The forum further stated that five countries had been placed in category C on the basis of high positivity, high daily Covid-19 cases/deaths and low vaccination rate. These countries are Armenia, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Iraq and Mexico.

On the other hand, Mongolia, Slovenia, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago and Ukraine have been included in high-risk countries.

In the wake of high disease indicators, Russia, Iran, Ethiopia, Germany, the Philippines and Afghanistan have also been placed in high-risk [category] for continuous monitoring, but no travel restriction has been imposed," the statement said, adding that all countries (including high-risk nations) were placed in category B with no inbound travel restrictions.

An official of the Ministry of National Health Services (NHS), requesting not to be named, said Pakistan had introduced three categories to deal with Covid-19.

"Countries in category A are exempted from the mandatory Covid-19 test, travellers from areas in B category require a negative polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test that must be taken within 72 hours of the travel date while

people coming from nations in C category are restricted and can travel only under specific NCOC guidelines," he added.

The NCOC said 100pc vaccination for all inbound passengers would be ensured while all passengers of six years age and above (locals/ foreigners) should be in possession of a negative PCR test report (max 72 hours old) before boarding.

The forum said testing protocols were applicable on all inbound border terminals except Afghanistan.

"Afghans entering Pakistan through border terminals are exempted from vaccination certificates or showing PCR test results," the NCOC said, adding that "they will however undergo stringent testing/quarantine protocols as already emplaced".

According to data shared by the NCOC, there were 22,570 active patients as of Nov 3, out of whom 1,361 were admitted to hospitals across the country.

Emergency use of eighth Covid-19 vaccine

The World Health Organisation (WHO) issued an emergency use listing (EUL) for Covaxin® (developed by Bharat Biotech), adding to a growing portfolio of vaccines validated by the WHO for prevention of Covid-19.

"This emergency use listing expands the availability of vaccines, the most effective medical tools we have to end the pandemic," said WHO Assistant-Director General for Access to Medicines and Health Products Dr Mariângela Simão.

"But we must keep up the pressure to meet the needs of all populations, giving priority to the at-risk groups who are still waiting for their first dose, before we can start declaring victory," Dr Simão said.

Covaxin, which is the eighth vaccine registered by the WHO, will be administered in two doses, with a dose interval of four weeks, in all age groups of 18 and above. It was found to have 78pc efficacy against Covid-19 of any severity, 14 or more days after the second dose, and is extremely suitable for low- and middle-income countries due to easy storage requirements.



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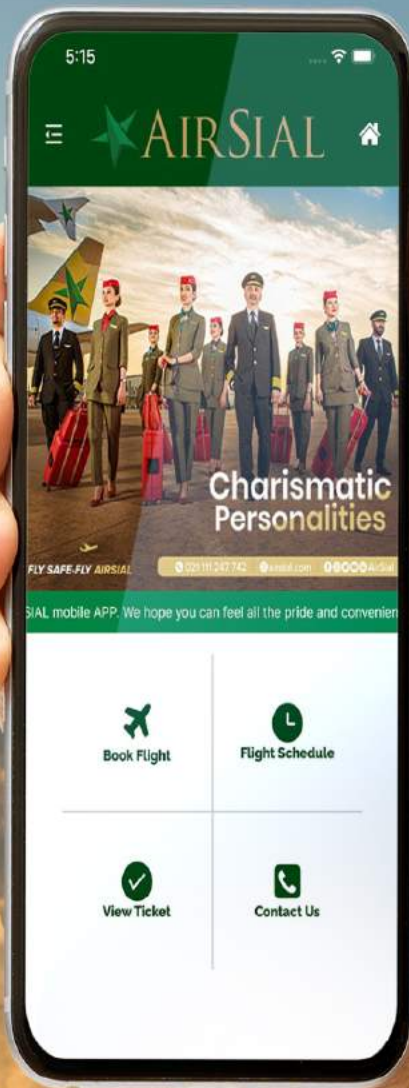
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CAA issues notice for international flights at full capacity

The Civil Aviation Authority issued a notice to all airmen (NOTAM) on Thursday 4 Nov. in response to a decision of the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC) to allow international flight operations at full capacity.

“Government of Pakistan is pleased to allow 100 per cent international passenger flight operations to and from all airports with effect from November 10, 2021 at 0001 PST,” said the notice.

The NCOC had on Wednesday 3 Nov. announced that inbound air travel would be allowed in Pakistan at full capacity from November 10 owing to a downward trend in Covid-19 cases in the country.

According to the NCOC decision, all passengers of more than six years locals or foreigners will have to carry a negative PCR test report conducted within the 72 hours prior to boarding a flight for Pakistan.

Furthermore, Rapid Antigen Testing on arrival at the airport for all inbound passengers has been abolished, except for people travelling via direct flight from category 'C' and high-risk countries.

The high-risk countries are: Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Germany, Iran, Philippines and Russia.

However, inbound travel to Pakistan from category 'C' countries is banned and only allowed on grant of special authorisation by the NCOC's exemptions committee.

The countries placed in category 'C' are: Armenia, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Iraq, Mexico, Mongolia, Slovenia, Thailand, Trinidad & Tobago and Ukraine.

Airline fares go through the roof as countries ease curbs

In a bid to apparently recover losses sustained because of the pandemic restrictions, domestic and foreign airlines have almost doubled fares to destinations such as Dubai, the US and Europe.

Some of the reasons cited by airline officials behind the massive increase in fares are the influx of passengers after foreign destinations lifted coronavirus travel restrictions, increase in fuel prices and devaluation of the rupee.

“For Dubai, the national flag carrier (PIA) is charging over Rs90,000 for an economy class return ticket and foreign airlines about Rs110,000,” an airline official said in conversation with media.

Hotel rents in Dubai, Turkey and elsewhere have also shot up

“Similarly, the economy class return ticket for the UK is between Rs280,000 and Rs350,000. A one-way economy class ticket for the US costs over Rs160,000,” he said, adding that an economy class return ticket for Istanbul was priced over Rs100,000.

“There are different reasons behind such a huge increase in airline fares. As countries are opening up after Covid-19 restrictions, passengers stuck here are flying out. Fuel prices have shot up and

the Pakistani rupee is fast losing its value. So the domestic and foreign airlines are looking at it as an opportunity to compensate for losses they earlier suffered because of the pandemic,” the official remarked.

Another official said Dubai's fare increased more than double because of the Expo 2020 and T20 Cricket World Cup under way, and airlines were booked to capacity. “Even hotel and apartment rents in Dubai, Turkey and elsewhere have shot up,” he added.

PIA awarded highest level certification

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has achieved the International Air Transport Association (IATA's) new distribution capability (NDC) level-4 certification. The certification is of the highest level, awarded to PIA.

A press release issued by PIA on Monday 11 Oct. stated that the national flag carrier recently embarked upon a Digital Transformation Programme, under which it is focusing on modernising its business practices, resource competence, technology upgrade and partner collaborations in line with new industry standards and practices.

The certification will enable the airline to better connect, communicate and share rich content among industry partners through distribution channels. This achievement will significantly enhance PIA's capability of merchandising, retailing and product differentiation, the press release stated, adding that the certification will not only help PIA take its distribution standard to the next level but also facilitate better service for passengers, travel agents and industry partners while accelerating PIA's digital transformation.

PIA CEO Air Marshal Arshad Malik appreciated teams from the airline's Information Technology (IT) and Commercial departments, and thanked its passenger services system (PSS) provider HITIT Computer Systems for support.

He added that this achievement was a proof of PIA's commitment to become the airline of choice for travel agents, distribution partners and passengers.



Citizens are seen at the Jinnah International Airport in Karachi.

NZ strait crossed for first time by electric plane

As he made history by becoming the first person to fly across New Zealand's Cook Strait in an electric plane, Gary Freedman thought it only fitting that the first thing he saw when approaching the Wellington coastline was the rotating blade of a wind turbine producing renewable energy.

Freedman's 40-minute solo flight in the small two-seater came 101 years after the first person flew a conventional aircraft over the body of water that separates the South Pacific nation's two main islands.

Monday's flight was aimed at drawing attention to the possibilities of greener flying and timed to coincide with the opening of a pivotal UN climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland.

Wellington International Airport officials believe it may be the longest distance flown in an electric plane across any body of water.

"It's a very exciting day for the airport. A world-record-setting day," said spokesperson Jenna Raeburn.

Freedman said the day began badly with pouring rain at his departure point near the town of Blenheim. After delaying the flight for 15 minutes, the weather cleared just enough for takeoff and soon improved to sunny conditions over the ocean.

Freedman said he was ecstatic when he landed, and the technology worked better than he'd hoped.

"We still had 40pc left in the battery," he said. "We could have almost flown back again."

Freedman, 49, who founded the company ElectricAir, said he's long been passionate about the environment and the idea came as he thought about the incongruity of driving an electric car and flying a gas-powered plane.

He took a trip to Slovenia to buy a Pipistrel Alpha Electro plane, and then jumped through various hoops with New Zealand aviation regulators to get the plane cleared.

It weighs less than 400 kilograms (880 pounds) and is much quieter than a traditional aircraft. For the 78 kilometre trip, Freedman flew it at just 1,000 feet (305 meters) above sea level and at the relatively slow speed of 130 kilometres per hour (81 mph) in order to preserve its charge.

Freedman said it takes about one hour to fully charge the plane. The maximum



The electric aeroplane approaches the airport for landing.

flight time is also about an hour, and he mainly uses it for pilot training.

Wellington International Airport is preparing for regular short-hop flights of new 12-seater electric planes that will begin in about five years' time, said Raeburn, the airport spokeswoman.

She said electric technology is not yet advanced enough to power large passenger planes, but biofuels and hydrogen will likely provide greener alternatives in the future.

Aeroflot launches regular flights to Abu Dhabi



Aeroflot has begun operating regular services from Moscow to Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates. Three weekly flights SU0530/0531 will operate on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Flights will be operated on the Boeing 737-800, modern medium-range aircraft in Aeroflot's fleet.

Abu Dhabi is the third destination in the UAE where Aeroflot offers regular flights to. The airline operates two daily Moscow Dubai flights, and two weekly Moscow Sharjah services.

Abu Dhabi has an extensive leisure and business travel infrastructure. Travellers are lured by beach resorts, shopping opportunities, and world-famous sights, including the Sheikh Zayed

Grand Mosque, Louvre Abu Dhabi, the Ferrari World theme park.

The autumn and winter season is the most comfortable time to visit Abu Dhabi. In November through March, average daytime temperatures are +22+24°C, and sea water temperature reaches +27°C.

Ariana Afghan Airlines begins flights from Kabul to Islamabad



A model of an Ariana Afghan Airlines jet is seen in front of the international airport in Kabul on September 5.

Ariana Afghan Airlines is beginning regular twice-weekly services from Kabul to Islamabad, the state-owned operator said on Thursday 11 Nov., joining Kam Air which has begun flying five times a week between the two cities.

Ariana, which began regular services to Dubai this week, will operate flights between Kabul and Islamabad on Thursdays and Mondays, charging \$400 from Kabul and \$100 from Islamabad.

Earlier this week, privately-owned Kam Air started services five times a week to Islamabad as international air traffic gradually reopens following the Taliban's seizure of power in Kabul in August.

The announcement from Ariana came as the Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi was visiting Islamabad for talks.

Some charter services have been flying to Kabul since the Taliban takeover but normally scheduled commercial flights had been suspended.

With an economy in deep crisis and continuing concerns about Afghanistan's future under the Taliban, there has been huge demand from people wishing to leave Afghanistan, made worse by repeated problems at land border crossings into Pakistan.

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) suspended its charter service to Kabul from Islamabad last month, citing interference from Taliban authorities, who had warned the airline it should cut its ticket prices.

PIA fires over 1,500 employees recruited on forged documents

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has fired over 1,500 employees recruited on forged documents. The airline is also simplifying and reforming its human resource processes by inducting e-PIA workers portal.

This was revealed during a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Aviation held under the chairmanship of Senator Hidayatullah at the Old PIPS Halls, Parliament Lodges, on Wednesday 13 October.

Aviation Minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan also attended the meeting. The committee was informed that PIA had suffered Rs67.4 billion losses in 2018.

It was further told that in 2020, Rs94,989 million revenue was generated and operational losses were Rs680 million.

The committee was also informed that Covid-19 had hit the market with nearly 60pc of operations coming to a halt.

The PIA representative said the airline recovered \$412 million from Airbus which was not pursued by previous regimes and also resolved a claim of \$4 million with Air Asia.

The airline is also enhancing tourism by introducing new routes to Gilgit from Lahore, Karachi, Faisalabad, Sialkot and Multan and also launched Air Safari Flight in partnership with Shangri-La Hotels for diplomats.

The committee was told that PIA was inducting a simulator to reduce training cost as an initiative for 2022 and 2023, and also implementing Engineering MRO projects mostly for commercial activities.

The matter regarding a PIA-owned property in New York, was also discussed in the meeting, however, the airline officials requested an in-camera meeting on the property.

The PIA officials put it on record that the property had not been taken over nor attached by anyone and the case was under trial and no final decision had been announced as yet.

The ban imposed by the European Union on PIA was also discussed, with the airline officials saying that a delay in lifting of the ban was due to delay in the audit by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

The ICAO had announced the audit in July 2021 which was postponed due to Covid-19.

The ICAO has now announced that the audit would be conducted from Nov 29

to Dec 10 and resumption of flights to the European Union will take place after the validation audit.

The PIA officials said it was a national agenda and requested the committee to send recommendations in this regard to the government.

The committee also discussed PPRA rules, which causes delay in the procurement of aircraft.

It was of the view that either the PPRA rules may be amended or such a methodology be adopted in consultation with the PPRA to avoid any delay in aircraft procurement.

“PIA will never get a plane if they follow the PPRA rules,” said Senator Saleem Mandivawalla. “It is not only for aircraft but also for engines and cargo,” he added.

The committee was also informed that flights from Peshawar to Lahore had been restored twice a week from this month. The flights from Islamabad to Malaysia have also been restored which were earlier discontinued due to non-payment of lease dues.

With regard to non-implementation of the recommendation of the harassment of a female officer by the then special assistant to PIA chief executive officer, the PIA officials explained that he would be repatriated to his parent department if they get a decision of the Supreme Court in this regard.

Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan assured the committee that its recommendations would be implemented and the official would be repatriated before the next meeting.

The committee was informed the scrutiny of all available records of 262 pilots had taken place. The federal cabinet cancelled 50 pilots' licences except for seven which were in court. Licences of 32 pilots were suspended for a period ranging from six to 12 months (barring 11 court cases). Besides, 42 pilots violated FDTL which were dealt with in accordance with regulations.

