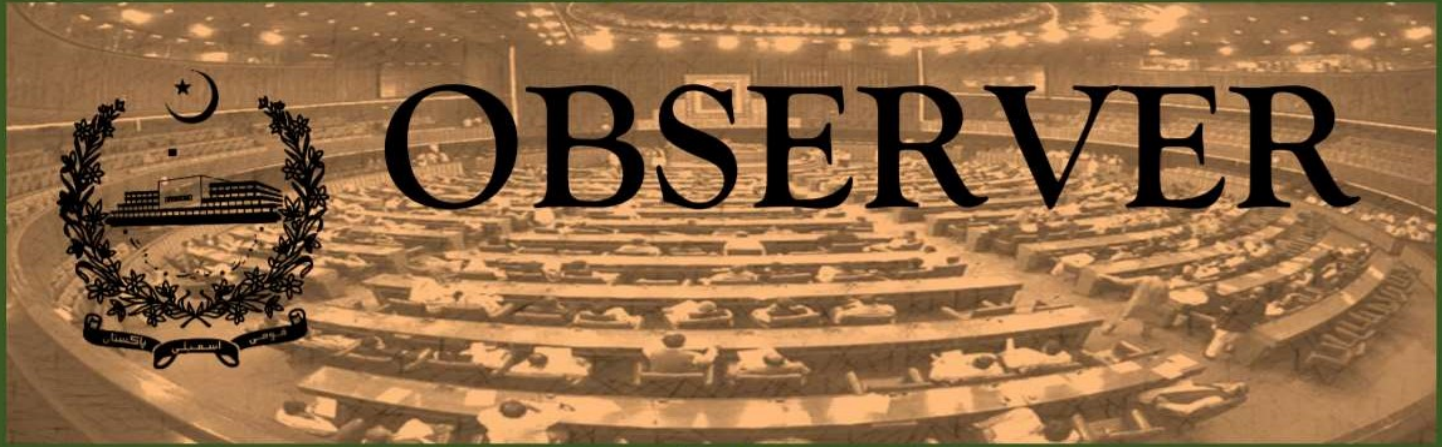


NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



Newsletter by National Assembly of Pakistan

January to June 2020 | Volume I Issue II

Pak Turk Friendship Echoes

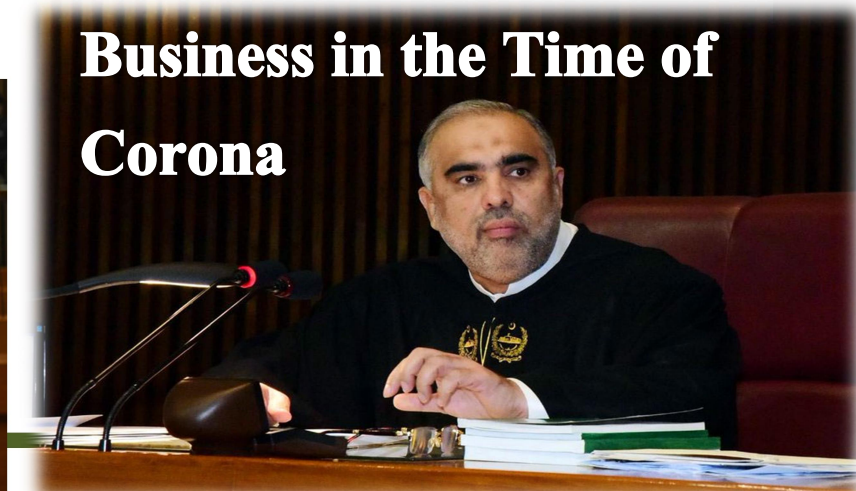
Erdogan addresses the Joint Sitting of Parliament



BUDGET 2020-21 GETS THE NOD



Business in the Time of Corona



MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

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The year 2020 has been a tough year as it exposed the fault lines within systems and societies all over the world, and taught lessons to those who failed to adapt and reinvent themselves. This applies to organisations as well and here, I'm particularly pleased to mention that the National Assembly of Pakistan has been one of those organisations that modified its usual way of conducting business, adapted to the diktat of circumstances yet remained committed to its service to the public under the leadership of Speaker, Mr. Asad Qaiser.



