

Monthly FORESIGHT

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WEAVING DREAMS INTO REALITY

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خلوص بھری رفاقت کے 52 سال



پی ٹی سی ایل گروپ کی جانب سے متحدہ عرب امارات کے
عوام کو 52 واں قومی دن مبارک



روح الاتحاد
SPIRIT OF THE UNION
اليوم الوطني
NATIONAL DAY
امارات العربية المتحدة
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

52



CHEERS TO 52 YEARS

SETI General Trading Salute to the UAE on National Day

A Decade of Partnership and Progress

On behalf of SETI General Trading, I extend heartfelt congratulations and warm wishes to the people of the United Arab Emirates on the occasion of the 52nd National Day.

As we celebrate this significant milestone, we take pride in being part of the vibrant landscape of the UAE for the past decade. At SETI General Trading, we have strived to be at the forefront of innovation and excellence in the ever-evolving world of technology. Our commitment to delivering quality service assistance and dynamic specialized solutions aligns with the progressive spirit of the UAE.

Over the past decade, our journey in the UAE has been a remarkable tapestry of innovation and growth. As a creative technology company, we've diligently partnered with Code labs to provide dynamic solutions in web development, software services, hardware, and beyond, not only within the UAE but also across the globe.

Today, as we extend our coverage to South Asia, Central Asia, Eastern Europe, and East Africa, we reflect on the shared successes and milestones achieved. This National Day, we express our gratitude to the UAE for its continuous support and look forward to many more years of collaborative innovation.

Best regards,

Dr. Sonia Saleem
CEO / Founder
SETI General Trading





Smart Innovations Extends Heartfelt Congratulations to the UAE on its Glorious 52nd National Day Celebration

As we commemorate the 52nd National Day of the United Arab Emirates we find ourselves at the intersection of tradition and innovation, where the rich tapestry of our heritage seamlessly blends with the cutting-edge advancements that define the contemporary landscape. In the heart of this transformative journey stands Smart Innovations, a beacon of technological prowess reshaping the way we live, work, and connect in the UAE.

In a world where technology is the catalyst for unprecedented change, Smart Innovations emerges as a key player, spearheading initiatives that redefine the very fabric of our daily existence. As we navigate the dynamic landscapes of the 21st century, our commitment to harnessing the power of innovation mirrors the forward-looking spirit of the UAE.

At the core of Smart Innovations mission is a dedication to providing solutions that not only keep pace with the rapid evolution of technology but also contribute to the betterment of our society. Whether it's pioneering advancements in artificial intelligence, revolutionizing the digital infrastructure, or fostering sustainable practices, we stand as a testament to the UAE's vision for a future where technology seamlessly integrates into the daily lives of its residents.

As we raise our glasses to the 52nd National Day, let us celebrate the resilience of our nation and the transformative impact of technology on our collective journey. Smart Innovations proudly stands as a partner in this voyage, offering a collaborative message that resonates with the progressive spirit of the UAE. Driving positive change and contributing to the technological legacy of the United Arab Emirates. Happy 52nd National Day.

Best Regards,

M.Zeeshan Shahzad
CEO / Founder
Smart innovations



SMART
INNOVATIONS

FORESIGHT

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Chief Editor Note

As we usher in the festive spirit of December, our pages resonate with celebrations, reflections, and a collective gaze into the future. This edition is a tapestry woven with diverse threads, each strand bearing the richness of stories and milestones that mark this moment in time.

In our opening feature, we raise our glasses to the 52nd UAE National Day, a journey through time that transforms the arid sands into a beacon of prosperity. Join us in navigating the historical trajectory of the United Arab Emirates, an odyssey of resilience, innovation, and a visionary pursuit of progress.

The heartbeat of our edition resonates with the silver jubilee celebration of the Human Development Foundation (HDF). For 25 years, HDF has been a catalyst for transformative impact, touching lives, and empowering communities. Delve into the insightful prelude that sets the stage for the narratives of change and empowerment.

In the economic realm, we bring you exclusive insights from the Policy Research Institute of Market Economy (PRIME)'s Third Pakistan Prosperity Forum. Uncover the discussions that unfolded, the challenges diagnosed, and the pathways proposed to navigate Pakistan's economic transformation. It's more than a forum; it's a compass guiding the nation towards sustainable growth.

As the world grapples with climate challenges, we turn our attention to Pakistan's stance in the global arena. Join us in navigating the complexities and aspirations at COP-28 as Pakistan takes strides in its climate crusade. Explore the stories of resilience, innovation, and determination that define our nation's commitment to a sustainable future.

In this edition, we invite you to celebrate, contemplate, and chart your course into the upcoming year. May the stories within these pages kindle inspiration, spark curiosity, and ignite the flames of hope and possibility.

With warm regards,



Tanveer Ali Maken

President Sheikh Mohamed Says UAE's People are Central to its Progress



President says country remains committed to assisting nations and communities in need.

To the people of the UAE, the second of December is one of the most beloved days for us in the UAE, as it is the day on which hearts united in building our nation. It is the day when shared ambitions came together and when the country's Founding Father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, and his brothers, the Rulers of the Emirates – may their souls rest in peace – penned the first line in the UAE's story.

On Union Day, we foster a spirit of ambition in our country's youth so they may leave their mark on our nation, just as their predecessors did with their rich legacy. Union Day is a time for newer generations to understand that our successes are the result of our resolve, and that we share a responsibility in building upon these achievements.

We have achieved significant accomplishments over the years, and with God's blessing, we are heading towards a future that is brighter, more hopeful and more prosperous.

Sheikh Mohamed said Union Day is about encouraging ambition among the country's younger generation. Presidential Court

“While we advance, we honour all those who contribute to the UAE's continued journey of development, and we take pride in all of the residents who live alongside us with dignity and honour.

As we enter a new year of the UAE's history, let us reflect on the lessons of our past: that challenges can be overcome with determination, perseverance, and hard work. The people of the UAE are central to our efforts to progress. It is through devotion and selflessness towards the nation that true accomplishments are realised.