The committee was informed that based on data in corroboration with airlines, remaining licences were found to be valid.

The committee was further told that the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) initiated disciplinary proceedings against six employees on charges of facilitating pilots to appear through proxies, conduct of exams on unscheduled date and time and on public holidays and after office

hours. Two employees were under suspension and four were dismissed on the decision of the cabinet.

PIA starts regular flights to Najaf



Passengers disembark from the PIA Airbus at Najaf International Airport.

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has launched regular service to Iraq, as the first scheduled flight of the national carrier, which had departed for Najaf on Oct 30, returned to Karachi on Sunday 31 Oct. morning.

PIA had been previously operating special flights to Najaf.

When the first scheduled flight (PK-219) of the national carrier with Iraqi Ambassador Hamid Abbas Lufta and PIA CEO Arshad Malik among 91 passengers aboard landed at Najaf, it was given a water cannon salute by crash tenders with powerful cannons on taxiway at the airport.

Najaf Governor Luay Yasry, Pakistani Ambassador Ahmed Amjad Ali, the head of Iraqi civil aviation and religious leaders welcomed the passengers at the airport.

On the occasion, PIA CEO Malik said he brought a message of love and peace from Pakistan. Iraq was an important destination for Pakistani Muslims, he said.

Najaf Governor Luay Yasry said they would leave no stone unturned in serving PIA and Pakistani pilgrims. He said efforts were being made to simplify the visa system so that maximum number of people intending to visit Najaf could benefit.

Ambassador Ahmed Amjad Ali said PIA's scheduled flights would further strengthen ties between the two countries. “Now, after Najaf, efforts will be made to start the PIA flights to Baghdad as soon as possible,” he added.

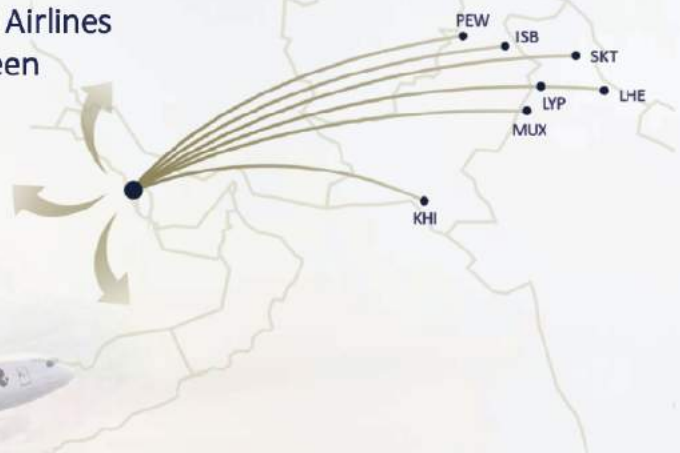
After the reception, the delegation visited Hazrat Ali's shrine and Kufa mosque.



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Ariana Airlines resumes flights between Afghanistan and Dubai

Ariana Afghan Airlines on Monday 8 Nov. resumed regular flights from Kabul to Dubai, reopening a heavily used international route that had been suspended since the Taliban victory over the Western-backed government in August.

Ariana will operate daily flights, charging \$550 for a one-way ticket, the state-run airline said on its Facebook page.

A spokesman said there had been heavy demand for tickets on the first flight, which was scheduled to depart at 4.30pm local time on Monday 8 Nov. (1200 GMT). Dubai will be the only international destination offered by Ariana for the time being.

Some charter services have been flying to Kabul since Taliban takeover, but normally scheduled commercial flights have remained suspended.

Pakistan International Airlines suspended its charter service to Kabul from Islamabad last month, citing interference from Taliban authorities, who had warned the airline it should cut its ticket prices.

Tickets for PIA flights had been selling for up to \$2,500, according to local travel agents, compared with around \$180 before the Taliban victory.

PIA said it could not afford to operate services at previous prices because of the high cost of insuring flights to a country considered by insurers to be a war zone.

With a worsening economic crisis compounding concerns about Afghanistan's future under the Taliban, there has been heavy demand for flights out, made worse by repeated problems at land border crossings into Pakistan.

After the Taliban took control of Kabul in August, the Ariana Afghan

Airlines suspended its flights. It resumed some of its domestic flights in Afghanistan between Kabul and three major regional cities in early September.

The development came after a Qatar-based technical team reopened Kabul's Hamid Karzai International Airport (KBL) for receiving aid and domestic services.

On its social media page, Ariana Afghan Airlines had stated that it had restarted the flights between Kabul and the western city of Herat, Mazar-i Sharif in northern Afghanistan and Kandahar in the south.

It said: "Ariana Afghan Airlines is proud to resume its domestic flights."

The Qatar's ambassador to Afghanistan had said that the Kabul airport's runway had been restored in cooperation with authorities in Afghanistan.

The airport in Kabul had been chaotic since the Taliban took control of the city.

The airport in Kabul was shut down after the end of the US-led airlift of its citizens.

The evacuation operation ended at the end of August. In an attempt to restore order, the Taliban worked towards the reopening of the airport.

In the week of August, the US Federal Aviation Administration stated that the US civil aircraft had been restricted from operating over Afghanistan unless provided prior authorisation.

The FAA had then stated: "Due to both the lack of air traffic services and a functional civil aviation authority in Afghanistan, as well as ongoing security concerns, US civil operators, pilots, and US-registered civil aircraft are prohibited from operating at any altitude over much of Afghanistan."



An Afghan Ariana airliner Boeing-727-100 is shown in an undated file photo at Frankfurt airport.

CAA holds e-katchehri to address public grievances

The 16th e-katchehri (hearing) of the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) was held so that grievances of the general public could be resolved.

A spokesman for CAA said on Monday 8 Nov. that director general of the authority Khaqan Murtaza, chaired the e-katchehri and asked people to come up with queries regarding any airport of the country.

Deputy director general (regulatory), director (airport services), director (AT & ER), director (licensing), director (operations), director (commercial), director (HR) also accompanied Mr Murtaza.

The spokesman said about 126 queries and complaints were received during the online e-katchehri about grant of compensation/covid relief to adjust outstanding dues during the first to fourth wave of Covid-19, provision of facilities at Nawabshah Airport, queries regarding upgradation of facilities and operationalisation of D.G Khan Airport.

People asked about development of Bannu Airport besides information about domestic flight operations to/from Saidu Sharif Airport, delayed retrieval of luggage in conveyor belts at Islamabad Airport and NOCs for non vaccinated inbound passengers with health problems to Pakistan.

He said people had queries regarding high fares, conversion of foreign licences, resumption of pilots, FOO and other licensing examinations, removal of conditions of PCR test for vaccinated people, increase in flight operation to/from Dubai, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and other countries, provision of water at the arrival immigration hall at Islamabad International Airport, exemption of passengers arriving from countries listed in category C.

Mr Murtaza answered most of people's questions on the spot and directed the quarters concerned to sort things out as soon as possible.

People appreciated the initiative. The hearing was live streamed on CAA's official Facebook page.

Gulf Air signs Emirates codeshare, widens Ras Al Khaimah agreement

Bahrain's flag carrier signed the two deals on the first day of the Dubai Airshow.



Gulf Air and Emirates have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to deepen commercial ties, including plans to establish a codeshare partnership, extend reciprocal loyalty benefits, and initiate cargo cooperation.

The deal was signed on the first day of the Dubai Airshow by Gulf Air's acting CEO Waleed Al Alawi and Emirates President Tim Clark.

Under the codeshare agreement, Emirates will place its EK code on Gulf Air operated flights between Bahrain (BAH) and Dubai (DXB), while Gulf Air will add its GF code to Emirates' services between the destinations.

"Gulf Air and Emirates operate multiple flights between Bahrain and Dubai and this agreement will provide passengers with more choices beyond our hubs," Al Alawi said.

OAG data shows that Gulf Air currently serves BAH-DXB 5X-daily, while Emirates provides 19X-weekly flights. The market is also served 25X-weekly by FlyDubai and 2X-weekly by KLM.

In addition, Gulf Air has signed an enhanced MOU with Ras Al Khaimah International Airport (RKT) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) building on an agreement forged earlier this year.

The expanded agreement will see Gulf Air launch a 2X-weekly service between Bahrain and Ras Al Khaimah, with a view to offering year-round scheduled flights.

"As the region's leading boutique carrier with a global footprint, we look forward to adding Ras Al Khaimah to our network of seaside destinations and increasing our UAE points to three with Abu Dhabi and Dubai," Gulf Air Chairman Zayed R. Alzayani said.

RKT CEO Atanasios Titonis added:

"Gulf-state connectivity is a key factor of our expansion strategy, and Gulf Air is an ideal partner for this mission."

The signing of the agreements with Emirates and RKT comes as Gulf Air continues to rebuild its network following the COVID-19 crisis. Frequencies have been increased on 10 routes, including taking Istanbul to 10X-weekly and Amman (AMM) to double-daily.

Cardboard boxes not allowed from Indian subcontinent on Gulf Air

Gulf Air will not be accepting cardboard boxes of any size or dimension for flights to/from Indian subcontinent due to high demand and to ensure that there is enough capacity in its aircraft for all the passengers luggage.

This policy will continue for all departures from/to any online Indian subcontinent origin/destination until further notice.

Regular suitcases with a maximum dimension of 158cms for travel to/from Indian Sub-continent as outlined in current policy will be accepted. No changes have been made to standard dimensions allowed for check in bags.

Any item of baggage exceeding 158cms but is less than 215cms shall be considered as 'Over Size' baggage and must be charged as an extra piece of baggage.

Oversized' ancillary charge will be filed under sub-code 01D 'Excess Size'. Baggage exceeding the linear dimensions of 215cms shall not be accepted. Due to limited hold capacity, 'Out of Gauge' (OOG) baggage shall be carried in accordance with the above specified maximum linear dimensions only.

Suitcases, briefcases, bags, pre-packed electrical goods (except TVs) are acceptable for carriage; as long as they do not exceed the aforesaid dimensions. Suitcases, etc. can be wrapped in the plastic wrap provided at Airport wrapping facilities.

TVs, with a maximum of 50 inches, in a pre-packed condition may be accepted.

British Airways brings Club Suite to Boeing 777



British Airways is continuing with the roll-out of its newest business class seat, Club Suite, as it continues to retrofit the seat across its Boeing 777 fleet.

The process is expected to be completed by the end of 2022.

The airline already has retrofitted a number of its Boeing 777 aircraft with the latest seat and will be working with Collins Aerospace to ensure the rest of the airline's 777 aircraft are fitted with the new cabin.

The airline's sophisticated Club Suite was first introduced in July 2019 on the first A350 and since then has been installed on the Boeing 787-10 aircraft.

The seat offers direct-aisle access, a suite door for greater privacy and luxurious flat-bed seats in a one-two-one configuration.

As part of its commitment to the North Atlantic, all British Airways flights to JFK will be operated by an aircraft that has the airline's Club Suite product.

Sajida Ismail, head of in-flight product at British Airways, said: "When we launched our Club Suite product, it was a huge hit with our customers who loved the privacy the new seat offers.

"We are focused on the roll out of this product and other cabin enhancements to ensure we deliver on our commitment to provide the very best British quality, style and comfort for our customers."

As part of the upgrade, the airline's Club Kitchen is also getting a makeover with new Club chillers and built-in storage for snacks, drinks and other refreshments, allowing customers in Club World to help themselves to refreshments at their leisure.

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FIATA and CLECAT renew MoU



CLECAT and FIATA the European and global associations for freight forwarding and logistics services providers have renewed their Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to reinforce the longstanding cooperation between the two Associations.

Following the signing event which took place virtually, FIATA president, Basil Pietersen said: "For many years FIATA and CLECAT have worked collaboratively on agreed international transport, logistics and supply chain management issues, both bodies working with national, regional, and international governmental and non-governmental agencies. In all relationships, however, there exists the need to review, reevaluate and reinvigorate cooperation. Over the past year FIATA and CLECAT have agreed on the need for a new MoU. By renewing and strengthening our MoU, we can work more effectively in pursuing our common goals and objectives."

CLECAT president Willem van der Schalk added: "The new MoU with FIATA is a great opportunity to strengthen our cooperation and to join forces whenever possible. The framework for cooperation enables both Associations to benefit from agreed actions and initiatives to achieve common objectives to assist our members through the current challenges and disruptions within the supply chain and across multimodal transport operations."

The Associations say they will continue to address the issues which are of key importance to their industry, including engagement with policy makers and stakeholders on issues such as trade facilitation, digitalisation, and the key challenges to secure decarbonisation across the transport and logistics industry.

However, ensuring a level playing field with the other parties in the logistics chain remains equally key. In a rapidly

changing business environment, the Associations need to respond to the needs of their respective members to ensure that supply chains maintain resilience, efficient, effective and seek to promote these requirements towards governmental and non-governmental associations.

The Associations recall that it remains important to increase understanding on the crucial role of the freight forwarding industry in ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of global supply chains in the movement of goods in the global economy.

FIATA and CLECAT share a long history. Their collaboration has been ongoing for more than 25 years, with their first MoU signed in Dubai in 1999.

Air India has once again been sold to the Tata group



Air India, India's flag carrier founded by the Tata group in 1932 and taken over by the Indian government, had been struggling over the years.

The Indian Government tried to sell the carrier on several occasions but could never reach an agreement. The airline had been piling losses every flight. However, after a long time with the Indian Government, the airline has once again been sold to the Tata group.

The airline was sold at around \$2.4 billion. Under the government, the airline was suffering significant losses amounting to about \$9.5 billion. Now under Tata, a bright future can be expected for the airline.

This agreement is the start of a new chapter for air India. The airline is amongst the largest in India alongside Indigo, Spicejet and more. The airline has thousands of skilled pilots and crew who

would have been in trouble if the airline were to cease operations.

With a fleet of 123 aircraft, the airline flies to various domestic and international destinations. The airline flies to countries like The UK, The USA, Australia, Canada and many more.

TATA Group isn't a new player in the aviation industry. The company owns two airlines; Vistara, a full-service carrier formed in partnership with Singapore Airlines and AirAsia India, a low budget carrier created in collaboration with AirAsia, Malaysia. The road ahead isn't easy for Air India. India's aviation market is one of the most competitive. Carriers like Jet Airways and Kingfisher couldn't compete here, considering the rise of low-cost airlines.