The current parliamentary year started in full swing, as has been the norm, with MPs being active on all parliamentary forums. With the onset of the pandemic, the medium of conducting business was shifted to online avenues, virtual platforms or where necessary, limited physical attendance of MPs was ensured to facilitate smooth operations. One such example is the Annual Budget Session 2020-21 which was smoothly conducted in such manner. These new norms and regulations were applicable to both members and staff alike while keeping immaculate safety and sanitation measures intact.

As extra ordinary circumstances call for extra ordinary measures, the Honourable Speaker, during these testing times, made it a priority to use this platform to help ease those who are in distress or have been adversely impacted as a consequence. Following the outspread of the COVID-19 epidemic, the repatriation of the stranded expatriates in different parts of the world became the primary objective of the National Assembly. The Honourable Speaker National Assembly formed a Committee on repatriation of stranded expatriates, personally supervised the entire process, and remained in touch with the Ambassadors/High Commissioners/Diplomats of Pakistan in respective countries. Consequently, around 1500 Pakistani expatriates stranded in different parts of the world were successfully repatriated to Pakistan through concerted efforts. This is one such example.

The current issue tries to reflect the many ways in which the National Assembly has been active during the first half of the year on humanitarian and diplomatic fronts besides fulfilling its core responsibilities which have been briefly touched upon in this issue for our readers' kind information. I hope we are successful in our endeavour.

Happy Reading and Stay Safe!

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BUSINESS IN THE TIME OF CORONA



Speaker presiding over the meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on Coronavirus on 20-04-2020 in Parliament House.

In the wake of Covid-19 Global pandemic, nearly 100 Pakistani MPs were infected. On 25th March 2020, Parliamentary Leadership of Pakistan pledged to collectively fight the Corona Pandemic and the Speaker of National Assembly Mr Asad Qaiser constituted a Sub-Committee to formulate Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the Parliamentary Committee on Corona. This was followed by a meeting to discuss modus operandi for conducting sittings of the National Assembly during Covid-19 on 8th June 2020. Most of the sessions were conducted virtually which were attended by Prime Minister, Ministers and Opposition Leaders themselves.

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser made adherence to required safety measures his utmost priority. The Speaker ordered for making new seating arrangement following the principle of social distancing in order to minimize chances of spread of corona virus. The new instructions were as follows:

- Seats in the Hall were placed at distance of two meters.
- The Visitor's Galleries remained closed during the sittings of the Assembly.
- Minimum presence of secretariat staff was allowed.
- Regarding presence of media in Press Gallery, cards were issued as per SoPs jointly developed by National Assembly & Senate Secretariats, Ministry of Information and Parliamentary Reporters Association.
- Staff tested negative for corona virus was deputed to perform duties in the Hall during the session.
- Disinfection of Assembly Hall, chambers and offices was done on daily basis. Sanitizers installed in every nook and corner.

- Face masks made mandatory for all to wear in premises.
- Mandatory to follow all health guidelines and SoPs in order to minimize the spread of the contagious disease in official conduct.

On similar lines, it was decided that:

- Virtual meetings of the Committees will be held using platforms like Zoom, Hopin, Webex and Google Meet.
- Few Committees and Sub-Committees with important business on agenda were functional throughout. For instance, Sub-Committees of Special Committee on Agriculture Products conducted around 5 to 6 meetings a month on average (as main committee was made dormant temporarily due to Covid) to focus on important business. Selective participants were physically invited while remaining stakeholders were engaged virtually. Social distancing, regular sanitization and disinfection of committee rooms and mandatory use of mask were ensured meanwhile.
- During the Budget session, no legislative and non-legislative agenda was taken up giving maximum opportunity to Members to take part in general discussion on Budget and its passage.
- The sittings of the Assembly were decided to stretch up to three hours with presence of 25% of the total membership of Assembly during a particular sitting and that to be decided by the Leadership of parliamentary parties.
- It was also decided to hold discussion on issues of utmost importance only during the pre-budget sittings of the Assembly.
- No individuals were allowed to accompany MPs into the Parliament House.
- All members and every other individual entering the Parliament House goes through thermal gun screening.
- Parliamentary Reporter Association shortlisted 10-12 journalists/reporters for entry into the Parliament Building (Press Gallery) in view of limited space.
- Mask, gloves and sanitizer were provided to Senators at their tables.
- All Senators had to get their coronavirus tests done before coming for the session.
- Testing facility is available at the dispensary in Parliament Lodge.