Above all, unity and loyalty are the firm foundations laid by the late Sheikh Zayed and his brothers for our nation that underpin our achievements and will continue to do so in the coming decades, God willing.

CHEERS TO 52 YEARS

52nd UAE National Day

Navigating the Sands of Time to a Beacon of Prosperity

Tanveer Ali Maken

The UAE National Day, celebrated on December 2, marks the historic unity of the seven emirates that formed the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 1971. Previously divided into tribal groups and under British protection, the emirates decided to unite after Britain's exit in 1968. This peaceful merger, led by rulers of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ajman, Al-Ain, Sharjah, and Umm al-Quwain, along with later addition Ras Al Khaimah, resulted in the formation of the UAE without violence. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan became the first president, and the UAE has since evolved into a powerful and influential nation with a thriving economy, abundant tourism, and iconic structures, symbolizing the success of unity and independence.

In anticipation of the 52nd National Day, the UAE is gearing up for a spectacular celebration that promises to be a vibrant reflection of the nation's journey from desert

landscapes to a flourishing, developed economy. The air is already charged with excitement as preparations unfold to mark this significant milestone in the country's history. From bustling cities to serene landscapes, the spirit of

tradition and modernity, symbolizing the harmonious coexistence of heritage and progress.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE), once a vast expanse of arid desert, has emerged as a testament to visionary leadership and unwavering dedication. Over the years, the UAE has transformed into a developed economy, standing tall as a beacon of prosperity in the Middle East. This remarkable journey is a testament to the foresight and commitment of the UAE's leadership, who have turned challenges into opportunities and transformed a once-barren landscape into a global economic powerhouse.

Sheikh Zayed's Legacy of UAE's Transformation

At the heart of the UAE's transformation lies the visionary leadership that envisioned a future beyond the constraints of geography. From the establishment of the UAE in 1971, leaders like



United Arab Emirates unity and progress permeates every corner. As the countdown begins, there is a palpable sense of pride and anticipation for the grand festivities that will honor the visionary leadership and dedication that have propelled the UAE to unprecedented heights. The pre-celebrations set the stage for a jubilant showcase of the UAE's unique blend of

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the Founding Father of the Nation, laid the groundwork for a prosperous and sustainable future. Their strategic vision focused on economic diversification, infrastructure development, and the empowerment of the people.

UAE's Strategic Shift Beyond Oil Dependency

One of the key pillars of the UAE's journey to a developed economy has been its commitment to economic diversification. Recognizing the limitations of relying solely on oil revenues, the UAE embarked on a journey to diversify its economy. Initiatives such as Dubai's transformation into a global business hub and Abu Dhabi's strategic investments in sectors like renewable energy and aerospace have played pivotal roles in fostering economic resilience.

UAE's Journey in Technology and Innovation

The UAE's dedication to embracing innovation and technology has been a driving

force in its economic evolution. The country has positioned itself as a global leader in sectors like artificial intelligence, space exploration, and renewable energy. Initiatives such as the Mars Mission and the commitment to a knowledge-based economy underscore the UAE's determination to stay at the forefront of technological advancements.

UAE's Infrastructural Revolution

A crucial aspect of the UAE's transformation has been its unwavering commitment to infrastructure development. Iconic structures like the Burj Khalifa and Palm Jumeirah are not just architectural marvels but symbols of the UAE's ambition. The development of world-class airports, seaports, and transportation networks has not only facilitated economic growth but has also positioned the UAE as a global logistics and trade hub.

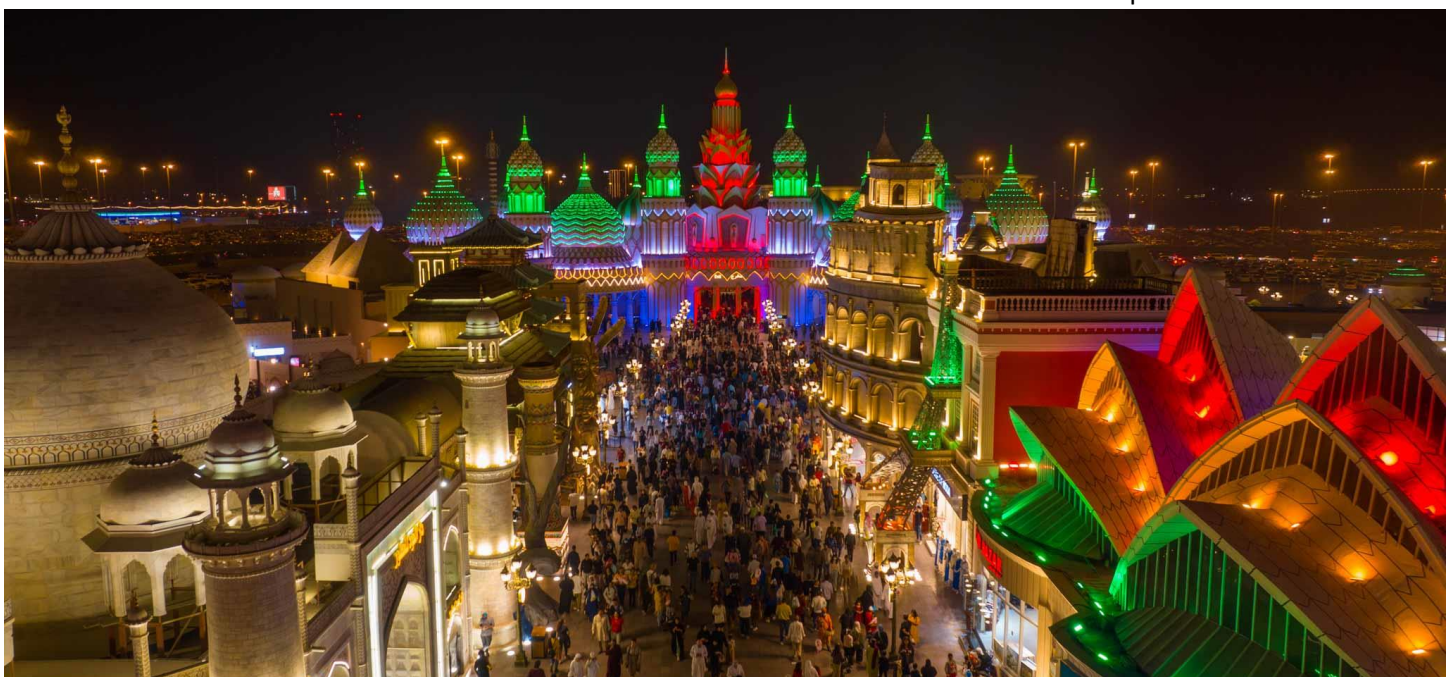
UAE's Prosperity lies in Empowering its Citizens