Flying alongside them will be a significant challenge for Maharaja. Pulling the airline out of loss and making it a profitable company will be a challenging ride. The airline has slots in major airports worldwide and has significant real estate and assets that will prove to be very beneficial

TATA wins bid

The TATA Group winning the bid for Air India is great news! While admittedly it will take considerable effort to rebuild Air India. It will hopefully provide a very strong market opportunity to the TATA Group's presence in the aviation industry.

On the emotional note, Air India, under the leadership of Mr. J. R. D. TATA had, at one time, gained the reputation of being one of the most prestigious Airlines in the world. TATAs will have the opportunity of regaining the image and reputation it enjoyed in earlier years. Mr. J. R. D. TATA would have been overjoyed if he was in our midst today.

We also need to recognize and thank the government for its recent policy of opening select industries to the private sector.



Sabre and Emirates reach new distribution agreement

The leading software and technology company that powers the global travel industry, and Emirates, one of the world's largest international airlines, have signed a new multi-year, worldwide distribution agreement.

The new agreement will provide Sabre-connected travel buyers and agencies with access to Emirates' content, through Sabre's global distribution system (GDS), with immediate effect. Further to this, Emirates will create and distribute NDC offers through the Sabre GDS.

"We are delighted to reestablish our long-standing partnership with Emirates," said Roshan Mendis, Chief Commercial Officer, Sabre Travel Solutions. "The agreement demonstrates our commitment to creating a sustainable distribution model that benefits all constituents across the travel value chain. Resulting from thoughtful discussions between both parties, our new agreement will provide both Emirates and travel buyers with immense value, removing complexity in the buying process, which is crucial to the recovery of the industry."

The new contract will connect Emirates to a global network of travelers, while supporting its global vision to provide travel buyers and travelers with personalized offers.

"We are pleased to have reached this distribution agreement with Sabre," said Adnan Kazim, Chief Commercial Officer at Emirates. "The new contract will support us to meet the needs of our agency partners. Providing agencies with flexibility, choice and efficiency will help them to thrive in the current climate and will help us drive revenue and growth."

In addition to the new agreement, Sabre will continue to partner with Emirates on advanced retailing, data and analytics capabilities through a number of its industry-leading solutions in areas such as network planning, revenue optimization and market intelligence.

Struggling Thai Airways to take drastic measures will offload 42 jets and slash workforce by a third



Founded in 1961, the flag-carrying airline Thai Airways International Public Company Limited (Thai Airways) has remained virtually unprofitable for the best part of a decade. The ailing carrier is now taking drastic measures to turn around the company's fortunes by selling off 42 less-fuel-efficient aircraft, 16 aircraft which are on lease will also be returned, basically halving its current fleet size to 58 planes across four different types.

These moves are all part of a bankruptcy-protected restructuring after protection was granted by the Central Bankruptcy Court in September 2020. In June 2021 the Central Bankruptcy Court accepted Thai Airways' business plan, which had been previously agreed by creditors, to restructure its approximate 424-billion-baht debt. On Monday the Thai government lifted restrictions to enable quarantine-free travel for vaccinated tourists and the carrier intends to now expand its flight coverage, adding flights especially from Europe. By December 2022 Thai Airways will also reduce its workforce from a current 21,300 staff to 14,500.

While currently in discussions with the Thai government for an additional loan of 25 billion baht, the Thai carrier will finalise a 25-billion-baht credit agreement with financial institutions to aid cashflow by the end of next year. For the six-month period up to June this year Thai Airways posted a profit of 11.1 billion baht, compared to a loss of 28 billion baht for the same period in 2020. (£1.00 = US\$1.18 = 45.44 baht).

Tale of two companies: Airbus recovers as Boeing reels



This Nov 8 picture shows an Airbus A330-323 aircraft, operated by Delta Air Lines, takes off at the Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport.

The aviation industry is slowly recovering from last year's Covid-induced downturn, but European aircraft maker Airbus is having a smoother ride than American rival Boeing, which has endured a series of crises.

The world's dominant aerospace companies will seek new business as they attend the five-day Dubai air show on Sunday, the industry's first major event since the pandemic started last year.

But while Airbus has returned to profit and delivered 460 aircraft in the first 10 months of the year, Boeing remains in the red and has supplied just 268 planes.

Boeing's 737 MAX returned to the skies last year after the entire fleet was grounded for 20 months following two crashes in Ethiopia and Indonesia that left 346 people dead.

Almost 370 of the planes remain in inventory and Boeing chief executive David Calhoun has said that it will take two years to sell them all.

The 737 MAX has also yet to be re-certified in China, a major market for aircraft makers. Boeing's production plans will depend on access to the Chinese market, Calhoun says.

The 787 Dreamliner has had its share of problems which is estimated to have cost the company \$1 billion.

The company halted deliveries of the 787 in May following a series of issues with the plane the second suspension in the past year.

Boeing announced in July that it had spotted additional problems near the nose of the plane and was working to fix them.

A delay for the first deliveries of its new wide-body 777X plane which were

pushed back from 2022 to late 2023 is costing the company \$6.5 billion.

"There's been so many problems that it's very difficult to say they're over," Richard Aboulafia, analyst at aerospace consultancy Teal Group, told AFP.

Covid cuts long-haul flights: Covid has also hit Boeing's strong point long-haul aircraft as international travel has been curbed by pandemic restrictions, said Remy Bonnery, an analyst at Archery Strategy Consulting.

International air traffic is only expected to return to pre-pandemic levels between 2023 and 2025.

Domestic air travel, meanwhile, is doing better which benefits Airbus and its A320 family of narrow-body aircraft.

Airbus will display its latest single-aisle plane, the A321neo, in Dubai.

The company aims to release the long-range version of the aircraft in 2023, the A321XLR, which can fly for 10 hours a feat only achieved by bigger planes until now.

"Airbus is alone in the single-aisle, long-haul market," said Bonnery at Archery Strategy Consulting.

"The next 10 years, we will have more plane deliveries by Airbus than Boeing," he said.

'Staunch the bleeding': Boeing decided last year to hold off on launching its New Midsize Aircraft (NMA) project. The plan was to deliver by 2025 an aircraft that could transport up to 275 passengers nearly 9,000 kilometres (5,600 miles).

The US company "is losing 10 points of market share, largely due to the A321neo. Losing 10 points of market share is a road towards being a marginal player," Aboulafia said.

Boeing would have to launch a new plane to claw back market share, said Michel Merluzeau, an analyst at AIR consultancy.

"It must really staunch the bleeding against Airbus," Merluzeau said.

Regaining a place on the market "is very complicated and very expensive" at least \$15 billion he said.

Boeing's debt has increased five-fold in less than three years to \$62 billion.

It would be hard for Boeing to get a new plane out before 2028-2029, according to Merluzeau.

Calhoun indicated in October that the company has put a team together to design a new plane and production system.

International flights resume in Sydney after nearly 20 months



Qantas Boeing 787 with its latest livery.

On Nov. 1, Sydney Airport welcomed the first international flights under new quarantine-free international travel rules. The first arrival was planned to be operated by Qantas who appropriately scheduled a Boeing 787 Dreamliner from Los Angeles. The flight touched down just after 6 a.m. local time.

The aircraft, VH-ZND, is painted in an indigenous livery inspired by a famous Aboriginal artist Emily Kame Kngwarreye. Named "Yam Dreaming," Australians' dreams of international travel have finally come true.

Qantas was, however, pipped to the post by a Singapore Airlines Airbus A350 which was given dispensation to land before the 6 a.m. curfew due to fuel reasons. 9V-SHV touched down at 5:18 a.m. local time.

Sydney in the state of New South Wales, was allowed to recommence international flights after the state reached a vaccination rate of 80% in mid-October. Melbourne in the state of Victoria, was also allowed to open up but other states are yet to reach the 80% vaccination milestone.

With the exception of a travel bubble with New Zealand which only lasted a few months, Australians have effectively been locked inside their country since March 21, 2020. Some citizens and permanent residents could return home but arrivals were capped at 6,000 per week for the whole country. This was reduced to 3,000 since June, with passengers forced into two weeks hotel quarantine. So flights only had a handful of people on board with a reported 46,000 Australians stranded abroad. A few managed to gain exemptions to leave the country, due to very strong compassionate reasons, but most applications were denied as Australia isolated itself from the rest of the world.

For the first time since then, those in

New South Wales and Victoria are now free to leave the country and can return home without the need to quarantine. Strangely though, with most domestic borders still closed, Sydneysiders can fly to London, but not Brisbane.

Foreigners are still banned from entering Australia, meaning airlines have been slow to return to Sydney. This was noticeable on the first day with only 16 arrivals and 19 departures scheduled according to a press release from Australia's busiest airport.

The majority of international airlines did continue to operate into Sydney throughout the pandemic, albeit mostly on reduced schedules. This was to meet the growing cargo demand with passenger seats not available on some flights. China Airlines and Hong Kong Airlines actually added additional flights from Taiwan and Hong Kong, and cargo operators also increased their schedules. FedEx now operates several flights a day and UPS sends a Boeing 747 from Honolulu most days.

Some airlines that ceased operations are returning. Most notably, Hawaiian Airlines announced they will return to Sydney on Dec. 15 and American will start operations again in January after pausing its flight since August. British Airways, the only European airline to fly to Sydney, is planning to return on March 27, some two years after last being seen on the kangaroo route via Singapore.

Qantas kicked off operations by launching flights from Sydney to Los Angeles and London and has also reopened its Sydney International First Lounge. Qantas Group Chief Customer Officer Stephanie Tully said: "The safe reopening of Australia's borders and our first international flights will be a very special day for the entire Qantas team which is excited to get back flying and help reconnect our customers with family and friends around the world."

Australia's national carrier will also start flights to Singapore later this month but with only a few more destinations planned to restart in December it will clearly take some time before the international terminal returns to pre-pandemic levels. According to the airport's website it handled 16.7 million international passengers in 2018.

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Emirates calls on applicants to join cadet training programme

The Emirates Flight Training Academy is inviting aspiring United Arab Emirates (UAE) nationals and residents as well as international candidates seeking a career in aviation to join its cadet training programme. Admissions are now open and interested international candidates are encouraged to apply online.

The Emirates Flight Training Academy reviews applications on a continuous basis, and new students are taken in every other month. Interested candidates will be required to pass the selection process put in place by the airline.

Adel Al Redha, chief operating officer at Emirates Airline says: "At Emirates, we continuously explore opportunities to support and initiate programmes within the aviation industry. We are pleased to offer this unique opportunity for Emirates Flight Training Academy graduates to pursue their flying careers at Emirates. This is an exclusive initiative launched by the airline to provide opportunities for UAE nationals, residents and international students wanting to build their careers as pilots."

Captain Abdulla Al Hammadi, vice president of the Emirates Flight Training Academy says: "The demand for pilots will continue to grow globally and within the region, despite the recent pause that we have seen as a result of the pandemic. At EFTA, we are committed to providing state of the art training programmes using some of the latest aircraft and technologies as well as training methods."

Traing academy features

Located in Dubai South, the training academy is spread over 164,000 square metres (the area of 200 football fields) and

includes 36 modern classrooms, next-generation simulators, and a fleet of 27 Cirrus SR22 G6 single-engine piston and Embraer Phenom 100EV very light jet aircraft. The academy also boasts a 1,800-metre dedicated runway with navigation aids and lighting, an independent air traffic control tower, rescue and firefighting service, and a maintenance centre. **The academy uses a four-pronged approach to train its cadets:**

Highly interactive theoretical learning in classrooms using advanced digital content and immersive VR technology,

Experiential learning through hands-on instruction of modern training aircraft, Use of advanced flight simulators, and Airline-focused line-oriented flight training.

The academy has also established an innovative approach to training cadets, from learning to fly the single-engine piston Cirrus SR22 G6 aircraft to directly progressing to the Phenom 100EV very light jet (VLJ) aircraft, providing cadets with more experience on jet aircraft. In fact, the last batch of cadets that graduated in December last year clocked in over 6,000 flying hours during their training at the Academy.

Cadets at EFTA graduate with a Commercial Pilot License (CPL) on a multi-engine aircraft with Instrument Rating. The total training duration for cadets ranges between 21 months and 24 months.

Interested international applicants, as well as UAE nationals and residents, can take advantage of competitive tuition fees for the two years training period, which also cover training materials, accommodation, dining, and uniforms,

amongst other expenses. UAE Nationals seeking careers as pilots may have the opportunity to be selected for a fully sponsored pilot training programme.

Thai Airways reports profit for the first nine months of 2021

Thai Airways reported a net profit in the first nine months of 2021. The positive financial outcome was largely attributed to asset sales and financial gain from debt restructuring.

In the first nine months of 2021, Thai Airways posted a net profit of 50.1 billion baht (\$1.5 billion), an increase compared to a net loss of 49.5 billion baht (\$1.5 billion) during the same period in 2020.

Thai Airways disclosed that out of 78.6 billion baht of its total revenues, 60.7 billion baht (\$1.9 billion) came only from the airline's debt restructuring measures. The Central Bankruptcy Court of Thailand gave the final go-ahead for Thai Airways' rehabilitation plan on June 15, 2021.

Will Thai Airways regain its ground post-pandemic?

Thai Airways has secured a court's approval for its business rehabilitation plan. But will it be able to execute its plan successfully?

The court-supervised rehabilitation consists of major business and financial reorganization. The business reorganization plan includes a revenue increase plan, expense reduction, work process adjustment, and organizational restructuring to sustainably increase efficiency. Financial reorganization, on the other hand, includes debt and capital restructuring.

According to rehabilitation law, Thai Airways must fully implement the rehabilitation plan in five years once it is submitted and approved by the Court, unless the Court grants an order for extension.

The rehabilitation plan was seen as fundamental for the airline that has been reporting losses since 2013.

Currently, the airline is reportedly aiming to sell older aircraft and reduce workforce by a third to cut costs. The airline plans to reduce its number of workers from 21,300 down to 14,500 by December 2022.

Thai Airways will sell 42 jets, reduce workforce by a third to cut costs

Cash-strapped Thai Airways to sell 42 jets and reduce its workforce by a third in a bid to cut costs.