Erdogan addresses the Parliament

14 February, 2020



President of Turkey H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan is addressing the Joint Session of Parliament while Speaker NA Asad Qaiser is presiding the Session in Parliament House on 14.02.2020

In a move to celebrate the warm friendship between the two countries and forge stronger ties further, President of Turkey H.E Recep Tayyip Erdogan paid a two-day visit to Pakistan where he addressed the Parliament of Pakistan for the fourth time.

A day before his address to the Joint Session of the Parliament, the Turkish President met with Speaker National Assembly, Prime Minister Imran Khan, Chairman Senate Mr. Sadiq Sanjrani and Deputy Speaker Qasim Khan Suri in the Parliament House.



While talking to the Turkish President, the Speaker said that Pakistan cherishes its fraternal relations with Turkey which is intertwined in religious, historic and cultural ties. He said that people of Pakistan are thankful for the strong support of Mr. Erdogan on the issue of Kashmir and that it was indeed an honor for the Parliament to be addressed by a Leader of his stature.

Speaker Asad Qaiser further said that bilateral relations between both the countries have witnessed progression due to enhanced cooperation at multilateral spheres and expressed his optimism regarding future relations of both countries as a consequence of the current visit of H.E Erdogan. The Chairman Senate of Pakistan Mr. Sadiq Sanjarani and Deputy Speaker Qasim Suri also welcomed the honorable Guest and expressed their gratitude for visiting Pakistan and addressing the Parliament.

President of Turkey H.E Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that Turks adore their Pakistani brethren who are tied in eternal bond of religion and history. He reiterated his staunch support to the issue of Kashmir. The President of Turkey after his address to the Parliament also inscribed his remarks in the Visitors' book placed in the Hall of Fame in the Parliament House.



Budget 2020-21 gets the nod



The Government presented its second full-year budget as a “relief budget”. The Budget was tabled by Minister for Industries and Production Mr. Hammad Azhar in National Assembly on 12th June 2020. For the first time in the parliamentary history, the cut-motions on budgetary allocations for selected ministries, moved by the opposition parties in the National Assembly, will not be voted upon and would be treated as withdrawn after discussion on them. This had been agreed by the government and opposition while deciding the rules of the game for the budget session.

The National Assembly, on 29th June 2020 passed the Finance Bill 2020-21 with a voice vote, after debates. The amendments proposed by the opposition in the Finance Bill, 2020 were rejected by the House. Earlier, the government defeated the opposition with 160-119 votes at the time of passage of clause nine of the bill.

Below is brief summary of the Budget presented:

- Total expenditures are budgeted at PKR. 7.137 trillion, and gross revenue receipts are targeted at PKR. 6.573 trillion. The net revenues will be PKR. 3.7 trillion, which is 56.3 per cent of the total

expenditure, after adjusting the provincial share of PKR. 2.874 trillion.

- The government is targeting PKR. 5.464 trillion (83.1 %) from taxes and PKR. 1.109 trillion (16.9 %) will be non-tax revenues.

- The targeted revenues for the year 2020-21 are 19.4 % higher than the revised target for the year 2019-2020

- Total current expenditures for the year 2020-21 are estimated at PKR 6.344 trillion. The major contributors are mark-up payments (PKR. 2.946 trillion), pensions (PKR. 470 billion), defence affairs and services (PKR 1.289 trillion), grants and transfers (PKR. 905 billion), subsidies (PKR. 209 billion), and running the civil government (PKR. 476 billion).

- Total development expenditures for the year 2020-21 are estimated at PKR. 792 billion, out of which PKR. 650 billion are allocated to the federal PSDP.
- The fiscal deficit is budgeted at PKR. 3.195 trillion, which forms 7% of the GDP as compared to 9.1% for FY20's revised estimates.
- The deficit will be financed from external borrowing (PKR. 810 billion), capital receipt (PKR. 1.396 trillion) bank borrowing (889 billion), privatization proceeds (PKR. 100 billion), and surplus from the provinces (PKR. 242 billion).
- The government aims to finance 75% of the deficit from domestic resources.

NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON AGRICULTURE

A Giant Step Forward

In a bid to alleviate the lives of farmers on grass root level, the National Assembly of Pakistan initiated an exclusive, one of its kind debate on Pakistan's agro-economy on 11th March 2020 called the "National Dialogue on Agriculture."