The leadership's commitment to empowering the people of the

UAE has been fundamental to the nation's success. Initiatives focusing on education, healthcare, and social welfare have ensured that the citizens of the UAE actively contribute to and benefit from the country's prosperity. Emiratization programs and efforts to foster a knowledge-based society reflect the leadership's dedication to nurturing human capital.

UAE's Evolution all about Visionary Leadership, Dedication and Global Excellence.

The UAE's journey from a desert landscape to a developed economy stands as a testament to the vision, dedication, and leadership that have shaped its destiny. Through strategic planning, economic diversification, and a commitment to innovation, the UAE has not only overcome geographical challenges but has also set new standards for global excellence. As the nation continues to evolve, its story serves as an inspiration for others to transform challenges into opportunities and realize the true potential of visionary leadership.





BEYOND THE SMOKE

Israel's Actions exposed in the Public Eye

Omar Suleiman

In a new media landscape dominated not by Western media giants but by Instagram reels, TikTok videos and YouTube shorts, Israel's ongoing war on the besieged Gaza Strip is more than televised.

Audiences across the world, and especially young people, have been watching the devastation caused by Israel's indiscriminate bombardment of the Palestinian enclave on their preferred social media platforms, in real-time, for over a month. Anyone with internet access has seen countless videos of babies torn apart by bombs, women crushed under tonnes of concrete and mothers cradling the dead bodies of their children.

Israel, of course, still continues with its usual efforts – and more – to control the narrative about its bloody wars and decades-old occupation.

It does not hesitate to brand as “terrorists” and assassinate Palestinian journalists who work tirelessly to tell Gaza's truth to the world. During this latest war alone, Israel killed at least 53 journalists and media workers, mostly in targeted air strikes alongside their family members, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists. Al Jazeera Arabic's Gaza Correspondent, Wael Dahdouh, lost his wife, son, daughter and grandson in one such attack. He received the news while he was on air.

And Israel does not allow foreign journalists to enter Gaza and report on what they see freely either. CNN's Fareed Zakaria recently admitted that the Israeli military currently only allows into the war-torn Gaza Strip foreign journalists who agree to “submit all materials and footage to the Israeli military for review prior to publication”. Zakaria said CNN agreed to these terms “in order to provide a limited window into Israel's ops”.

Yet, despite all these efforts, thanks largely to social media, Israel is no longer able to conceal the truth about its conduct in Palestine. It can no longer control the narratives and the public opinion on Palestine. As mainstream media loses its ability

to single-handedly decide what Western and, to a certain extent, global audiences get to witness about the situation in Palestine, the brutality of Israel's occupation has been laid out in the open for everyone to see.

Now social media users are openly mocking Israel's desperate attempts to control the narrative of its war on Gaza, and swiftly exposing the Israeli lies parroted by mainstream outlets. On November 29, the #WeWontBeSilenced campaign was launched across social media platforms, encouraging posting this graphic, or a picture with one hand covering one's mouth, and a relevant message written on the other hand or a poster. Since its launch, it has received hundreds of thousands of impressions across platforms and will continue to gain traction as social media accounts feel the effects of shadow banning, censorship, and intimidation.

It's not only Israel that knows it's losing the PR war either – its

biggest financier and enabler knows it, too. Last week's announcement of a temporary ceasefire, which is due to expire soon, has revealed the US is as concerned about changing public opinion on the conflict as Israel.

Politico reported that senior Biden administration officials have been concerned about how the temporary ceasefire "would allow journalists broader access to Gaza and the opportunity to further illuminate the devastation there and turn public opinion on Israel." In other terms, US officials are cognizant of the direction public opinion has shifted since the beginning of this episode of bombardment and are worried that an influx of journalists into the Gaza Strip could further expose the genocide Israel has been committing there with their permission and support.

Israel and the US, however, did not lose the all-important war on narratives just because of its latest war on Gaza. The current assault on Gaza has only

expedited Israel's weakening grip on the media narrative and public opinion. In March of this year, many months before the beginning of the latest round of violence, Gallup published data that, for the first time ever, revealed that, "Democrats' sympathies in the Middle East now lie more with the Palestinians than the Israelis, 49 percent versus 38 percent." This shift in Democrats' sympathies is indicative of a weakening of the mainstream media monopoly on the narrative of Israel-Palestine. Meanwhile, many in the GOP have also begun to rethink the US-Israeli relationship vis-a-vis foreign aid. Former US President Donald Trump's "America First" doctrine has made many Republicans question whether supporting Israel with regular military aid should remain a foreign policy priority for the party.

Since October 7, Meta's reaction to accounts and posts that raise awareness of the mass murder of



Palestinian civilians has largely been one of censorship, with reports of over 90 percent of pro-Palestinian content deleted. Now, there are concerns as to how X will respond to Israeli PR pressure.

This week, X CEO Elon Musk visited Israel and met Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in a trip widely criticised as a form of “cleanup” after his endorsement of an anti-Semitic post on his platform. As part of the propaganda tour, an agreement was reached that Musk’s Starlink, a satellite internet service, can only be used in Gaza with the approval of the Israeli government. The Israeli occupation wields and controls the flow of water, electricity, food, humanitarian aid – and now Musk’s internet services – into Gaza, yet remains adamant it is not an occupier.

Israel has only itself to blame for its increasingly negative image in the international community.