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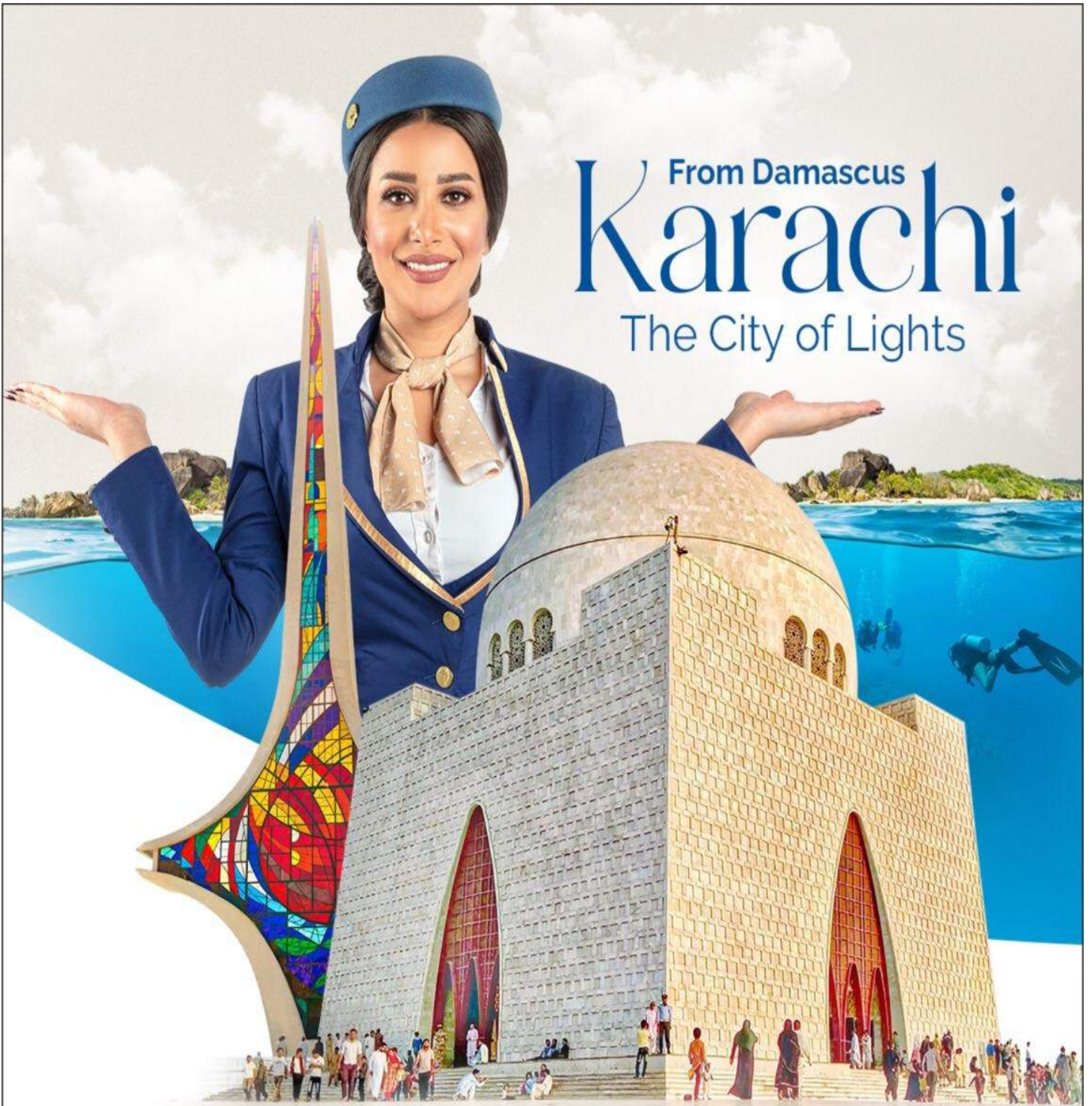


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Daily cargo clearance at PICT reaches 51pc



Cranes poised above shimmering waters at the Pakistan Deep Water Container Terminal at Keamari.

The per-day clearance of trade cargoes at the Pakistan International Container Terminal (PICT) reached 51 per cent in August from less than 40pc last year, a development that will help reduce the cost of doing business.

The information was shared during a meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Maritime Affairs presided over by Amer Ali Khan Magsi when members of the committee directed the Collectorate of Customs Appraisalment (East) Karachi for removal of blockage and congestion of containers at the PICT.

The committee was also briefed about the land encroached upon in the jurisdiction of Karachi Port Trust (KPT). The meeting noted that the encroachment has been going on for several years and the KPT administrations have willfully let it happen.

It has been done with the connivance of officials of different organisations, including the KPT, police and revenue department, etc. Although some land has been recovered, a cohesive effort is still needed by the KPT to resolve the issue, the committee recommended.

Collector of Collectorate of Customs Appraisalment (East) Karachi Fayaz Rasool Maken briefed the committee on the steps taken for the clearance of imported consignments. The automated Web-Based One-Customs cargo clearance system has ensured that 51pc of the consignments are cleared within one day.

High freight, congestion

He informed the committee that global disruptions in vessel schedules and container tariff created congestion at the ports during January and February 2021. Disruption in the international supply chain and a shortage of containers substantially increased freight charges, which further disrupted vessel schedules

affecting the entire business cycle.

This resulted in the clustering of vessels calling in at the ports at non-scheduled times, causing port congestion due to the increased container traffic. These factors coupled with the capacity issues of the PICT aggravated the situation, the collector said.

Special emphasis was placed for the disposal of overstayed cargo through rigorous auction proceedings by constituting dedicated teams of the Customs officers. The auction of overstayed containers reached 1,540 containers in 2020-21 from 787 in the previous year.

Speedy clearance

He said despite lack of proper infrastructure and equipment at the PICT, Customs took several initiatives to address the issue of port congestion and ensure expeditious clearances at the terminal.

The meeting was informed that additional space of 7,000 square metres was allocated for examination out PICT area in KPT bounded area.

Moreover, the collectorate staff conducted examinations / assessments even on consecutive Sundays and extended working hours on regular weekdays, from February to July 2021. The customs has submitted a string of proposals for further increasing the clearance of cargo and reducing the congestion at the port. It was recommended that the KPT may like to provide more space to the PICT after making a necessary arrangements with them as per law; terminal operator should significantly improve their capabilities in terms of equipment.

It was also suggested that skilled and adequate labour should be employed by the terminal operators to pre-empt any port delays.

The ministry of ports and shipping may consider deputing an independent audit agency to evaluate and improve clearances/ performance by the terminal operators in regard to their operations at the ports, the collector said.

The committee observed that the KPT is also not fulfilling its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). It will ascertain the facts behind the land encroached in the KPT, not fulfilling the obligations under CSR and not giving lower grade jobs district wise.

The committee was told about the

financial performance of the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC). IT was informed that the PNSC has prepared a Fleet Development Plan to enhance its carrying capacity keeping in view its available financial resources.

In short term, the PNSC is working on the acquisition of Aframax crude oil tankers and Ultramax bulk carrier for which international tenders have already been floated in compliance with the requirements of Public Procurement Rules, 2004.

Consumer court notice to airline for denying refund

The district consumer court has issued a notice to a private airline on the complaint of a woman passenger against non refund of two return tickets she bought for travelling from Lahore to Dubai but the flight was cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Plaintiff Hina Shafiq contended through counsel Syed Ikhtisar Ahmad that she purchased two tickets of the private airline on June 4, 2021, for a Lahore-Dubai flight on July 1. However, she said, the flight was cancelled by the airline. She said the staff of the airline told her that she could wait for the next available flight or take the 100 per cent refund anytime.

The plaintiff got her flight rescheduled for July 8 but the flight was again cancelled. Finally, her flight was rescheduled another time for July 22, however, this time the flight was cancelled due to air traveling restrictions imposed by the government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for an indefinite period.

The woman said she received a phone call from the airline on Sept 15 and she was told that her tickets had expired and she could not apply for the refund. The plaintiff said she visited the office of the airline the same day and applied for the refund of the tickets under protest but the amount had not been transferred to her.

She submitted that the act of the airline amounted to dishonesty, malpractice and unfair dealing under the purview of the Punjab Consumer Protection Act 2005. She said the act of the respondent caused her mental agony and financial loss. The woman asked the court to order the respondent airline to pay her damages to the tune of Rs1.9 million.

The court sought a reply from the airline within a week.

Air Cargo, up 9.1% in September, capacity remains constrained

Geneva- The International Air Transport Association (IATA) released September 2021 data for global air cargo markets showing that demand continued to be well above pre-crisis levels and that capacity constraints persist.

As comparisons between 2021 and 2020 monthly results are distorted by the extraordinary impact of COVID-19, unless otherwise noted, all comparisons below are to September 2019 which followed a normal demand pattern.

- Global demand, measured in cargo tonne-kilometers (CTKs*), was up 9.1% compared to September 2019 (9.4% for international operations).
- Capacity remains constrained at 8.9% below pre-COVID-19 levels (September 2019) (-12% for international operations).

Several factors impacting global air cargo demand should be noted:

- Supply chain disruptions and the resulting delivery delays have led to long supplier delivery times. This typically means manufacturers use air transport, which is quicker, to recover time lost during the production process. The September global Supplier Delivery Time Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) was at 36, values below 50 are favorable for air cargo.
- The September new export orders component and manufacturing output component of the PMIs have deteriorated from levels in previous month but remain in favorable territory. Manufacturing activity continued to expand at a global level but, there was contraction in emerging economies.
- The inventory-to-sales ratio remains low ahead of the peak year-end retail events such as Single's Day, Black Friday and Cyber Monday. This is positive for air cargo, however further capacity constraints put this at risk.
- The cost-competitiveness of air cargo relative to that of container shipping remains favorable. Pre-crisis, the average price to move air

cargo was 12.5 times more expensive than sea shipping. In September 2021 it was only three times more expensive.

"Air cargo demand grew 9.1% in September compared to pre-COVID levels. There is a benefit from supply chain congestion as manufacturers turn to air transport for speed. But severe capacity constraints continue to limit the ability of air cargo to absorb extra demand. If not addressed, bottlenecks in the supply chain will slow the economic recovery from COVID-19. Governments must act to relieve pressure on global supply chains and improve their overall resilience," said Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General.

To relieve supply chain disruptions, including those highlighted by the US on supply chain resilience on the sidelines of last weekend's G20 Summit, IATA is calling on governments to:

- Ensure that air crew operations are not hindered by COVID-19 restrictions designed for air travelers.
- Implement the commitments governments made at the ICAO High Level Conference on COVID-19 to restore international connectivity. This will ramp-up vital cargo capacity with "belly" space.
- Provide innovative policy incentives to address labor shortages where they exist.

(1) % of industry CTKs in 2020 (2) Change in load factor vs same month in 2019 (3) Load factor level

Note: the total industry and regional growth rates are based on a constant sample of airlines combining reported

data and estimates for missing observations. Airline traffic is allocated according to the region in which the carrier is registered; it should not be considered as regional traffic. Historical statistics are subject to revision.

September Regional Performance

Asia-Pacific airlines saw their international air cargo volumes increase 4.5% in September 2021 compared to the same month in 2019. This was a slowdown in demand compared to the previous month's 5.1% expansion. Demand is being affected by slowing manufacturing activity in China. International capacity is significantly constrained in the region, down 18.2% vs. September 2019. Looking forward, the decision by some countries in the region to lift travel restrictions should provide a boost for capacity.

North American carriers posted a 19.3% increase in international cargo volumes in September 2021 compared to September 2019. New export orders and demand for faster shipping times are underpinning the North American performance. International capacity was down 4.0% compared to September 2019, a slight improvement from the previous month.

European carriers saw a 5.3% increase in international cargo volumes in September 2021 compared to the same month in 2019. This was on a par with August's performance (5.6%). Demand was strongest on the large North Atlantic trade lane (up 6.9% vs September 2019). Performance on other routes was weaker. Manufacturing activity, orders and long

Air cargo market detail

September 2021

September 2021 % Vs AUGUST 2021	worldshare	¹	ctk	actk	CLF(%CLF(LEVEL) PT) ²	³
Total Market	100%		9.1%	8.9%	9.1%	55.3%
Africa	2.0%	32.8%	4.6%	9.1%	42.8%	
Asia Pacific	32.6%	0.2%	21.0%	14.1%	68.0%	
Europe	22.3%	5.9%	12.4%	10.4%	60.4%	
Latin America	2.4%	15.7%	15.0%	0.3%	37.0%	
Middle East	13.0%	17.6%	4.1%	10.3%	55.8%	
North America	27.8%	22.6%	4.0%	6.8%	44.7%	

supplier delivery times remain favorable to air cargo demand. International capacity was down 13.5% on September 2019.

Middle Eastern carriers experienced a 17.6% rise in international cargo volumes in September 2021 versus September 2019, an improvement compared to the previous month (14.7%). International capacity was down 4% compared to September 2019.

Latin American carriers reported a decline of 17.1% in international cargo volumes in September compared to the 2019 period, which was the weakest performance of all regions. This was also slightly worse than the previous month (a 14.5% fall). Capacity in September was down 20.9% on pre-crisis levels, an improvement from August, which was down 24.2% on the same month in 2019. African airlines saw international cargo volumes increase by 34.6% in September, the largest increase of all regions for the ninth consecutive month. Seasonally-adjusted volumes are now 20% above pre-crisis 2019 levels but have been trending sideways for the past six months. International capacity was 6.9% higher than pre-crisis levels, the only region in positive territory, albeit on small volumes.

Islamabad airport handles first Afghan cargo

Commerce Adviser Abdul Razak Dawood said on Friday 15 Oct. the government was fully focused on boosting trade and exports with Afghanistan.

He said peace in Afghanistan and strengthening of economic relationship between the two countries would help increase bilateral trade.

Talking to media on the occasion of first cargo handling from Islamabad airport to Afghanistan via road, the minister said it was a historic moment. The cargo reached the airport via a private air company WF Integral. Mr Razak said despite having a cargo handling facility at Islamabad Airport, the complex remained inactive for international transportation. 'This facility would also help in despatching goods coming from other countries to Afghanistan,' he added.

IATA appoints Chief Economist



The International Air Transport Association (IATA) announced that Marie Owens Thomsen will join the Association as its Chief Economist effective 4 January 2022.

Owens Thomsen will come from Banque Lombard Odier, where she has served as Head of Global Trends and Sustainability since 2020. Prior to that she was the long-time Global Head of Investment Intelligence (2011-2020) at Indosuez Wealth Management. Additionally, she has served in Chief Economist and related roles for Merrill Lynch, Dresdner Kleinwort Benson and HSBC. Her varied career also includes entrepreneurship and market development activities.

"Marie's work on macro-economic issues with a focus on sustainability will prepare her to address aviation's top issues namely recovery from COVID-19 and sustainability. Coming from outside the aviation sector, she will bring valuable new insights and perspectives. And I am confident that she will carry on IATA's reputation for objective reporting and analysis that is essential for explaining aviation's contribution to the global economy and advocating for the policies airlines need to be successful," said Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General.