A flagship initiative of the Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan, Mr. Asad Qaiser, the national dialogue was attended by the President of Pakistan, Members of the cabinet, treasury and opposition benches, international financial institutions, agriculture specific international organizations, ambassadors, farmer unions and technical experts.

Speaking on the occasion the President of Pakistan Dr Arif Alvi stressed on the need to build new synergies, mobilization of investment in Agriculture Research and enabling environment for the private sector to drive the Agriculture transformation agenda. He appreciated the Speaker National Assembly's efforts to turn around Pakistan's Agricultural decline. Minister for National Food Security and Research also spoke on the occasion.

The Speaker termed the dialogue as the beginning of a nationally integrated effort to facilitate policy shifts in the agriculture sector. He vowed that the jointly agreed recommendations would be pursued to a logical end. The Speaker National Assembly stressed that enhanced farmers' profitability, diversified national nutrient base and employment generation in agriculture sector were key objectives of such national deliberations.

The Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Shah Mehmood Qureshi speaking at the conclusion of the dialogue



remarked that poor farmers' lack of access to finance and markets precluded them from achieving the economies of scale in agriculture.

The National Dialogue on Agriculture organised with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was intended to facilitate an informed debate in the National Assembly and promote policy coherence and coordination at all levels of government. It aimed to identify the constraints and obstacles which continue to impede progress in realising Pakistan's full agricultural potential.

The dialogue addressed 8 themes which included agriculture research, extension and technology transfer frameworks, farmers' access to credit, input for higher yields, pathways for enhancing Pakistan's agriculture exports, women and youth in agriculture, integrated natural resource management, high value agricultural products and value addition for a resilient agriculture sector.

The Dialogue is part of the endeavors of the National Assembly Special Committee on Agricultural Products, headed by the Speaker himself, to assist in accelerating the national agricultural growth rate.



NA Speaker Writes Letters to World Leaders on COVID-19 Pandemic

April 8, 2020

National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser offered deep condolences over the precious loss of lives due to COVID-19 pandemic through letters addressed to the Speakers of the national parliaments of China, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United States of America, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, Italy, Iran and Spain.

In his epistle to the Chairman of the National People's Congress of China, he wrote, "It is indeed inspiring for the rest of the world the way government of the People's Republic of China checked the vicious spread of virus". He also expressed his gratitude to the Chinese government for the care that they extended to the affected Pakistani student community in China.

In his letter to the Speaker of US House of Representatives, Ms. Nancy Pelosi, the Speaker underlined the need for international cooperation. He remarked that relief in debt repayments and relaxation of international sanctions on states could be important steps in such international cooperation. In his missive to the Speaker of British House of commons, the Speaker

expressed his hope for the early and complete recovery of Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

The Speaker inter-alia wrote to the Speaker of Grand National Assembly of Turkey that Pakistan was attempting to strike a balance between the need to arrest transmission of the disease through social distancing and other measures and keeping the wheels of the economy moving.

In his letter to the Speaker of Majlis of Iran, the Speaker Asad Qaiser not only expressed prayers for his early recovery but also highlighted the call by Prime Minister Imran Khan for debt relief and restructuring for the developing countries to create the fiscal space needed to save human lives and shore up economies.

The Speaker in his letters to Speakers of Shura of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, National Assembly of United Arab Emirates, Italy, Iran and Spain expressed his heartfelt condolence on loss of precious lives of their citizens and reiterated Pakistan's resolve to jointly fight that pandemic.

The 25th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Commonwealth

6 – 10 January, 2020
Ottawa, Canada



Photo Credits: Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

held on inclusive Parliaments where Speakers and Presiding Officers discussed the role of the Speaker in supporting emerging procedures and practices to embrace the changing needs of modern Parliaments.

Speakers and Presiding Officers from across the Commonwealth met in Canada for the 25th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth (CSPOC) which took place from 6 to 10 January 2020.

Speakers and Presiding Officers from 37 Commonwealth Parliaments were hosted by the Senate of Canada's Speaker, Hon. George Furey and the Speaker of the House of Commons, Hon. Anthony Rota, MP. The event was attended by the Honourable Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr. Qasim Khan Suri, along with the two officers of the National Assembly Secretariat.