It cannot expect the world to turn a blind eye to the genocide it is committing in plain sight, with the support of the US. The short ceasefire – which allowed some humanitarian aid to enter the besieged enclave and the Palestinians to bury their dead and wrap their wounds as much as they can – is expected to end soon. Israel will likely continue with its indiscriminate bombardment and suffocating total siege on Gaza in the immediate aftermath of the brief truce. Israel’s war on Palestinians may be far from over, but it has already lost the war of public opinion.



HDF'S SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION

25 Years of Transformative Impact

An Insightful Prelude

Arooj Rajput

Embarking on a quarter-century journey of impactful community service, the Human Development Foundation (HDF) has traversed an extraordinary path of positive change and resilience. As we stand on the threshold of HDF's Silver Jubilee Celebration, here we unfold as a tribute and reflection on the foundation's relentless commitment to sustainable development. Join us in revisiting the key milestones, programs, and successes that have shaped HDF's remarkable 25-year legacy, illustrating how it has become a beacon of hope and progress for communities across Pakistan.

As we mark the silver jubilee of HDF, I am filled with gratitude and pride for the incredible journey we've undertaken over the past 25 years.

In this milestone year, we celebrate not just the passage of time but the transformative impact we've had on communities. For a quarter of a century, HDF has been a catalyst for change, advocating for a holistic approach across our five core program areas: education, primary healthcare, livelihood and food security, sustainable environment and WASH, and social capital development—HDF's Power of 5.

Our commitment to transforming lives remains unwavering. Each success story, every empowered individual and the sustainable changes we've initiated stand testament to the dedication of our team and the support of our donors, partners and the communities we've transformed.

As we reflect on our achievements, let us also look ahead with renewed vigor. The challenges persist but so does our resolve to create positive, lasting impact. Together, let's continue to make a difference, guided by the principles that have defined us for a quarter-century.

Thank you for being an integral part of HDF's journey. Here's to 25 years of Transforming Communities and to the countless lives we will touch in the years to come.

Mehboob UI Haq
Chief Executive Officer



HDF Celebrating a Quarter Century of Positive Change

In the spotlight of its 25th anniversary, the Human Development Foundation (HDF) stands proud, reflecting on an inspiring journey marked by resilience, commitment, and transformative impact. From its humble beginnings in 1997 to becoming a beacon of sustainable development, HDF's Silver Jubilee is a testament to its unwavering dedication to uplift communities across Pakistan.

Journey through Time

As we traverse the timeline of HDF's evolution, each milestone tells a story of growth, perseverance, and positive change:

- 1997: HDF's inception by the Pakistani diaspora and individuals in the USA.
- 1999: A gift to Pakistan on its 50th Independence Anniversary.
- 2002: Expanding its reach to 23,437 households across multiple regions.

- 2007: Impacting 268,448 people under its program areas.
- 2012: Reaching 91,196 households, changing the lives of 585,471 people.
- 2017: Assisting more than 20 million people.
- 2022: Celebrating its Silver Jubilee, supporting over 3.7 million Pakistanis.

Geographical Footprint: Illuminating Communities Across Pakistan

Over the course of 25 years, HDF's sustainable community development efforts have culminated in a transformative impact on more than 530,000 vulnerable households in over 7,000 villages and 53 districts across the four provinces of Pakistan and AJK.

25 Years of Holistic Impact: Core Program Areas in Focus

Underlying HDF's success is a holistic approach to community development, emphasizing five core program areas.



Showcase of Achievements

Sustainability Investment Expo 2023:

At the expo, HDF showcased a dynamic exploration of projects touching 3.7 million lives. Notable projects, including the climate-resilient smart community in Soon Valley, garnered praise. HDF's commitment to sustainability was underscored by winning the Sustainability Award 2023 for the Afaf Dam in the 'Water Conservation' category.

Sustainable Development Conference 2023:

A panel discussion featuring luminaries delved into HDF's transformative journey. Commitments were solidified through MOUs with SDPI and Code for



Pakistan, promising impactful collaborations toward a greener and more sustainable Pakistan.



Senator Sherry Rehman Emphasizes Replicating HDF's Climate-Smart Model in Other Climate Vulnerable Regions

A Future Focused on Sustainability:

As HDF steps into another decade, the organization envisions a future characterized by a deepened commitment to creating sustainable positive change. Initiatives like the Climate Smart Community in Soon Valley and empowering youth with transferable skills exemplify HDF's dedication to shaping a brighter, sustainable future.



HDF Takes the Win at Sustainability Awards 2023

Silver Jubilee: A Milestone, Not an End

HDF's Silver Jubilee is not just a celebration of the past but a promise for the future. As the organization continues its journey, the spirit of positive change remains alive, lighting the way for another 25 years of impact, growth, and transformation.

HDF (Human Development Foundation) has been at the forefront of transformative initiatives aimed at uplifting communities and fostering sustainable development. As we conclude this article, it is evident that HDF's unwavering commitment to education, healthcare, and

socio-economic empowerment has left an indelible mark on countless lives. Their holistic approach, addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by underprivileged populations, exemplifies the true spirit of human development. By creating pathways to education, ensuring access to healthcare, and empowering individuals with the tools for self-sufficiency, HDF paves the way for brighter, more equitable futures.



L to R: Lt. Gen. (R) Anis Abbasi - Vice Chairman HDF, Dr. Tariq Banuri – Former Chairperson HEC, Dr. Adil Najam – President WWF, Fatima Hussain – Managing Director HDF North America

In closing, HDF's tireless efforts underscore the profound impact that strategic interventions can have on the trajectory of communities. As we reflect on the strides made by HDF, it becomes clear that their work extends beyond immediate relief, aiming to create a ripple effect that resonates through generations. The journey towards sustainable human development is ongoing, and HDF's dedication serves as an inspiration for continued collaboration and collective action to build a world where every individual has the opportunity to flourish.