"I am joining IATA to contribute to the aviation sector which has been a formidable long-term driver of economic growth. I'll do this with a research approach that identifies causal factors for critical issues and their high-priority solutions. This is important as aviation begins the recovery from COVID-19 and continues the journey to net zero emissions. I look forward to a future where aviation can flourish within a sustainable

global economy," said Owens Thomsen.

Owens Thomsen holds a PhD in International Economics from The Graduate Institute in Geneva and an MBA equivalent from the University of Gothenburg in International Economics and Business. Holding US, UK and Swiss nationalities, she has worked in the UK, France and Switzerland and is fluent in Swedish, English and French.

Owens Thomsen succeeds Brian Pearce who retired from IATA earlier this year after serving as Chief Economist since 2004.

ICAO's standardized runway reporting format has now become applicable

The ICAO Global Reporting Format (GRF) for assessing and reporting runway surface conditions, became applicable worldwide on 4 November 2021. This harmonization of the assessment and reporting of runway surface conditions is intended to mitigate the risk of runway excursions, which continues to be the most common form of aviation accidents. It will also benefit efficiency and sustainability, through a better planning of contaminant removal and the more effective use of de-icing and other treatments.

The GRF comprises a number of elements:

- A harmonized matrix through which a trained observer allocates runway condition codes and descriptors;

- A Runway Condition Report (RCR) containing the above information, which is transmitted to flight crew;

- The flight crew's correlation of the RCR with aircraft performance data, enabling them to calculate their take-off or landing performance; and

A facility for flight crew to provide observations of runway surface conditions.

ICAO reports that the implementation of the GRF is still ongoing in many States.

Filed under: Regulations by HarroRanter

CAA barred from running wedding halls on airport premises

The Supreme Court on Tuesday 26 Oct. directed the director general of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to appear before it along with details of alleged allotment of a piece of land near Karachi airport to private persons by the Sindh Board of Revenue (BoR) despite the fact that it was earlier allotted to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) for building a new terminal.

While expressing resentment over the CAA for running wedding halls on its premises near the airport, a three-judge SC bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Gulzar Ahmed also restrained the aviation regulator from using its land at Karachi and all other airports of the country for commercial purposes.

The bench made it clear that the CAA must not use its land other than the airport and allied services.

CAA Director General Khaqan Murtaza appeared before the bench hearing a petition against alleged allotment of the authority's land to private person by BoR.

He submitted that the land measuring 209 acres allotted to the CAA in 1992 for setting up a new terminal, but the BoR had illegally allotted it to private persons by bifurcating it into plots.

He further submitted that the CAA had referred the matter to the FIA as some officials of the CAA were also involved in illegal allotments and the agency found allotment documents fake and forged.

About the joint survey of the land in question carried out on the directive of the Public Accounts Committee, he maintained that the BoR had not provided them the copy of the survey.

Regarding a new survey, Justice Ahsan asked the BoR that who had ordered the second survey and whether BoR was curving out fake plots on the pretext of the new survey.

He also questioned as to how the SRB allotted a piece of land belonged to the federal government to private persons.

Senior Member BoR Shamsuddin Soomro submitted that the land in question was not allotted to the CAA as per market value. Upon which, the CJP asked which land the provincial authorities had allotted on the basis of its per market value.

The CAA chief submitted contended that the BoR illegally allotted the land located within the boundary of the CAA to private persons.

During the proceedings, the CJP berated the CAA chief for running marriage halls on the premises of the airport.

DG Murtaza submitted that the CAA law stated that authority's land could be used for revenue generation.

At this, the CJP asked him to quit the aviation industry and start the business of holding weddings. Upon which, Mr Murtaza said that the CAA was ready to shut the marriage halls if the court directed it to do so.

While responding to another question

of the CJP about thin activities at the airport, the CAA chief submitted that international flights had been decreased, but still 60 to 80 flights were landing at Karachi airport on a daily basis.

Amadeus signs Delta distribution deal

Amadeus and Delta Air Lines have announced a new global distribution agreement, providing travellers with a full range of options via the Amadeus Travel Platform for enhanced retailing.

Through this new value-based distribution agreement, Amadeus-connected travel sellers will have access to the full range of Delta's products thanks to an optimised shopping display that provides expanded product options on all flights including attributes and ancillary services.

This expands customer choice and allows the airline, and its travel agency partners, to deliver more value and relevant content for travellers.

"We commend Amadeus for its commitment to innovation.

"Aligning the travel distribution ecosystem with value-creation and shopping display improvements that will benefit all customers in their channels of choice," said Jeff Lobl, managing director of global distribution, Delta Air Lines.

"This agreement completes the transformation of Delta's distribution partnerships as we work together to elevate the customer experience in our indirect channels."

The Amadeus Travel Platform offers the broadest range of content across multiple channels so travel sellers and buyers can easily shop, sell and service unique offers from Delta through a range of front-end solutions, including Amadeus Selling Platform Connect, Amadeus Web Services and the Cytric self-booking and expense solution.

"We are pleased to continue this collaboration with Delta, further solidifying our long-standing partnership to power great journeys together.

"As we navigate through Covid-19 and look to rebuild travel for the future, bringing back traveller confidence will be key.

"Together we are working towards these goals by modernising the shopping experience and creating more value for travel sellers and travellers through Amadeus' advanced distribution solutions", said Javier Laforgue, executive vice president, air distribution, Amadeus.



A Leonardo twin-engined tilt-rotor vertical take-off and landing aircraft performs a demonstration flight at the Dubai Airshow.

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AirLog GSA Gulf Air Cargo hosts reception for Cargo Agents in Lahore

AirLog Pakistan, a part of the Air Logistics Group, has been appointed as cargo GSA for Gulf Air Cargo (GF) in Pakistan, effective August 15.

Gulf Air has a large fleet of aircraft and can carry a wide variety of products, ranging from perishables and oversized freight to dangerous goods and valuable cargo as well as live animals. GF operates direct flights from seven cities across Pakistan: Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Sialkot, Faisalabad, Peshawar, and Multan to Bahrain and beyond to Middle East, Europe, Africa and Asia.



Mr. Imran Peracha MD AirLog, Mr. M. Sohail Peracha Director Sales and a guest.



Group photo with Mr. Imran Peracha and Mr. M. Sohail Peracha.



Group photo graph taken on the occasion of a reception hosted by AirLog Pakistan GSA Gulf Air Cargo in Pakistan for Cargo Agents of Lahore.

AirLog GSA Gulf Air Cargo hosts reception for Cargo Agents in Sialkot



Mr. Imran Peracha MD and Mr. M. Sohail Peracha Director Sales AirLog, Mr. M Yousaf CEO Pakistan Cargo, Mr. Mudasar Rafique Sales Manager (North) and Mr. Rizwan Mahmood Station Supervisor Sialkot, Air Log.



Mr. M. Yousaf Presents Bouquet to Mr. Imran Peracha and Mr. Sohail Peracha also seen in the picture are Mr. Amjad Fakhri, Mr. Khawaja Usman, Mr. Amir Sheikh, Mr. Sajjad Dharsi, Mr. Wajjahat and Mr. Rizwan Mahmood.



Mr. Rizwan Mahmood with AirLog Pakistan staff.



Mr. M. Yousaf in conversation with Mr. Imran Peracha and Sohail Peracha.



Mr. Rizwan Mahmood and Mr. Mudasar Rafique.



Group photo with Mr. Imran Peracha.



12 passengers at large after fleeing plane in Spain emergency landing

Mallorca police arrested 12 passengers and were seeking 12 more recently who fled a plane during an emergency landing in an “unprecedented” incident possibly linked to illegal immigration, officials said.

The unauthorised exodus followed a passenger apparently being taking ill on a flight from Morocco to Turkey, with the plane forced to stage an emergency landing at Palma de Mallorca, one of Spain's busiest airports.

“Twelve people have been arrested and 12 more have yet to be found,” Aina Calvo, the Spanish government's representative in the Balearic Islands, told a news conference.

“Such events have never taken place before at any airport in Spain.” Police earlier said a passenger “apparently suffered a diabetic coma and was taken by ambulance to hospital with a companion” but on arrival was found to be fine and discharged.

“He was arrested on suspicion of encouraging illegal immigration and violating Spanish immigration law,” a police statement said, noting his companion had fled.

During the evacuation, another 21 passengers got out of the plane at around 7pm on Friday evening and ran onto the runway, Calvo said, prompting a massive police search that forced the closure of the airport until around midnight.

Another person was arrested for “insults and aggression” inside the plane, raising to 24 the total number involved in the incident most of them Moroccans except for one “who we believe is Palestinian”, she said, adding that the incident was “unprecedented”.

Pre-planned or on a whim?

Investigators were examining “whether what happened at the airport was an orchestrated, planned event or an isolated incident”, she said.

“At this stage we do not have any information that allows us to confirm that this was an orchestrated operation... or part of a pre-determined plan. But the investigation is still open.”

Calvo said the plane had been on the tarmac “for quite some time” before the other passengers decided to disembark.

“At this point, we cannot clearly say why these 21 people decided to rush onto the runway.” Those that fled the plane would be prosecuted for non-compliance with air safety regulations and irregular entry into Spain, and would be deported to their country of origin, Calvo said.

None of them had applied for political asylum, she added. Following the investigation, medical emergency protocols would be reviewed to see if anything needed changing in light of the incident, she added.

According to aircraft tracker FlightRadar24, the plane was an Air Arabia Maroc Airbus A320 flying between Casablanca and Istanbul.

During the incident, 13 planes bound for Palma were rerouted to other airports, and 16 departing flights suffered significant delays, AENA said.

Emirates and Garuda establish a codeshare partnership



Emirates and Garuda Indonesia have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a codeshare partnership between both airlines.

Subject to required regulatory approvals, the codeshare agreement is expected to come into effect from January 2022.

Anadn Kazim, chief commercial officer, Emirates said: “We are pleased to forge a codeshare partnership with Garuda Indonesia to provide our customers with access to additional destinations in Indonesia and which also allows them to enjoy seamless and convenient connectivity to eight domestic destinations to and from Dubai and to our global network through Jakarta, and three destinations through Denpasar.

Under the codeshare agreement, Emirates will connect to and from Denpasar (DPS), Surabaya (SUB), Makassar (UPG), Balikpapan (BPN), Manado (MDC), Medan (MES), Padang (PDG) and Solo (SOC) airports on flights operated by Garuda Indonesia from Jakarta (CGK), to Dubai.

Additionally, routes directly connecting Denpasar (DPS) with

Surabaya (SUB) and Makassar (UPG), will be available.

Garuda Indonesia will also add their marketing code to flights on eight routes, operated by Emirates, including between Dubai and Jakarta (CGK), Denpasar (DPS), Bahrain (BAH), Moscow (DME), Johannesburg (JNB), Cairo (CAI) London (LHR) and Manchester (MAN).

Qatar Airways and China Southern expand their codeshare agreement

Qatar Airways and China Southern Airlines has signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) confirming a significant expansion of the existing codeshare agreement, and outlining greater benefits and more seamless connections between the two partners.

The comprehensive MoU signed by Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker, and China Southern Airlines President and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Han Wensheng, builds upon the existing codeshare agreement signed by the airlines in December 2019.

As part of the collaboration, all future flights between China and Qatar will be codeshared, allowing passengers to benefit from seamless connecting flights. The closer cooperation will also provide greater customer benefits, including increased joint lounge access and a soon-to-be confirmed enhanced frequent flyer agreement. In addition, the two airlines agreed to support the growth of Beijing's Daxing International Airport, into a leading international aviation hub for both passenger and cargo services.

The expanded codeshare agreement is the latest development in Qatar Airways program of strengthening strategic cooperation between key global airlines, which has already seen partnerships with American Airlines, JetBlue, Alaska Airlines, Oman Air and RwandaAir in recent months.

The enhanced cooperation between Qatar Airways and China Southern Airlines is subject to the lifting of current travel restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and regulatory approvals.

The national carrier of the State of Qatar continues to rebuild its network, which currently stands at over 140 destinations. With more frequencies being added to key hubs, Qatar Airways offers unrivaled connectivity to passengers, making it easy for them to change their travel dates or destination as required.



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Pakistan renews pledge to implement GSP+related conventions

Pakistan has reaffirmed its commitment to effective implementation of the GSP Plus-related international conventions.

The assurance was given by Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi to EU Parliament's Delegation for Relations with the Countries of South Asia, led by Nicola Procaccini, which called on him here on Wednesday 3rd Nov.

The foreign minister said the EU's GSP+ facility to Pakistan had been mutually beneficial and it had played an important role in the growth of trade between the two sides.

Views were exchanged on various aspects of the Pakistan-EU relations and regional and international developments during the meeting.

Recalling his meeting with EU High Representative Josep Borrell and his earlier virtual interaction with the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs, Mr Qureshi said the Pakistan-EU Strategic Engagement Plan had ushered in a new phase by laying a solid foundation and framework for multidimensional cooperation between the two sides.

The foreign minister highlighted the enormous potential in diverse areas such as commerce and trade, sustainable development and climate change and stressed the importance of translating them into tangible outcomes to further deepen Pakistan-EU relations.

He conveyed Pakistan's readiness to continue to work for a productive and constructive partnership and underscored the importance of regular interactions between the two sides.

He also appreciated the EU's support for Pakistan in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. The foreign minister also gave an account of various measures taken by the government for the welfare of the people of Pakistan.

The two sides exchanged views on the latest developments in Afghanistan.

The foreign minister highlighted that Pakistan had suffered the most due to conflict and instability in Afghanistan over the past 40 years and that a peaceful and stable Afghanistan was in the best interest of Pakistan.

Mr Qureshi said that there was realisation in the international community to engage with Afghanistan. He underlined that a humanitarian crisis and economic collapse in Afghanistan could have enormous consequences for the entire world.

He stressed that the Afghan people should not be abandoned and that the international community should remain positively engaged to advance shared



objectives of peace, security, development and connectivity.

The foreign minister highlighted Pakistan's efforts, including its initiative of establishing the platform of six neighbouring countries of Afghanistan.

The foreign minister also briefed the visiting delegation on Pakistan's assistance in the EU citizens' evacuation from Afghanistan when the Taliban took over the country.

He also apprised the delegation of the grave human rights violations in India-held Kashmir.

Mr Qureshi stressed that Pakistan desired good relations with all neighbours. He highlighted Pakistan's efforts to promote peace in the region and underlined that the onus was on India to create an enabling environment for a result-oriented engagement.