The biennial conference focused on the topics of parliamentary engagement: openness, transparency and accountability; and on Parliamentarians as effective legislators and representatives. A special plenary session was also

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS

Acts of Parliament:

19 Bills became Acts of Parliament during the first half of the year.

	Title	Date
1	The Finance Act 2020 (Act No. XXII of 2020) (Act No. XIX of 2020)	30th June, 2020
2	The Geographical Indications (Registration and Protection) Act, 2020 (Act No. XVIII of 2020)	27th March, 2020
3	The Tax Laws (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Act No. XVII of 2020)	27th March, 2020
4	The Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act, 2020 (Act XV 2020)	19th March, 2020
5	Legal Aid & Justice Authority Act, 2020 (Act XVI of 2020)	19th March, 2020
6	The National Counter Terrorism Authority (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Act No. XIV of 2020)	18th March, 2020
7	The Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Act No. XIII of 2020)	25th February, 2020
8	The Foreign Exchange Regulation (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Act No. X of 2020)	21st February, 2020
9	The Anti Money Laundering (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Act No. XI of 2020)	21st February, 2020
10	The Banks (Nationalization) (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Act No. IX of 2020)	18th February, 2020
11	The Superior Courts (Court Dress and Mode of Address) Order (Repeal) Act, 2020 (Act No. VIII of 2020)	18th February, 2020
12	The Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Act No. VII of 2020)	18th February, 2020
13	The Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act, 2020 (Act No. XII of 2020)	18th February, 2020
14	The Letters of Administration and Succession Certificates Act, 2020 (Act No. VI of 2020)	11th February, 2020
15	The Federal Government Employees Housing Authority Act, 2020 (Act No. IV of 2020)	14th January, 2020
16	The Naya Pakistan Housing and Development Authority Act, 2020 (Act No. V of 2020)	14th January, 2020
17	The Pakistan Army (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Act No. I of 2020)	9th January, 2020
18	The Pakistan Air Force (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Act No. II of 2020)	9th January, 2020
19	The Pakistan Navy (Amendment) Act, 2020 (Act No. III of 2020)	9th January, 2020

Bills Passed:

5 Bills were passed by National Assembly

- The Surveying and Mapping (Amendment) Act, 2020
- The Federal Public Service Commission (Validation of Rules) Act, 2020
- The University of Islamabad Act, 2020
- The ICT Right of Persons with Disability Act, 2020
- The Mutual Legal Assistance (Criminal Matters) Act, 2019

Government Bills:

27 Government Bills were laid in the House

	Title	Date
1	The Finance Bill 2020	12th June, 2020
2	The Maritime Security Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2020	10th June, 2020
3	The National College of Arts Institute Bill, 2020	10th June, 2020
4	The National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2020	10th June, 2020
5	The Regulation of Generation, Transmission and Distribution of Electric Power (Amendment) Bill, 2020	10th June, 2020
6	The Hyderabad Institute for Technical and Management Sciences Bill, 2020	10th June, 2020
7	The Pakistan Single Window Act, 2020	8th June, 2020
8	The Motion Pictures Ordinance (Amendment) Act, 2020	11th March, 2020
9	The Associated Press of Pakistan Corporation (Amendment) Act, 2020	11th March, 2020
10	The Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (Amendment) Act, 2020	11th March, 2020
11	The Pakistan Arms (Amendment) Bill, 2020	9th March, 2020
12	The Members of Parliament (Salaries and Allowances) (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Introduced)	9th March, 2020
13	The University of Engineering and Emerging Technology Bill, 2020	9th March, 2020
14	The Pakistan Health Research Council (Amendment) Bill, 2020	9th March, 2020
15	The Islamabad Capital Territory Charities Registration, Regulation and Facilitation Bill, 2020	9th March, 2020
16	The United Nations (Security Council) (Amendment) Bill, 2020	17th February, 2020
17	The Anti-terrorism (Amendment) Bill, 2020.	31st January, 2020
18	The Post Office Cash Certificate (Amendment) Bill, 2020.	31st January, 2020
19	The Government Savings Bank (Amendment) Bill, 2020.	31st January, 2020
20	The Emigration (Amendment) Bill, 2020	31st January, 2020
21	The Post Office National Savings Certificates (Amendment) Act, 2020	31st January, 2020
22	The Protection of Communal Properties of Minorities (Amendment) Bill, 2020. (introduced)	13th January, 2020
23	The SBP Banking Services Corporation (Amendment) Act, 2020	9th January, 2020
24	The Pakistan Army (Amendment) Act, 2020	3rd January, 2020
25	The Pakistan Air Force (Amendment) Act, 2020	3rd January, 2020
26	The Pakistan Navy (Amendment) Act, 2020	3rd January, 2020
27	Pakistan Academy of Letters (Amendment) Act, 2019	1st January, 2020