PAKLAND TOWER 2
New Blue Area, Islamabad

We were the first to acquire land in New Blue Area in July 2020. By the Grace of Almighty, construction work of *Pakland Tower 2* has already started. InshaAllah keeping our tradition of timely delivery, we will handover the possession to our valued investors in *July 2023*

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NAVIGATING ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Insights from PRIME's Third Pakistan Prosperity Forum

Desk Report

Pakistan's economic prosperity hinges on a comprehensive overhaul of its taxation system and privatization of state-owned enterprises (SOEs), according to experts who gathered at the 3rd Pakistan Prosperity Forum organized by the Policy Research Institute of Market Economy (PRIME).

The forum, held in Islamabad, brought together representatives from the government, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the business community, academia, and the media to discuss Pakistan's economic challenges and formulate a roadmap for sustained growth.

Taxation System: A Major Impediment to Growth

Mr. Fawad Hasan Fawad, Federal Minister for Privatization, highlighted the flaws in Pakistan's taxation system, noting that the current structure incentivizes individuals and businesses to stay out of the formal tax net. He pointed out that 93 percent of the collected tax revenue comes from voluntary or withholding payments, while only 7 percent is actually collected by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR).

Moreover, the minister emphasized that the tax burden on corporate taxpayers has increased by over 40 percent on average since 2016, discouraging businesses from registering and contributing to the tax system. This has led to a phenomenon



known as "decorporatization," where businesses operate informally to avoid taxes.

SOEs: Draining Public Funds

Mr. Fawad also underscored the unsustainable state of Pakistan's public sector, particularly SOEs, which have become a drain on public finances. He revealed that between 2018 and 2021, the government injected Rs. 2.54 trillion in subsidies, grants, and loans to keep commercial SOEs afloat.



The minister stressed that SOEs must be privatized or restructured to improve efficiency and reduce reliance on government support. He emphasized that the government should focus on its core functions of regulating markets and providing essential services, while allowing the private sector to drive economic growth.

Public Expenditures: A Call for Rationalization

Mr. Shahid Hafeez Kardar, Former Governor State Bank of Pakistan, emphasized the need for rationalization of public expenditures to ensure fiscal sustainability. He cautioned against wasteful expenditures on low-priority and poorly designed projects, which have contributed to Pakistan's unsustainable debt burden.

Mr. Kardar advocated for a contributory pension system to reduce the burden on the government and promote financial prudence. He also called

for a reduction in the government's footprint in the economy, streamlining tariff structures, and revamping the taxation system to broaden the tax base and lower tax rates.

Political Will: A Prerequisite for Reform

Mr. Rizwan Rawji, a prominent businessman, presented the Charter of Economy prepared by PRIME, highlighting the crucial role of political stability and strong political will in promoting economic prosperity. He attributed Pakistan's economic woes, including the balance of payment crisis, unsustainable debt, and inflation, to misaligned fiscal policies of successive governments.

Mr. Rawji emphasized that reforms should focus on reducing the size and presence of the government in the economy, privatizing loss-making SOEs, rationalizing tariffs, and adopting sound monetary policies. He stressed that the government

should create an enabling environment for the private sector to flourish and drive economic growth.

Call to Action: Restructuring and Resizing the Government

The speakers at the forum unanimously agreed on the need for comprehensive reforms, starting with restructuring and resizing the government to reduce its presence in the economy. They advocated for restricting public spending, revamping the taxation system, and adopting a market-oriented approach to economic development.

The Pakistan Prosperity Forum concluded with a call to action for the government, the private sector, and all stakeholders to work together to implement the necessary reforms and steer Pakistan towards a path of sustainable economic growth and prosperity.





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COP28 UAE

THE COP 28 Bringing The World Together

Ahsan Mukhtar

The COP28 conference is taking place from 30 November to 12 December at Expo City Dubai. COP28 UAE will be a milestone moment for the world to unite around tangible climate action and deliver concrete solutions. Achieving this requires collaboration across civil society, government, industries and all sectors of the economy.

COP28 is where urgency meets hope. Where the gap between ambition and action may be closed - with meaningful, practical and pragmatic solutions. COP28 brings the world together at a pivotal, consequential moment - to shape our collective commitment to climate action and to meet the globally agreed warming limit of 1.5°C. With tangible actions and credible

solutions, COP28 can serve as a springboard to fast track the energy transition, fix climate finance, focus on nature, lives and livelihoods and foster a more inclusive process. It's time to unite, act and deliver.

The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the main decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It brings together the 198 Parties – 197 nations plus the European Union – that have signed on to the Framework Convention.

The inaugural COP gathering took place in Berlin, Germany, in March 1995, and today the COP secretariat is headquartered in Bonn. COPs are hosted annually in different countries, under the

auspices of the UNFCCC, with the UAE hosting COP28.

COPs serve as the formal meeting place each year for the Parties to negotiate and agree on how to tackle climate change, reduce emissions and limit global warming. A primary task at COPs is the examination of national reports and emission inventories submitted by participating countries.

These reports offer essential insights into each country's actions and their progress toward achieving the overarching goals of the Convention.

The COP meets every year unless the Parties decide otherwise. The COP Presidency rotates among the five recognized UN regions - Africa, Asia, Latin America and the



Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe and Western Europe and others. This rotation ensures that different corners of the world have the opportunity to host and showcase their commitment to addressing climate challenges. This time COP28 conference is taking place from 30 November to 12 December at Expo City Dubai

What is the COP28 Presidential Action Agenda?

The COP28 Presidency conducted one of the most extensive engagement and listening tours of any presidency, along with the

first ever open consultation for the two-week agenda at COP28. Its Action Agenda is guided by a single North Star: keeping 1.5°C within reach.

The GST has shown us that we must reduce 22 gigatons of emissions before 2030. To hit these 2030 targets, we need urgent and decisive action at COP28.

To achieve this, the COP28 Presidency developed its Action Plan with four key pillars: fast tracking a just and orderly energy transition, fixing climate finance, focusing on people, nature, lives

and livelihoods, and fostering inclusivity.

What is the COP28 Presidency responsible for?

The COP28 Presidency has been playing the lead role in the preparations for the summit, rallying countries across the world to raise their ambition, to make new promises and deliver on old ones.