The two sides agreed to further enhance interaction in diverse areas through various established mechanisms and high-level exchanges.

The EU delegation thanked Pakistan for its assistance in the evacuation of EU nationals from Afghanistan.

The EU delegation is currently on a three-day visit to Pakistan. They held extensive meetings with other government functionaries. The visit is a part of regular interactions between the two sides.

Textile exports up 26.55pc in 4MFY22

The exports of textile and clothing posted growth of 26.55 per cent in the first four months of this year to \$6.02 billion compared to \$4.75bn over the year, data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) showed on Monday 15 November.

The growth momentum in textile and clothing export is steady on the back of rising demand from the global market as well as massive depreciation of the rupee as exports posted growth of over 24.24pc in October from a year ago.

The Ministry of Commerce estimates that the easing of lockdown in North America and European countries top markets for Pakistani textile goods will help boost the exports. The demand for textiles collapsed during the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, but eventually recovered in the outgoing fiscal year.

In the budget 2021-22, the government had drastically reduced duty and taxes on imports of several hundred raw materials to bring down the input cost of exportable products. Liquidity issues were also resolved to a large extent by timely releasing refunds as well as payment of cash subsidies.

With a delay of more than two years, the government has recently announced the Strategic Trade Policy Framework for the non-textile sector. However, the textile and clothing sector specific policy is still awaited.

The PBS data showed ready-made garments exports jumped by 22.34pc in value and in quantity by 20.50pc during July-Oct FY22, while those of knitwear edged up 35.45pc in value, but dipped 13.11pc in quantity, bedwear posted

positive growth of 21.30pc in value and 23.53pc in quantity.

Towel exports were up by 14.17pc in value and 7.75pc in quantity, whereas those of cotton cloth rose by 18.54pc in value and dipped by 76.83pc in quantity.

Among primary commodities, cotton yarn exports surged by 71.39pc, while yarn other than cotton by 114pc. The export of made-up articles excluding towels rose by 11.55pc, and tents, canvas and tarpaulin dipped by a massive 23.98pc during the months under review. The export of raw cotton declined by 100pc during the months under review.

The import of textile machinery increased by 110pc in July-Oct FY22 a sign that expansion or modernisation projects were taken up by the textile industry during the months.

To bridge the shortfall in the domestic sector, the industry imported 235,691 tonnes of raw cotton in July-Oct FY22 against 183,216 tonnes last year, an increase of 28.64pc.

Similarly, the import of synthetic fibre posted a slight decline of 1.05pc as industry imported 169,337 tonnes this year as against 171,140 tonnes. The import of synthetic and artificial silk yarn stood at 132,610 tonnes this year as against 128,826 tonnes last year, a rise of 2.94pc.

The import of worn clothing recorded a growth of 189pc to 340,359 tonnes this year as against 117,725 tonnes last year.

The overall country's exports posted a growth of over 24.94pc year-on-year to \$9.46bn in July-Oct FY22 compared to \$7.57bn in the corresponding period last year.

Chinese firms briefed on CPEC opportunities

The government recently hosted a marketing session for about 70 Chinese companies as it seeks to trigger the second phase industrial development of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

CPEC Authority (CPECA) chairman Khalid Mansoor briefed the chief executive officers and representatives of the Chinese companies on latest developments on the CPEC horizon, various business opportunities and incentives for investment.

Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar, the Board of Investment chairman and Chinese ambassador in Islamabad also attended the session. Some Chinese companies joined it through video link.

Mr Mansoor told the Chinese companies that phase-II of the CPEC was aimed at enhancing bilateral cooperation in industrial, technological and agricultural sectors for which business-to-business collaboration would be a hallmark of success and opportunities, according to an official statement.

He highlighted that four out of the nine agreed on special economic zones (SEZs) along with Gwadar Free Zone under the auspices of CPEC were now at an advanced stage of development and investors had started populating these SEZs.

'Pakistan offers regionally competitive incentives in SEZs, including 10-year income tax exemption and exemption of customs duty on import of capital goods, he said, adding that the CPECA was setting up a facilitation centre to provide all kinds of support to the CPEC investors.

This will be a platform for serving as one window operation for the investors through coordination with various ministries as well as the provinces.

Explaining the importance of phase-II of the bilateral cooperation, the CPECA chairman said the key objective was to accelerate socio-economic development of Pakistan by bringing industrial, technological and agricultural revolution through Chinese investment and transfer of technology.

For this to achieve, he added, focus was on export growth (in areas like textiles, information technology, etc) and import substitution (like steel, agricultural productivity, etc) sectors by creating local employment opportunities and promoting joint ventures to make Pakistan a manufacturing hub.

Mr Mansoor said the CPECA would enable 'plug & play environment' for development of special economic zones

by empowered SEZs management companies to facilitate investors so as to create strong linkages with key state and economic entities in China.

Asad Umar urged the Chinese investors to explore more investment opportunities in industrial, agricultural and information technology areas. He said that due to a special relationship between the two countries, the government and

Pakistan, Australia agree to relax trade rules

Pakistan and Australia on Monday 15 Nov. agreed to review and work towards relaxing trade regulations for importing and exporting fruits and agricultural products.

This was decided during a meeting between Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhr Imam and Australian Trade Commissioner in Pakistan John Cavanagh in Islamabad.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Imam said Pakistan has limited exports to Australia in terms of mangoes and citrus fruits due to strict regulations of the National Plant Protection Organisation of Australia. The export of mangoes to Australia has increased from two tonnes in 2013 to 75 tonnes in 2021, however with little focus, the level of this export can be enhanced manifold, he added.

With respect to citrus fruits, the two countries agreed to work together in eradicating the citrus canker disease in order to increase citrus export to Australia.

The minister informed the Australian trade commissioner that the export of citrus fruit from Pakistan has increased from 350,000 tonnes to approximately 460,000 tonnes in just one year. Moreover, the export of mangoes has increased from 110,000 tonnes to 142,000 tonnes in the last year. Pakistan has huge export potential in terms of vegetables and fruits such as mango, citrus fruits and apple cherries.

The Australian trade commissioner informed the federal minister that Australia will provide technical agricultural trainings to Pakistan to uplift quality of human resources. Mr Cavanagh said that upgradation of technology and human resource is the key to revolutionising agriculture sector.

He said that transfer of agro-technology through private sector coordination of both countries can take the agro-economy of Pakistan forward. He also agreed to enhance agricultural research through transfer of quality human resource to research institutes of the country.

people of Pakistan would wish to see much greater investment from China.

He solicited the support of Chinese companies working in Pakistan in order to attract more foreign direct investment in the country.

The Chinese ambassador expressed his appreciation for the event which brought together all the Chinese companies and said Chinese enterprises would work closely with the CPEC Authority to increase their business and investment activities in Pakistan.

Mr Imam said on the occasion that technological exchange between Australia and Pakistan can enhance the agricultural sector of the country. He also stressed on the need to import agro-technology and upgrade human resource in agriculture sector of Pakistan.

Mr Imam said that Pakistan and Australia should enhance their relationship in regard to agro-economy especially through enhancing bilateral trade, and transfer of agro-technology.

55,000 visited Pakistan pavilion, at Dubai Expo

Adviser to the PM on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood on Thursday 14 Oct. said that Pakistan Pavilion received 55,000 visitors in just the opening week of Dubai Expo-2020, making it one of the busiest pavilions of the mega event.

The pavilion's first look is such a magnificent facade, established by Pakistan's renowned visual artist Rashid Rana, that 20,000 people visited it over the weekend Thursday-Friday-Saturday.

"The response we received was overwhelming and the number of visitors we had in the first week was beyond our expectations," Mr Dawood said in an official announcement.

The adviser thanked all visitors coming to the pavilion and exhibiting their interest in Pakistan's culture, and appreciating the richness and diversity it holds. It is a country of great opportunities for tourism and investment, he said.

The Dubai Expo-2020 will run from October 1 this year to March 31, 2022. It will be an excellent opportunity for Pakistan to connect around the world. During this period, 25 million people from 192 countries will visit the Expo.

Pakistan, Iran set \$5bn trade target by 2023

Pakistan and Iran have agreed to take measures to expand the annual trade exchanges to \$5 billion by the year 2023.

“Understanding of the new trade target was reached during the ninth meeting of Iran-Pakistan Joint Trade Committee held in Tehran,” said a commerce ministry official announcement released on Saturday 6 November.

Iranian Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade Reza Fatemi Amin said both countries were determined to expand annual trade exchanges.

Emphasizing the need for accurate programming in a way that provides Pakistani partners with the opportunity to invest in Iran, the minister said that hurdles would be lifted within three months to pave the way for expansion of free trade.

Mr Amin noted Pakistani and Iranian officials had already held talks on economic cooperation and the joint trade committee was tasked with paving the ground for enhancing trade ties between the two countries.

He referred to the determination for expansion of bilateral economic relations, stipulating that Iran was ready to remove obstacles in the way of developing trade exchanges with Pakistan in a bid to enhance economic ties with the neighboring country.

The joint committee pursues issues such as the free trade agreement (FTA) between the two countries as well as organizing exhibitions.

The meeting was attended by senior Iranian and Pakistani authorities as well as business and banking officials.

Reciprocating same feelings, Adviser to the PM on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood said Pakistan also wished to enhance bilateral trade with Iran.

He offered to expand trade in the field of transportation, increase the basket of barter trade, build joint border markets as well as reduce tariffs.

Both countries have already made planning and agreements on strategic cooperation, the adviser recalled, adding they were yet to be implemented. “I express the hope that necessary steps will begin from today,” he said.

Iranian official news agency, IRNA, quoted the Iranian minister of industry as saying that Tehran and Islamabad had planned to cooperate in the areas of home appliances and dairy.

The minister said Iran and Pakistan despite being two important countries in the region had so far not used properly their economic capacities. He said trade

obstacles to free trade between Tehran and Islamabad would be removed within the next three months.

Pakistan has a narrow export basket to Iran, as 63 per cent of the exports comprised rice alone. A preferential trade agreement (PTA) was signed with Iran in 2006. Tariff concessions were granted to Iran on 309 tariff lines whereas Pakistan was given concessions on 338 tariff lines. Major sectors covered under the PTA were rice, fruits, cotton, cotton yarn, pharmaceutical products and cutlery.

In the year 2017, both sides also decided to finalise the proposed FTA by November. The trade negotiating committee of both countries held two rounds of discussions on the FTA when it was projected that the agreement would

increase bilateral trade from \$300 million in 2016 to \$5 billion by 2021.

However, unavailability of a payment mechanism casts a shadow on the viability of a much-awaited agreement.

Until the regular banking channel was established for a mode of payment, the target to increase trade to \$5bn in the next two years might also remain only on paper, a senior officer of the commerce ministry said.

“If there is no payment mechanism, then there is no importance of such an agreement,” the officer added.

While Iran has about 959 joint border crossings with Pakistan, it remains to be seen how many border crossings will be declared for trade.

Pak-Afghan trade resumes as Chaman border reopens

Pakistani and Afghan authorities reopened the Chaman border on Tuesday 2nd Nov. after nearly a month, allowing goods transport and citizens of both countries to cross after clearance from security and customs officials.

The Chaman crossing a major transit point for truckers moving fruit exports from the southern Afghan city of Kandahar reopened after a final round of talks between Pakistani and Afghan authorities at Spin Buldak on Monday evening.

The Taliban authorities in Kandahar had closed the border on October 5, without informing the Pakistani border authorities on the issue of border crossing without travel documents.

Chaman and Kandahar residents allowed to cross the border on showing identity, travel papers, says official

Heavy cement blocks and boulders placed at the entry points were removed on Tuesday morning as the border remained open from 8am till 5pm without break.

“The border is opened to all kind of traffic and the people for crossing into Pakistan and Afghanistan,” a senior security border official said. He explained that Afghan authorities removed all huge cement blocks and other barricades they had put on the border to facilitate border crossing without any hurdle.

Several thousand Pakistani and Afghan citizens who were waiting to return to their countries crossed the border after completing the procedure agreed upon by the authorities on the two sides.

“Crossing of border is allowed on showing Afghan national identity cards (Terkeera) and Pakistan CNIC, belonging to Chaman and Kandahar,” the immigration officials said, adding that a large number of people from both sides crossed the border.

With the reopening of Chaman border, Afghan transit trade resumed as trucks carrying goods were allowed to cross after clearance. “Hundreds of trucks crossed into Pakistan from Afghanistan and into Afghan areas after customs clearance,” customs officials told media.

Both countries were deprived of millions of rupees of customs duty and other taxes due to the border closure for 27 days.

Several rounds of talks between officials of the two sides had been held in Chaman and Spin Buldak, but remained fruitless as Kandahar Governor Yousaf Wafa insisted that Afghan nationals be allowed to cross into Pakistan without travel documents.

Thousands of Pakistanis and Afghan citizens, including patients, were stranded on both sides of the border while all trade between the two countries, including Afghan transit trade, also suffered. Hundreds of trucks carrying goods, including fresh fruits and vegetable, were stuck due to the month-long closure of the Chaman crossing.

Members of business and trade community had staged several protests during the past month against the closure. Even traffic on the Quetta-Chaman National Highway had been blocked to press the authorities to reopen one of the main Pak-Afghan border crossings.

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The Honest Taxi Driver

By: Zeenat Iqbal

What all is involved in a taxi drivers life; physical labour and not much exercise for the grey matter. One such driver was Anwar. He got his driving license from the back door. He did not learn how to drive a car, neither was he aware of the traffic rules and regulations. He was however, a man with a generous heart, known for his hospitality.

Overheard conversation, as he sat with his mates at a tea stall. "Tea keeps me on my feet", have another, everything should be done in moderation". "Tea is a milder addiction". The conversation drifted to the price of petrol and passengers. "Things have become so expensive. I bought a kilo of meat for Rs. 150/-. It seems that if the price does not come down, it will be difficult for us to make ends meet".

One of the reasons why Anwar stood out amongst his mates was his wife. She never harassed him for extra money. The hard work that he put in was evident from his bronze rugged skin tone. Tanned from the hours, days, years that he had spent driving his cab, exposed to the merciless sun. He was so vigilant that he pierced the distance with the sight of an eagle soaring in the skies and nose-diving to pick up the prey from ground. Proof of his vigilance, "stop the thief, " cried the lady, whose purse had been snatched. Nobody moved from amongst the onlookers. Anwar from a distance approached the scene of the theft; "move aside" he roared "corner the thief". The thief was a smart cookie. Dodging Anwar he entered the alley and hid behind a rubbish can. To the thief's misfortune a cat inside the can scared of the noise the thief made, leapt out of it. Anwar pounced on the thief and recovered the money from him.