Private Member's Bills Laid:

32 Bills of Members were laid during the first six months

	Title	Date
1	The National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2020	10th March, 2020
2	The Elections (Amendment) Act, 2020	10th March, 2020
3	The Civil Servants (Amendment) Act, 2020	10th March, 2020
4	The National Database and Registration Authority (Amendment) Act, 2020	10th March, 2020
5	The Pakistan Penal Code (Amendment) Act, 2020	10th March, 2020
6	The Prevention of Drugs usage in Educational Institutions Act, 2020	10th March, 2020
7	The Employment of the Unattended Youth Act, 2020	10th March, 2020
8	The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act, 2020	10th March, 2020
9	The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Insertion of new section 297A & amendment in schedule II)	6th February, 2020
10	The Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection (Amendment) Bill, 2020.	6th February, 2020
11	The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Insertion of new section 409A)	6th February, 2020
12	The Transfer of Evacuee Land (Katchi Abadi)(Amendment) Act, 2020	14th January, 2020
13	The Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2020	14th January, 2020
14	The Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2020	14th January, 2020
15	The Marine Insurance (Amendment) Act, 2020	14th January, 2020
16	The National University of Technology (Amendment) Act, 2020	14th January, 2020
17	The Legal Practitioners and Bar Councils (Amendment) Bill, 2020	8th January, 2020
18	The Right to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2020	8th January, 2020
19	The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Article 31)	8th January, 2020
20	The Minorities Education Seats Bill, 2020	8th January, 2020
21	The Institute of Art and Culture (Amendment) Bill, 2020	8th January, 2020
22	The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2020. (Article 251)	8th January, 2020

Resolutions passed:

National Assembly passed 7 Resolutions in the first half of 2020

23	The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Section 510)	8th January, 2020
24	The Women in Distress and Detention Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2020	8th January, 2020
25	The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2020. (Amendment in Third Schedule)	8th January, 2020
26	The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Article 140A)	8th January, 2020
27	The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Section 292)	8th January, 2020
28	The Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Section 206 & 208)	8th January, 2020
29	The Minorities Access to Higher Education Bill, 2020	8th January, 2020
30	The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020 (Section 427 to 429, 435 to 440, 447 to 458, 461, 462 and Schedule II of CrPC)	8th January, 2020
31	The Juvenile Justice (Amendment) Bill, 2020	8th January, 2020
32	The Islamic Development Bank (Amendment) Bill, 2020	8th January, 2020

	Resolution	Date
1	Resolution to condemn sacrilege of Bibi Fatima Zahra (AS) as unacceptable and called for taking necessary measures against it.	June 24, 2020
2	Resolution to condemn information leakage of high profile criminal cases which can benefit the culprit in anyway.	June 22, 2020
3	The House condemns and protests the Attacks under Extremist Indian Government on Peaceful protestors.	March 9, 2020
4	The National Assembly extends its full and complete support in solidarity with Government and people of China for their dedicated efforts	February 13, 2020
5	The House strongly condemns the brutal killing of 8 years old Iwaz Noor in Nowshera	February 7, 2020
6	The National Assembly of Pakistan emphasizes that 5th February is the International Day of Solidarity being marked all over the world to express solidarity with the people of Kashmir	February 4, 2020
7	This House reiterates that Hazrat Muhammad P.B.U.H. is the last Messenger of Allah	January 6, 2020

COMMITTEES AT WORK



Chairman Parliamentary Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) presiding over the meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on CPEC on 18-06-2020 in Parliament House, Islamabad.

Public Accounts Committee

The 15th PAC constituted by the House on 20th December 2019. It continued the examination of the inherited 8 years of Audit Reports. So far 18 Sub Committees have been constituted on pending Audit Reports and other issues of public importance, particularly the overall losses in DISCOs, Electricity overbilling, enhancing the capacity of staff of AGP Office and structural changes to improving the performance of PAC.

During this period, the PAC and its Sub-Committees have held 32 meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic. The AGP has verified recovery to the tune of Rs.60, 970.071 Million from December 2018 till June 2020. Moreover, the Sub-Committee VIII of the PAC on Monitoring and Implementation held four meetings pertaining to Ministry of Climate Change, Commerce, Information Technology and Telecommunication, Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Petroleum Division and Revenue Division and recovery made of total Rs. 5374.372 million during the said period. The Committee

reviewed the compliance on PAC Reports for the years 1999-00, 2000-01, 2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2008-09.