What are the themes of COP28 and what do they mean?

The COP28 Presidency has taken an innovative and inclusive



DR. SULTAN AHMED AL JABER, PRESIDENT FOR COP28 UAE

Dr. Al Jaber is the first CEO to ever serve as COP President and brings with him sound business acumen, a deep understanding of economics and leverages his decades-long experience in the energy sector, encompassing both renewable and traditional energies. During his double tenure as Special Envoy for Climate Change (2010- 2016, 2020-present), Dr. Al Jaber has played a seminal role in shaping the country's clean energy path, including as founding CEO and currently the Chairman of Masdar, Abu Dhabi's pioneering renewable energy initiative, that has since become a leading global clean energy player. Dr. Al Jaber has also been an outcomes-focused participant at over 11 COPs, including the historic Paris COP21 in 2015. Upon joining Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) as its CEO, Dr. Al Jaber has spearheaded a \$15 billion decarbonization strategy and new low-carbon solutions business.



approach to the two-week program for COP28. It is the first Presidency to hold an open consultation on thematic areas and sequencing. The program highlights the sectors and topics that stakeholders repeatedly raised during consultations, including both annual fixtures of the COP agenda such as energy and finance, and new, essential topics like health, trade and relief, recovery, and peace.

The thematic days' programming also incorporates four crosscutting themes that underpin effective, interconnected delivery: Technology & Innovation, Inclusion, Frontline Communities and Finance.

The COP28 Presidency has been working in collaboration with women, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, youth, people of determination, subnational actors, and faith-based organizations to ensure their contributions are included throughout the programs and

outcomes. COP28 will also host a historic number of parliamentarians, mayors and local leaders.

THEMATIC PROGRAM

COP28 UAE follows a two-week program, alongside the formal negotiations. It identifies and shapes real world solutions to close the emissions gap in 2030 and build on the challenges and opportunities identified in a Global Stocktake of progress on climate action.

COP28 is the most inclusive ever held. The Presidency is the first to hold an open consultation on the program agenda, including from governments, business, civil society, youth, and Indigenous Peoples, placing both people and planet at the heart of the climate process.

The program showcases new, neglected themes, including threats to human health, steps for relief and recovery from climate change, and a Just Transition in trade and energy. Together, the program delivers connected messages across four over-arching solutions, Technology & Innovation, Inclusion, Frontline Communities and Finance - to help rebuild trust, and empower communities to succeed in our future world.

BLUE ZONE

The Blue Zone is a UNFCCC-managed

site, open to accredited parties and observer delegates. This space houses the formal negotiations across the two-week conference, as well as the World Climate Action Summit, the country pavilions, presidency events, and hundreds of side events. These include panel discussions, round tables and cultural events.

GREEN ZONE

The Green Zone is free-of-charge, and open to everyone. This space is managed and delivered by the COP28 Presidency and is where we bring together diverse groups delivering climate action and accelerating solutions. The Green Zone offers a platform for non-accredited delegates, including youth groups, civil society, NGOs, the private sector, and indigenous groups, to promote voices for climate change conversations and awareness.

WHAT ARE THE GREEN ZONE HUBS

Here is some information on what to expect during your visit to the Green Zone, a space managed and delivered by the COP28 Presidency. Additional details will follow in the days ahead to help visitors maximize their experience and engage in meaningful dialogue to address climate change at the individual level.

The Green Zone will serve as the central hub for action and will welcome all attendees. It will be open to the public, private sectors, media, youth, NGOs, as well as delegates and guests of the UNFCCC-managed Blue Zone for two weeks. The Blue Zone will be open to accredited party and



observer delegates and will host formal negotiations.

The Green Zone will be a space where collective action can transform climate policy into concrete outcomes. With an all-hands-on-deck approach, it will accelerate the energy transition, building upon a legacy of driving impactful initiatives and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). COP28's mission in the Green Zone is to translate insights and ideas into meaningful impact.

Dedicated hubs across Expo City Dubai will give climate curious individuals opportunities to get inspired, learn, develop new skills, and collaborate to co-create and accelerate climate solutions.

COALITION FOR HIGH AMBITION MULTILEVEL PARTNERSHIPS

Climate change is a pressing global crisis that transcends national boundaries, requiring international cooperation and concerted efforts from everyone, including individuals like all of us.

With the United Arab Emirates preparing to host COP28 in just a few weeks, we have put together a comprehensive explainer to answer all your questions about this year's most significant climate conference.

Whether you're curious about understanding the COP process, are contemplating attendance, or simply want to understand how to engage in this major event, we've got you covered. Read on to understand the historical significance of COP, what to expect at COP28, and what you need to know to actively participate in this crucial dialogue on climate action.



The Federal Secretary Ministry of Water Resources, Syed Ali Murtaza highlighted that water governance was a key issue and water management and agriculture practices need to be changed in Pakistan.

(PCRWR), and CGIARs Water, Land and Ecosystems Programme

Secretary Murtaza said water scarcity is due to the usage in the agriculture sector, adding that the Punjab Water Act gives a

approach to achieving the goal of efficient water usage.

‘We are also facing issues due to the Indus Water Treaty and eastern rivers have completely gone dry,’ he regretted but added

PAKISTAN WATER WEEK 2023

Experts call for effective water management in Pakistan

Desk Report

Addressing an international conference in connection with ‘Pakistan Water Week 2023’ he said the event has brought together the experts for an important discussion on a crucial issue being faced by the country.

The conference, ‘Transformative Pathways for Water and Food System in a Climate Resilient Pakistan’ was organized by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources

governance framework to the province for water allocation for different sectors.

‘The act also focuses on licensing and wastewater and use of surface and groundwater and we thank FCDO for supporting the implementation of the Punjab Water Act,’ he said and added that Sindh and Balochistan provinces should also frame their water act soon.

He also highlighted the need for a holistic rather than a piecemeal

that the government was committed to efficient use of water.

The federal secretary admitted that the water table was going down in Lahore and Multan and water acts can play a role to avoid that.