Like the lady above, his work led him to interact with persons from various stratas of society. Sometimes there were persons from affluent families also. One bright sunny day when fate was to take a turn for Anwar, Mr. and Mrs. Ahmed sat in his cab. "We want to go to Nazimabad. Will you take us?" "Hope in." said Anwar. "We are going to this place for the first time. I hope you will be able to follow our instructions," said Mr. Ahmed. After clearing a few traffic jams, they finally arrived at the destination. They got off on the main road and said they would manage on foot the rest of the way.

To his utter surprise Anwar found a

parcel on the back seat of his cab. This was when he stopped for a meal after dropping Mr and Mrs. Ahmed. The parcel had jewellery inside. He was somewhat anxious regarding how to locate them so that he could give them their parcel back. He searched for some form of identification, but to no avail. His friends tried to persuade him to keep the parcel. But he took pride in being honest and there was no way he would compromise over it.

Little did he know that this parcel was to seal the fate of a couple about to be married? The couple was Ammar and Shagufta. Ammar and Shagufta had been engaged for a year. It was customary to give dowry to the daughter. Not to display wealth, but to support her in her new home, till she was self-sufficient.

He reached home and asked his wife to keep the parcel in safe custody. Weeks passed, and behold, he spotted Mrs. Ahmed. She was shopping in a market where he had just dropped a passenger. He hurriedly approached her and told her that she had forgotten a parcel in his taxi. She told him, she had searched for this parcel. She could not hold back her happiness and gratitude. "I was so worried. The parcel had jewellery, which was my daughter's dowry. I had fallen sick due to the loss."

This jewellery was an heirloom. It had been handed down from Shagufta's grandmother to Shagufta's mother and then to her. The grandmother was married to one of Ammar's father's uncles. Shagufta's grandmother had grey eyes and brown hair and so had Shagufta. These qualities endeared Shagufta to Ammar.

Anwar arranged for the jewels to be returned to Mrs. Ahmed. "We will expect you and your family at the wedding". Mrs. Ahmed's happiness knew no bounds. The return of the jewellery meant a big load off her delicate shoulders. Mrs. Ahmed just could not stop praising Anwar. She told everyone she met, about how honest he was and how difficult, it was to find people like him. She thanked God, five times a day, when she prayed.

"Welcome Anwar". Anwar was welcomed in a big way at the wedding. All the family were eager to know him, although he was not a rich man and the other guests were all, well, rich people. But who could deny, that Anwar was 'rich at heart'. The richest in the gathering at the wedding. He walked, in with his head held high. He felt so good, after returning the jewels. Although he was in a gathering of rich people, he did not feel reached the pace.

3,000 visas to Sikh pilgrims issued



Sikh pilgrims from different countries visit the shrine of Baba Guru Nanak Dev at the Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur.

Pakistan High Commission on Friday 12 Nov. issued about 3,000 visas to Indian Sikh pilgrims to enable them to participate in the 552nd birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak in Pakistan on Nov 17-26.

According to a press release issued by the High Commission, the Sikh pilgrims during their stay in Pakistan will visit different Gurdwaras, including Gurdwara Janam Asthan in Nankana Sahib and Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur.

Visas to the Sikh pilgrims have been issued under the Pakistan-India Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines of 1974, which provides for visit of 3,000 Sikh pilgrims from India for birthday celebrations of Guru Nanak.

Thousands of Sikh pilgrims residing in countries other than India will also be visiting Pakistan to attend the event.

Prime Minister Imran Khan has taken several initiatives to facilitate Sikh pilgrims, including the historic opening of the visa-free Kartarpur Sahib Corridor in November 2019 on the occasion of 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak. The newly built Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib complex was a gift by the people of Pakistan and their leadership to the Sikh community from India and worldwide.

Meanwhile, Pakistan High Commission in India extends felicitations to the Sikh community on the 552nd birth anniversary of the founder of Sikh religion. The High Commission also wishes a spiritually rewarding Yatra to the pilgrims visiting Pakistan on this occasion.

The issuance of maximum number of pilgrimage visas is in line with the government's efforts for promoting visits to religious shrines in Pakistan.

Ferry service between Seaview, Manora planned



Inaugurated on Saturday 30 Oct., the Manora beach waterfront is likely to provide much-needed recreational facilities to fun-starved Karachiites after prolonged lockdowns.

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Saturday 30 Oct. said that his government was planning to start a ferry service between Seaview and Manora.

He said this while inaugurating the Manora waterfront beach project. He said that his government had developed the place to provide a safe, secure, neat and clean family recreational facilities for the people of this city.

He said that the development of a jetty at Seaview was being planned to start a ferry service from the Clifton area to the newly developed beach.

The Rs650 million improvement of waterfront development at Manora beach project was launched through an annual development programme (ADP) scheme. It has a parking area spreading over an acre. It has front structure of 7.91 acres with 29 gazebos and L-Shape benches along with tables.

It has dozens of Teflon sheds and 76 park benches. A separate play area has been developed for children.

"The project is a part of an overall development scheme of Karachi and the construction of waterfront development provides for public recreational of Karachi," the CM said and added: "At present, the Manora beach is underutilised with very low volume of visitors due to lack of facilities like sitting space, dining area, restrooms, shades, tidiness, etc."

He said the main attraction of Karachi is its beaches and coastline, which distinct the city from the rest of the country.

He said that due to the dearth of entertainment avenues, especially for middle and lower middle class, people rushed to Clifton, Seaview, Hawkesbay and Sands Pit for a long time.

"Since those destinations are just beaches and not developed thus they got stale, there is a dire need of some new developments to provide an area for public refreshment," he said.

The CM said that it would be the first developed beach in the city and added the proposed design had all the needs required for a family entertainment in a secure environment.

Finding solace in nature



Amidst the rapid development in science and technology, especially in communication devices, we are drifting away from Mother Nature, which we ought to have closely aligned with.

While we may have many 'ifs' and 'buts' to prove how exciting our living styles are or how important our commitments are, yet the sunrise, the cool breeze, the chirping of birds, the sunset, the trees, flowers and flowing water is beyond expression and should be enjoyed always.

In the words of E.M Foster, a great English novelist, "What is good of your stars and trees, your sunrise and the wind, if they do not enter into our daily lives?"

This is true for us, for the generation of today, excluding the older generations who still follow the age-old maxim of 'early to bed and early to rise'. We seldom catch the sight of stars in the sky due to a flood of lights in the cities, causing fractions up in the air, making things so hazy that we can see only a few countable stars. Whether due to population increase or some other reason, the soft (unpaved) earth is being replaced with pavements, roads, infrastructure, etc., often by eating up enormous trees, the habitats of uncountable birds and other critters.

Apart from that, as a result of our unnatural and unhealthy routine, anxiety, stress and obesity are on the rise. While no sane person may deny the importance of nature and natural beauty, here are a few tips that may assist you in finding ways within your busy routine to enjoy the company of nature.

As students, you might have to stay up late at night and might awake up at the eleventh hour in the morning and complete your chores in a rush before proceeding to your school or college. Many of you might be holding sandwiches in one hand, while getting on to your school van and nibble it all the way, whereas holding notes in the other hand to finish last minute study.

Well, well, well! The only thing you need to do is to give a paradigm twist to

your routine. Why can't you sleep early and wake up early? After all, the net amount of study, as well as rest, remains the same.

One of my friends waits till he has to lay his bike flat on roadside to get the few leftover drops of petrol, to help him get to a nearby petrol station. Looking at his trouble and indecency, I often advise him to refill his tank while there is still some petrol left, or keep the tank full. After all, the net amount of the petrol consumed remains the same.

Many of you may claim that you can study better at night and complete your sleep hours in the day. True! But according to the law of nature, the night is for rest and the day is to work. In the words of Luther Burbank, a famous American botanist, and pioneer in agriculture science, "If you violate nature's laws you are your own judge, jury and hangman."

In most religions, prayers and other rituals are done early morning. In Islam, the Fajr prayer hails the start of the day but few of us bother to wake up early to say our prayers. It is due to violating the noble laws of nature and religious practice that there are now many health issues affecting people, such as short-term memory issues, weaker eyesight and poor assimilation ability.

In an urban area, silence may be the most desired thing. However, silence may be achieved even on the busiest streets. But why is silence so essential?

According to Mother Teresa, "... see how nature trees, flowers, grass grows in silence; see the stars, the moon and the sun, how they move in silence ... we need silence to be able to touch souls."

In order to touch your soul, silence is mandatory. Perhaps, this is why it is said, "Silence is a form of worship." Plenty of literature and aerobic centres are available through which yoga or Tie Chi (a form of Chinese Martial Arts) can be practiced. Even if there is none, Google it and you would get a handful of aerobics or yoga exercises. Practicing these may require a silent place and preferably early morning time.

Even if you do not find this feasible, simply sit cross-legged, inhale and try to prolong the inhaled air by inflating your lungs to your maximum, followed by a smooth exhale. With time, and of course with consistency, you would observe tremendous improvement in your body. Do it and feel the newer and fresher you!



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14 Arab dignitaries issued houbara bustard hunting permits

Fourteen Arab dignitaries have been officially granted permits for hunting houbara bustard, an internationally protected bird species, in Sindh this year.

Sources told media this year the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) had forwarded "recommendations" to provincial governments for Falconry Season 2021-2022 (excluding protected areas) with a request to provinces to issue necessary permits in accordance with the wildlife law.

Prior to 2016-17, the federal government used to directly grant special permits to Arab dignitaries for hunting.

"The procedure of granting permission changed after the controversial subject was debated in court. Now, the power of granting permission for hunting lies with respective provincial governments," said a wildlife expert, describing the change as just a formality as no Pakistani government had ever questioned this hunting.

The sources said this year the federal government had sent a list of 14 Arab dignitaries including the prime minister of Qatar and the president of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for Falconry Season 2021-2022 to the Sindh government, which approved it during a meeting of provincial cabinet two weeks back.

According to the sources, UAE President and ruler of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan has been allowed to hunt in districts Sukkur, Ghotki, Sanghar, Nawabshah and Khairpur districts (excluding Sindh desert safari and the area across Nara Canal).

Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, the representative of the UAE president in Western Region and member of the UAE ruling family, has been allocated areas in Khairpur, Larkana, Qambar-Shahdadkot and Dadu districts.

Major General Sheikh Ahmed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the head of Central Military Command/Deputy Chairman of Dubai Police and Public Security and member of the ruling family of the UAE, is allowed to hunt in Umerkot, Tharparkar and Nagarparkar districts excluding protected areas.

Sheikh Sultan Bin Tharon Al Nahyan, Member of the Executive Council of Abu Dhabi and member of the ruling family of the UAE, is allowed to hunt in district Mirpurkhas.

Sheikh Rashid bin Khalifa Al Maktoum, member of the ruling family of



A man chases after his hunting falcon which has caught and dragged down a houbara bustard over the desert.

the UAE, has been allocated areas in district Badin, Jungshahi in district Thatta and Dhabeji, Makli including the union council Chato Chand.

Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hammad Al-Thani is allotted the areas of Diplo and Islamkot of Tharparkar district.

Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdul Aziz Al-Thani, the prime minister of Qatar who also holds the charge of interior minister, is allowed to hunt in district Jacobabad.

Sheikh Fahad bin Abdul Rahman bin Hammad Al-Thani, a member of the royal family of Qatar, is allocated areas of Chachro and Dahli in district Tharparkar.

King of Bahrain Hammad bin Isa bin Salman Al-Khalifa has been allotted areas in district Jamshoro, including tehsils Thana Bula Khan, Kotri Manjhand and Sehwan.

Sheikh Ebrahim bin Hamad bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa, senior member of the ruling family and uncle of the king of Bahrain, is allowed to hunt in tehsil Shah Bandar of district Sujawal.

Lt Gen Sheikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa, the minister of interior and first cousin of the king of Bahrain, is allowed to hunt in district Naushahro Feroze.

Sheikh Abdullah bin Salman Al-Khalifa, adviser to the king of Bahrain for Defence Affairs, is allocated tehsil Jati of district Sujawal.

Sheikh Ahmed bin Ali Al-Khalifa, member of the ruling family of the kingdom of Bahrain and the first cousin of the king of Bahrain, is allocated areas in districts of Hyderabad and Malir (excluding the Malir Cantonment and Dhabeji areas).

Sheikh Khalid bin Rashid bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa, member of the ruling family and the first cousin of the king of Bahrain, is allowed to hunt in district Tando Mohammad Khan.

It may be noted that a case challenging the controversial hunting of houbara bustards has been pending in court for some years.

The World Wide Fund for Nature-

Pakistan (WWF) in a position statement released in 2020 has called for an immediate ban on the birds' hunting keeping in view its vulnerable IUCN Red List status and the threats the species faced in its entire range in general and in Pakistan in particular.

Pompeii dig yields rare window on daily life of enslaved



A view of the latest finding in Pompeii.

Archeologists in Pompeii excavating a villa amid the ruins of the 79 AD volcanic eruption that destroyed the ancient city have discovered a room offers a very rare insight into the daily life of slaves, officials said on Saturday 6 November.

Italy's culture minister, Dario Franceschini, said the find was an important discovery that enriches the knowledge of the daily life of ancient Pompeians, in particular the level of society still little known.

The room served as both a dormitory and a storage area, officials from the Archeological Park of Pompeii said. It was discovered in a villa in the Pompeii suburb of Civita Giuliana, just a few steps from where archeologists in January discovered the remains of a well-preserved ceremonial chariot.

The room, with just one high window and no wall decorations, contains the remains of three beds made out of wood. The beds were adjustable, with two measuring 1.7 metres (nearly 5 feet, 7 inches) and one just 1.4 (4 feet, 7 inches) metres, possibly indicating that a family with a child had lived there.

"Nearby, a wooden chest contained metallic objects and textiles that appear to be part of harnesses for horses," according to the archeological park. There also was a wooden steering element for a chariot.

Chamber pots and other personal objects were under the beds, while eight amphorae a type of container were in a corner, suggesting storage for the household.

The villa, with a panoramic view of the Mediterranean Sea on the outskirts of the ancient Roman city, is considered one of the most significant recent finds at Pompeii. It was discovered after police came across illegal tunnels dug by alleged looters in 2017.

Getting visa not a fundamental right, rules LHC

The Lahore High Court has ruled that a citizen cannot claim that getting a visa of a foreign country is his fundamental right.