In the first half of 2020, **Parliamentary Committee on Appointment of Chief Election Commissioner and Members of the Election Commission of Pakistan** confirmed the nomination of the Chief Election Commissioner and two Members of Election Commission from Sindh and Balochistan.

On the other hand, Mr. Shehryar Afridi got elected as the new Chairman of the **Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir** by majority votes on 13th May 2020.

Parliamentary Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) held 9 meetings and took special interest in Gas Energy projects in the country while **Parliamentary Committee on Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)** including a Sub-Committee constituted for the implementation of the recommendations of the main Committee held 06 meetings respectively.

Matters Referred to Standing Committees (Jan-Jun 2020)

S#	Name of Committee	Chairman/ Convener	Meetings held	Bills		
				Referred	Disposed off	Pending
1	Cabinet Secretariat	Ms. Kishwar Zehra	04	03	-	03
2	Climate Change	Ms. Munaza Hassan	2	1		1
3	Commerce	Syed Naveed Qamar	3	3	1	2
4	Communications	Mr. Ibadullah Khan	1	1	1 Rejected	
5	Defence	Mr. Amjid Ali Khan	4	7		1
6	Defence Production	Chaudhry Iftikhar Nazir	1	--		
7	Energy	Mr. Imran Khattak	1	7	6	1
8	Federal Education and Professional Training, National Heritage and Culture	Mian Najeeb Ud Din Awaisi	4	5 + 18		
9	Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs	Mr. Faiz Ullah	11	12	3	9
10	Foreign Affairs	Malik Muhammad Ehsan Ullah Tiwana	3	1		
11	Housing and Works	Mr. Muhammad Najeeb Haroon	2			
12	Human Rights	Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari	1	3	--	3
13	Industries and Production	Mr. Sajid Hussain Turi	3	1		1
14	Information and Broadcasting	Mian Javed Latif	7	3		3
15	Information Technology and Telecommunication	Mr. Ali Khan Jadoon	06	4+1=5		
16	Inter-Provincial Coordination	Mr. Agha Hassan Baloch	1	-		
17	Interior	Raja Khurram Shahzad Nawaz	5	8	Passed: 3	4
18	Law and Justice	Mr. Riaz Fatyana	4	9	1	8
19	Maritime Affairs	Mir Amer Ali Khan Magsi	2	1	1	--
20	Narcotics Control	Mr. Salahuddin Ayubi	2			
21	National Food Security & Research	Rao Muhammad Ajmal Khan	3	1		1
21	National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination	Mr. Khalid Hussain Magsi	4	1		1
23	Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development	Sheikh Fayyaz Ud Din	4	1		1
24	Parliamentary Affairs	Mr. Mujahid Ali	04	03		
25	Planning, Development and Special Initiatives	Mr. Junaid Akbar	1			
26	Power	Chaudhry Salik Hussain	3	7	--	7
27	Railways	Mr. Muhammad Mueen Wattoo	07	-		
28	Religious Affairs and Inter-Faith Harmony	Mr. Asad Mahmood	1	5	2	3
29	Science and Technology	Mr. Sajid Mehdi	3	2	--	2
30	States and Frontier Regions	Mr. Sajid Khan	2	--	--	

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Of The People, For The People

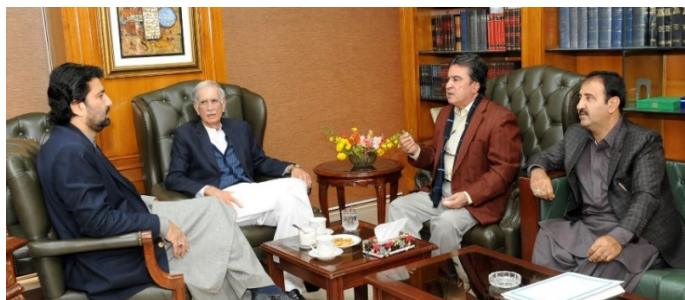
NA Speaker Forms Special Committee for Balochistan

9th March 2020



Islamabad 27.06.2020: Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser presiding over meeting of Special Committee on Balochistan at Parliament House.