Meanwhile, Dr Mark Smith, Director General IWMI, said that climate change was changing water regimes and Pakistan is also facing the same vulnerability.





Smith stressed that global efforts are underway to reduce the swift rise in temperature and the Conference of Parties (COP) currently underway in Dubai is also focusing on the challenges being faced by nature.

He praised the joint efforts being put forth by IWMI, CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research), and provincial governments of Balochistan and Sindh for policy implementation for water and food security.

‘We are working with FCDO (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office) on improving water governance in Punjab by implementing the Punjab Water Act 2019,’ he said.

He also announced the launch of CGIAR’s initiative on Fragility, Conflict, and Migration (FCM) in Pakistan to enhance the resilience of food, land, and water systems in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

Claudia Ringler (Co-Lead NEXUS Gains and Director, Natural Resources and Resilience) said that the number of hungry people has risen from 564 million in 2014 to 735 million in 2022, adding that the number in Pakistan is 43 million.

Elaborating that extreme weather events cause welfare loss, the expert quoted that Pakistan suffered a loss worth USD 2.1 billion as a result of climate change as per the estimates.

Stressing that the First World needs to take steps effectively to stem the tide of extreme weather events, the expert highlighted that countries like Pakistan should also work for climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies.

Dr. Ringler focused on utilizing the NEXUS Gains Approach which is improving water, energy, food, ecosystem, and health sectors for having a joint solution to all these sectors and can reduce rice acreage in Pakistan by 15 percent,

consequently leading to two million acre-feet of water saving.

Director, Water, Food and Ecosystems, IWMI, Dr. Mohsin Hafeez said Pakistan has 6th largest population in the world, is 77th in the food security index, and 8th most climate-vulnerable country, which is directly affecting water and food security in the country.

‘Despite reported figures suggesting that 90% of water is utilized in agriculture, the lack of scientific studies casts doubt on the reliability of this information,’ Dr Mohsin said.

The water expert highlighted that Pakistan Water Week 2023 aims to carry forward the momentum from its successful inauguration as Pakistan’s flagship international conference to discuss the critical climate challenges of Pakistan.

‘The Water Week will provide a platform for them to share insights and collaborate in building resilience for Pakistan,’ Dr Mohsin said.

In the wake of escalating global climate challenges, Pakistan, despite contributing less than 1 percent to global greenhouse gas emissions, finds itself on the

change is vividly apparent, with increased exposure to extreme weather events, exemplified by recent floods in Balochistan. These events underscore the

These pillars include Water Resources Management, focusing on sustainable water resource utilization for climate-resilient water security, and Agriculture

PAKISTAN'S CLIMATE CRUSADE

Navigating Challenges and Aspirations at COP-28

Tanveer Ali Maken

frontline of a disproportionate battle against climate adversities. The upcoming COP28, hosted by the UAE in Dubai from November 30 to December 12, 2023, emerges as a pivotal platform for nations to unite, recalibrate strategies, and propel progress towards meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement.

The United Nations Climate Change Conferences, including COP28, serve as critical gatherings where countries negotiate and agree on actions to combat climate change, limit emissions, and halt global warming. Pakistan's vulnerability to climate

urgent need for climate-resilient strategies, a focal point for international scrutiny at COP28.

Despite Pakistan's minimal contribution to global emissions, its efforts and challenges will take center stage at this global forum. The Ministry of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives aligns Pakistan's future with a sustainable vision presented by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, emphasizing key pillars of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2023.

and Food Security, enhancing agricultural resilience and ensuring food security through climate-smart practices.

As the world looks to COP28 for leadership and commitment, Pakistan's narrative serves as a compelling reminder that every action, whether large-scale projects or community-level initiatives, contributes to the collective journey toward a sustainable and resilient future. In the face of climate diversity, Pakistan stands as a testament to what can be achieved with vision, commitment, and collaborative action.



Pakistan's Agenda for COP-28 Excellence

As the world gears up for COP-28, Pakistan has taken center stage in addressing the pressing challenges of climate change. The Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination, in collaboration with the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF), recently orchestrated a pivotal event - the high-level Dialogue on "Pakistan's Roadmap for COP 28 – Expectations & Goals." This strategic platform brought together a spectrum of stakeholders, aligning national and international bodies, NGOs, private sectors, and academia. These preparatory dialogues serve as crucial milestones, fine-tuning collective negotiating positions and creating awareness.

The United Arab Emirates, as the host of COP-28, has outlined an ambitious agenda to make the conference a turning point in the global fight against climate change. Pakistan, recognizing its vulnerability to climate change, used this dialogue to collate input from diverse stakeholders, framing an effective national agenda. Key focal points include Loss and Damage, Climate Finance, and the Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETP).

Ahmad Irfan Aslam, Caretaker Federal Minister for Climate Change & Environmental Coordination, emphasized the imperative of mainstreaming climate change in vulnerable sectors, steering Pakistan towards climate-resilient development. The dialogue stressed that climate action is a shared responsibility and priority.

CEO of NDRMF, Bilal Anwar, highlighted the centrality of resilience in the face of climate challenges, fostering a world where every community is equipped to withstand climate impacts. The COP-28 agenda, with increased industry participation, will witness discussions on climate justice, finance, and a comprehensive global progress assessment since the Paris Agreement. Pakistan, actively participating in COP-28, has laid the groundwork through this high-level dialogue, fostering partnerships for meaningful climate action.

PM Kakar Steers Pakistan's Epic Journey to COP-28 Excellence

In a proactive move to address the challenges posed by climate change, Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has steered Pakistan towards developing a comprehensive national strategy. During his visit to the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) in Islamabad, he directed the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to collaborate with Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs) to enhance preparedness.

Prime Minister Kakar emphasized the utilization of expert research by the NEOC to effectively tackle the impacts of climate change. With an eye on COP-28, Pakistan aims to inform the global community about the detrimental effects of climate change and showcase its commitment to climate resilience.

Commending the NDMA and NEOC for their timely predictions and proactive measures, Kakar instructed the NDMA to facilitate

PDMAs in bolstering their capacity. During his tour of the NEOC, he interacted with team members and officers, gaining insights into Pakistan's preparedness for disasters and post-disaster recovery efforts.