Justice Muzamil Akhtar Shabbir observes claim of infringement of fundamental rights can be made for seeking a remedy against the state of Pakistan in the courts working in the country but this claim cannot be extended to pass a direction to an ambassador/embassy of a foreign country to issue a binding direction for issuance of visa, which even otherwise is not a fundamental right.

The judge has made these observations dismissing a writ petition of a citizen, Saghir Ahmad, who sought a direction to the ambassador of the United States embassy Islamabad, to issue him and his family a visa and provide air tickets to travel to the US.

The petitioner, who appeared in person, said he already applied for asylum in the US by filing an application through post, wherein he claimed that he was facing danger to his life. He argued he was entitled to the relief under the Geneva Convention.

The petitioner further argued that the writ petition related to his fundamental rights provided in the Constitution and in the rules of the Geneva Convention.

The judge in his verdict observes that the ambassador/embassy is a private entity and neither the ambassador/embassy of a foreign country can be treated as equivalent to the state of Pakistan nor it can be treated as a private entity/person in relation to exercise of jurisdiction of this court.

He maintains that the ambassadors/embassies are representatives of foreign sovereign states (sending states) having different rights, privileges and immunities from the state of Pakistan (receiving state) and its subjects.

The judge states that all conventions are based upon mutual respect of domestic laws of other sovereign states and even it is beyond imagination that conventions would abridge their domestic laws or impinge their sovereignty.

“Even otherwise visa in most cases is issued as a courtesy to the citizens of the other country with a view to maintain and promote friendly relations, economic or cultural activities, etc in exercise of discretionary power vested in an Ambassador/Embassy and not as of right, which exercise of discretion cannot be interfered with by the courts of another country,” he adds.

The judge observes, “Ambassador or the USA Embassy is neither working in

connection with the affairs of the federation (i.e. Pakistan) nor is legally bound to provide visa and air tickets to the petitioner and his family members, therefore, the petitioner's case does not

fall within the jurisdiction of this court provided under Article 199 of the Constitution.”

Dismissing the petition as not maintainable, the judge upheld all the office objections.

Before the railway stopped circulating



As I read about the revival of KCR my mind races back to the early 60s when there was no bridge over the Lyari River to connect Azizabad with Gulshan-i-Iqbal. For us, the Karachi University students living in North Nazimabad and Nazimabad numbers 3 and 4, it was quite a time-wasting exercise to take a bus to Gurumandir and then board the one run by the University management to drop us at the newly commissioned sprawling campus.

One student who gave me company on the train in the morning was good looking student of Political Science Department Mohsin Ali, who later made a name for himself as the producer of quite a few highly successful plays and serials for PTV. He lived in Nazimabad No 3 right in front of a huge empty plot, which was destined to house Abbasi Shaheed Hospital.

We converged at what still exists as North Nazimabad station. The train was not even one quarter full and Mohsin's one complaint was that there were no fellow passengers belonging to the opposite sex in any compartment.

The train that suited us in the morning left the North Nazimabad station at 7.30am and dropped us at the Karachi Central station 10 minutes later after making a two-minute stopover at the Liaquatabad station.

Karachi Central station had vast empty space around its premises. It was supposed to be modelled on Bombay Central, where the BB&CI (renamed Western Railway in the mid-50s) trains coming from western India terminated. Karachi city and cantonment stations, located in congested areas, posed

problems for passengers. By the way, the congestion is worse these days. What happened to that enormous space is nobody's guess.

Back to our trip, we got down at the aforesaid station and walked on a half km metalled road that terminated on the University Road. We flagged at the bus that was speeding on its way to the Campus and sure enough it stopped for the students, not more than four or five any morning, to take them to their destination.

Now the question: why didn't we get down at the so-called Karachi University Station? To begin with, it was more than a kilometre from the point where we boarded the bus and to make things worse there was no road link, not even what they call dirt track. The area resembled the ground captured by the cameras fitted on the spaceship Perseverance, which landed on the surface of Mars earlier this year on Feb 18.

Mohsin and I disembarked at the Karachi University Station only once and walked grudgingly towards the University Road as our painstakingly polished leather shoes collected dust. By the way, I have retained the pink-coloured ticket so far and would gladly exchange it with three or four Rs 5,000 currency notes if I run into a collector of fossils. The proceeds will be donated to a charity in the field of education.

Unlike the newly launched KCR which boasts of a separate colour scheme for its carriages, the ones that we travelled in had the same yellow and green combination which the inter-city trains were draped in. In those days 'PWR' (Pakistan Western Railway) was painted on every carriage. That was well before Pakistan's eastern wing was clipped and PER became BR (Bangladesh Railway).

The newly-introduced KCR boasts of equality unlike the earlier one which had Inter Class and Third Class. So it has only one class. Also it doesn't have separate compartments for ladies. Had it been so my feminist friends would have revolted. The only way to have satisfied them was to have had separate compartments for gents. Not a bad idea, isn't it?

SHC orders setting up of girls medical college at Mohatta Palace

The Sindh High Court on Wednesday ruled that Qasr-e-Fatima, commonly known as Mohatta Palace, would be used to set up a medical and dental college for girls.

The order came on a long-standing dispute over the heritage property of late Fatima Jinnah in Clifton.

A single-judge bench of SHC headed by Justice Zulfiqar Ahmad Khan ordered that the college would also have a hostel as both the plaintiffs and defendants agreed to amicably settle the dispute and accorded their consent to establish the medical and dental college.

The matter was adjourned till Nov 1 as both sides also recommended the names of some retired judges and prominent doctors and relatives of late Miss Jinnah to be part of a trust to run the affair of the proposed medical college.

However, the fate of the Mohatta Palace Museum, which is funded by the government, remains unclear.

A suit was filed in 1971 by Hussain Waliji, a relative of Miss Jinnah about the administration of her moveable and immovable properties including Qasr-e-Fatima.

After the death of Mr Waliji, his son Amir Ali became the plaintiff, but he had also passed away during the pendency of the suit and then his legal heirs had become the part of proceedings.

The litigation was initiated after the award of a succession certificate of such properties to Shireen Jinnah, the only surviving sister of Fatima Jinnah after her death on July 10, 1967. The Shireen Jinnah Charitable Trust was made as one of the defendants in the lawsuit.

On the last hearing, lawyers for both sides relatives of Fatima Jinnah (plaintiffs) and the Shireen Jinnah Charitable Trust (defendants) had informed the bench that they had considered the matter and progressed to amicably settle the long-standing dispute with regard to the property left by Miss Jinnah, and had exchanged certain proposals.

A provincial law officer also submitted that now both sides were moving towards implementation of the wishes of late Miss Jinnah as translated through the trust deed where it was desired that the premises of Qasr-e-Fatima will be used for the establishment of a modern medical college exclusively for girls and an attached hospital for free treatment of underprivileged persons/patients.

Thereafter, the bench had asked the provincial law officer to go through the various orders of the court and file a



A view of Mohatta Palace.

statement as to what assistance could be provided to achieve the ends of using the property in question as per the desires of its owners Fatima Jinnah and Shireen Jinnah.

Earlier, a counsel had drawn the attention of the bench to an order of the SHC passed in 1996 to dig out other assets left by Miss Jinnah which were allegedly handed out to the trustees through the declaration instrument on which a report was filed by the official assignee in the same year listing certain personal properties of Quaid-i-Azam and Miss Jinnah.

They sought an updated report from the official assignee in this regard, thus the bench had directed the official assignee to provide an updated list in this matter to reach to a just conclusion.

One of the counsel had also referred to an earlier order of the SHC issued in 1993 in terms of which it was ordered that the provincial government would deposit a sum of Rs61,188,000 with the official assignee as tentative sale price of Qasr-e-Fatima and asserted that upon the request of the Sindh government the property was handed over to it for repair and maintenance only.

The lawyer further referring to various earlier orders, pointed out that initial sum of Rs61 million through a cheque was deposited with the court nazir in 1994 by the provincial government that undertook to deposit the balance amount of Rs188,000 within a week, but it had deposited the remaining amount in 1996. Using such amount, the nazir had purchased Defence Savings Certificates (DSC) and Special Savings Certificates (SSC) which were still lying with him.

The nazir had informed the court that the principle profit accrued on DSC was Rs608,500 till Nov 2, 2004, and SSC was Rs399,959,500 till Jan 16, 2013.

He further submitted in a report filed in September 2015 that the profit on the DSC for the period of 10 years and on the SSC for the period of two and half years was due.

It may be recalled that on a previous order, the bench had granted a request of the plaintiff's counsel with regard to

calling the property as Qasr-e-Fatima instead of Mohatta Palace in government documents.

It had ordered the provincial government and other defendants to ensure that the said property continued to be named, tagged, labelled and described as Qasr-e-Fatima only and all the documents wherein any other name was used to describe the said property should be corrected.

Trophy hunting permits being offered despite dwindling ibex, urial population



An ibex spotted in the Kohistan area

Despite dwindling population of ibex and urial in the Kohistan area, district Jamshoro, the Sindh wildlife department is set to hold its annual open auction for the trophy hunting season (2021-22).

Population of these ungulates, they said, had become scattered in a decade and large herds were now rarely seen in the game reserves (non-protected areas) of Kohistan, which were opened for trophy hunting every year.

"This has mainly happened due to the development of a large housing colony in an area which was once a key habitat of these ungulates along with other species," shared a wildlife expert requesting anonymity.



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A tribute to Dr A.Q. Khan

THERE are men taller than any tribute; Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan was among such men. An iconic figure, he has left his mark on history by providing an unassailable security shield to Pakistan. Beyond science, Dr Khan had many dimensions to his personality: energetic, innovative and full of ideas, he was above all deeply humane and a man of faith and love for Islam and yet he maintained a healthy commitment to the common good.

When I read his autobiography *Dastan-i-Azam* or listened to many anecdotes of his life I could not escape the feeling that a divine hand had shaped his destiny for a purpose. In the early 1960s, Berlin University accepted him and he was to pursue a PhD in steel technology with Professor Stark as his supervisor. But before he could join the university he was required to learn German in Frankfurt.

Soon he felt depressed and applied for a well-paying teaching job in a Nigerian university. He wrote to Dr Stark about his decision to leave for Nigeria. Dr Stark responded by suggesting that he was to pass through Frankfurt and the two could meet at the airport. They did.

Dr Stark, a bright-faced short old man, said, "If you go to Nigeria, your life will be comfortable, but you will end as a teacher. If you pursue research, you may accomplish something worthwhile." Qadeer Khan then made up his mind.

Later, during his summer vacation wanderings in Europe, at a gift card shop in Delft, the Netherlands, he met his future wife Henny, when she gave him a postal stamp which he needed. That led to their marriage, his shift to Louvain to study advanced metallurgy, and finally his employment at the Almelo uranium enrichment plant using nascent centrifuge technology. The rest, as they say, is history.

In 1975, Dr Khan wrote to Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who asked him to return home. He consulted his wife who reflected and decided to stand by him. Life was tough. There were doubts about the project at home and outside. I remember Dr I.H. Usmani telling me in New York in 1979, "How can Mattah (churning butter from milk) technology produce atom bombs."

Immediately after the 1998 Indian nuclear tests, India's Deputy Prime Minister L.K. Advani claimed, "By testing we have called Pakistan's bluff." Yet, Dr Khan with his dedicated team (whom he generously credits in his writings for their genius and dedication) improvised, developed and brought to Pakistan the proverbial Promethean Fire. Pakistan succeeded in developing a third route to producing fissionable material. The other two were developed by the United States



(and adopted by successive nuclear-weapon states) at the Manhattan Project in the 1940s.

A clear acknowledgment of his achievement ironically comes from American officials and scholars. Worthy of citation is the wistful remark by American CIA Chief George Tenet (1997-2004), who wrote in his memoirs *At the Centre of the Storm*, "Now I was going to ask him (President Musharraf) to take on a man (Dr Khan) who almost single-handedly transformed Pakistan into a nuclear power and who was considered a hero by the nation."

That 2003 episode was ugly, and unfair and deeply hurtful to Dr Khan and his family. We fell into a trap and mistreated a great hero and benefactor of the country.

Dr Khan was a man of many parts. He felt most agitated by the sufferings of Muslims around the world. I saw him become emotional when talking about Muslims suffering atrocities in Bosnia or Kashmir or Palestine and the carnage visited upon them in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq or other corner of the world.

Faith and strong belief were simply a part of his persona. He believed that logic must have its limits. But he tolerated sceptics like myself who thought some of his thinking was naïve.

His weekly *Jang* column *Sahr honay tak* always carried stories of holy men of Islam and quotes from the Holy Quran. But he could also talk about scientific theories of physics and chemistry with great ease. He was fond of sending books, and he sent me a range of books from life stories of Aulia Allah to subjects such as "the genius of science" and "the quantum labyrinth".

Quintessentially he was a humanist committed to justice, peace and the common good. Many a time during discussion he would argue that the atomic weapons are for deterrence, to prevent war,

and that they demand the utmost responsibility on the part of those who possess them.

His humane qualities were a sight to behold when he would engage in a monologue with a dozen pet cats who have the run of his house in E-7 Sector, Islamabad. Or, watching him feed bananas and bread to monkeys who would come down routinely from the Margallas and wait for him to throw the goodies from a specially built opening at the top of the big glass window beside his large easy chair. He also rescued stray dogs.

Talking once to a prying foreign media person who requested an interview for her documentary, he ended the call with the remark, "Madam you are looking for a villain for your film. I am no Dr Strange Love. I love animals."

Loving animals was his spontaneous way of proving his love for humanity and nature.

One surprise book I received from him was *The Bad-Ass Librarians of Timbuktu*, which suggested his fascination for the long lost empires of the Great Sahara and his passion for travel. He lamented that even his travels within Pakistan had become restricted. Once travelling in Mali, he and his friends pooled funds to help an intelligent local guide Abdurahman to set up an eight-room Adobe style hotel named after Dr Khan's wife where the owner also served Pakistani curry taught to him by Dr Khan's friends. The hotel closed down following the pandemic.

He was a simple man, but the most consequential of men. He enjoyed the company of old friends who were often invited for delicious meals of *paya*, *daal* and *bhindi*. He loved people and their adulation for him. No wonder, in his will he chose to be buried in the common H-8 graveyard as he was truly a man of the people.

The writer is former foreign secretary and a friend of Dr A.Q. Khan



(Clockwise) An ambulance carrying the coffin of Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan arrives at Shah Faisal Mosque in Islamabad on Sunday 10 October. The national flag flies at half-mast on a government offices. Security personnel pay their respects as part of a state funeral. A large number of people head to the mosque.

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