The meeting highlighted an action plan under the NDMA, encompassing early warning systems and practical measures to mitigate damages from natural disasters. COP-28 preparations revealed the risks Pakistan faces due to climate change, including glaciers melting, floods, GLOF (Glacial Lake Outburst Floods), snow avalanches, landslides, wildfires, and other hazards.

Modern technology, including mobile disaster vehicles, satellite monitoring, and advanced methods, are employed by the NDMA to monitor high-risk areas. This information is shared with provincial governments and district administrations, fostering collaboration to minimize the adverse effects of climate change-induced natural disasters.

The meeting shed light on the profound impact of climate change on agriculture, the economy, and transportation infrastructure. Caretaker PM Kakar's proactive approach underscores Pakistan's commitment to climate resilience and positions the nation as a proactive participant in global climate discussions.

NDMA Paves the Path for Innovations in Disaster Management at COP-28

In the face of escalating climate challenges, Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) stands as an example of



innovation and resilience, showcasing its revamped Proactive Disaster Management System at the international climate conference COP-28. The newly-established National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC) serves as the hub for cutting-edge technologies, including the National Common Operating Picture (NCOP), an integrated platform providing real-time data on weather, temperature, glaciers melting, and more. NDMA's participation in COP-28 is not just about sharing best practices but also embracing global technologies like the Electronic Multi Hazard Early Warning System (EMHEW) and fostering regional collaboration through disaster risk reduction strategies. As a key player in climate diplomacy, NDMA's initiatives extend beyond borders, with INS-RAG certified teams ready for deployment, emphasizing solidarity and cooperation in the face of climate-induced disasters. Joining hands with stakeholders, Pakistan envisions a safer, more resilient

future as it contributes to global efforts against climate change.

Live Updates from COP-28

NDMA Spotlight on Pakistan's 'Green Pakistan Initiative' at COP28"

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Sunday showcased Pakistan's strategic project Green Pakistan Initiative during a plenary discussion "Strengthening Delivery: Aligning development, humanitarian and climate finance" organised by IFAD and Green Climate Fund (GCF) at the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) at UAE meeting.

Chairman NDMA, Lieutenant General, Inam Haider Malik participated in a special session and highlighted Pakistan's Proactive Disaster Management enhancing indigenous capacities to prevent and minimise disaster losses, a news release said. He also discussed climate-smart agriculture collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The Chairman NDMA stressed the need to provide climate finances to undertake projects in disaster-hit countries like Pakistan. He also held a meeting with Practice Manager, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, South Asia Region, World Bank, Abhas Jha at COP28, Dubai. Both discussed possible collaborations with WB for long-term sustainability and extended scope of National Emergencies Operations Center (NEOC) operations, capacity strengthening interventions.

The World Bank official assured of their support and potential collaborations to strengthen the overall disaster risk management (DRM) system in the country. At another sideline meeting with the CEO IRC, David Milliband, the NDMA Chairman apprised of the operations of the NEOC established at the NDMA and its critical role in anticipating disasters well in advance to ensure timely actions for saving losses of lives and properties.



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Pakistan's recent victory in securing the Vice Chair position of UNESCO's Executive Board is not just a diplomatic feather in the cap, but a clarion call for a new chapter in the nation's engagement with the world. This prestigious role isn't a trophy to

administrative efficiency needs streamlining. But UNESCO offers a treasure trove of expertise and best practices to address these gaps. By bolstering educational infrastructure, promoting scientific research, and enhancing administrative efficiency, we can

heritage, and champion inclusive education. It means spearheading projects that resonate with the SDGs and contribute to the well-being of humanity at large.

Regional Cooperation and Global Problem-Solving:

FROM VICE CHAIR TO VANGUARD

How Pakistan Can Lead on Education, Science, and Culture

Anique ur Rehman

be displayed, but a platform to be leveraged for transformative change – for Pakistan, the region, and the world.

From Domestic Development to Global Leadership:

Pakistan's first task is to look inward. This vice chairmanship isn't just an external validation, it's a mirror reflecting our own shortcomings. We haven't reached parity with developed nations in education, our scientific research needs nurturing, and our

not only elevate our standing within UNESCO, but also pave the way for intellectual and institutional growth.

Beyond Rhetoric, Towards Tangible Action:

Mere lip service to UNESCO's ideals won't suffice. Pakistan's commitment must be etched in concrete action, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This means championing initiatives that tackle climate change, preserve cultural

Pakistan's newfound influence within UNESCO presents a unique opportunity to foster collaboration with South Asian nations. Educational and cultural exchange programs, joint research ventures, and shared initiatives can strengthen regional bonds, replacing competition with cooperation and understanding.

A Beacon of Education and Cultural Preservation:

Pakistan has a rich history and diverse heritage that can





contribute significantly to global efforts in safeguarding cultural treasures. By collaborating on projects aimed at preserving historical sites, promoting traditional arts, and fostering cultural exchange, we can solidify our role as a custodian of global heritage.

From Recipient to Leader:

Let's not just be recipients of UNESCO's expertise, but active contributors to the organization's mission. We can share our experiences, develop innovative solutions, and leverage technology to reach marginalized

communities. This proactive approach positions Pakistan as a leader, utilizing education as a catalyst for societal progress.

The Mantle of Responsibility, the Opportunity for Progress:

The UNESCO Vice Chair position is not a trophy to be displayed, but a mantle of responsibility to be carried with a forward-looking vision. It's an opportunity to transcend borders, enrich the global community, and live up to UNESCO's mission of "building peace in the minds of men and women." Let's not just celebrate this victory, but use it as a

springboard to write a new chapter – one where Pakistan leads the way on education, science, and culture, for the benefit of all.

Remember, as UNESCO's Director-General reminds us, "Peace is more than the absence of war, it is living together with our differences... while furthering universal respect for justice and human rights on which such coexistence depends." Let Pakistan become a beacon of that coexistence, leading the way towards a more just, equitable, and sustainable future for all.





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