In order to address the concerns of the people of Balochistan and to ensure inclusivity and even development, Speaker Asad Qaiser constituted a special committee on 9th March 2020 to discuss issues being faced by Balochistan. The committee has been formed in response to a resolution passed on 26th June last year. The committee consists of 14 members and will be headed by the Speaker NA himself.



Delegation of BNP (Mengal) meets with the Government Committee. Federal Minister for Defence Pervez Khattak, Deputy Speaker National Assembly Qasim Khan Suri, Senators Dr. Jehanzeb Jamaldini and Agha Hassan Baloch were present in the meeting on 19.02.2020

It is noteworthy to mention that Deputy Speaker National Assembly Qasim Suri met with Lt. Gen (R) Asim Saleem Bajwa, Chairman CPEC Authority in Parliament House a day earlier on 18th February 2020 where he was briefed about the status of ongoing projects under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in Balochistan.

NA Speaker Chairs meeting regarding Establishment of Panagahs

15th January, 2020

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser convened a meeting regarding the establishment of Panagahs and Langars across the Islamabad with the Special Advisor to Prime Minister on Health Services, District Administration and Panagah Coordinator ICT at the

Parliament House. The Chair was appraised about the recent developments in this regard. The Meeting also deliberated on the possibility of establishing Panagah at PIMS probably in the available vicinity for the patients and their attendants, where food and shelter would be provided to the people free of cost as per the vision of the Prime Minister of Pakistan.



Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser chairing meeting in Parliament House in connection with establishment of Panagahs in Islamabad on 15.01.2020. Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Health, Dr. Zafar Mirza and Senior Officers from District Administration ICT are also present

Youth Led Innovative Agri Startups Are Promising Engines of Rural & Agricultural Development: Speaker National Assembly

4th March 2020

The Speaker National Assembly Mr. Asad Qaiser stated that Youth led innovative and market disruptive agricultural startups offered a promising pathway to transform Pakistan's conventional agricultural sector into a globally aligned competitive one. He expressed these views in a meeting with the founders of various agricultural startups who briefed a panel of the National Assembly on path-breaking innovative agricultural businesses.

The Speaker urged the government to facilitate and scale up the quality agricultural startups as they were engines of rural and agricultural development. He also urged the need to create an enabling environment for private sector to lead the diffusion and transfer of agricultural technology, and raising Pakistan's agro-productivity and export competitiveness.

The founders of various agri startups who attended the meeting were winners of recently held competition on innovations in agriculture, food security and nutrition. The agri startups were supported by TiE Islamabad chapter headed by Ms. Sara Hashwani.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser presiding over meeting of Special Committee on Agriculture Products at Parliament House on 04.03.2020

Clean and Green Pakistan Launched 13th March 2020

In a bid to promote awareness regarding environmental concerns, Speaker National Assembly launched Clean and Green Pakistan-Tree Plantation Campaign by planting a sapling of Mangolia Grandiflora at Lawn of Parliament House. Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani was also present on the occasion.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser planting a sapling of Mangolia Grandiflora to launch Clean and Green Pakistan-Tree Plantation Campaign at Lawn of Parliament House.

Resumption of Mango Export to Iran through Taftan Border and Reduction of PIA Freight charges to boost exports 18th June 2020

On the intervention of the Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser and the Special Committee on Agricultural Products, Ministry of Interior issued a Notification regarding de-sealing of Taftan Border for trade purposes. Consequently, the Interior Ministry modified its earlier orders of 27th March and 13th April 2020 regarding closure of western border, which allowed opening of Taftan Border throughout the week for trade purpose subject to the observance of guidelines and SoPs.

Similarly, taking cognisance of the various issues being faced by Mango exporters and farmers, the Special Committee on Agriculture products summoned Ministries of Food Security and Research, Interior and Aviation to

thrash out those issues. Speaker Asad Qaiser was of the view that mango was a perishable commodity and procedural delays or logistic hurdles cost million to national exchequer. He warned that no delay in border opening and trade facilitation will not be tolerated.

The Speaker has also written a letter to the Prime Minister urging him to take cognisance of the matter and passing on directions to the concerned ministries to facilitate the mango exporters.

The Committee in the previous meeting had also asked Aviation Division to direct PIA to reduce the freight charges for mango export to facilitate the farmers and exporters. The Minister Aviation had assured that PIA would be asked to reduce the freight charges besides dedicating B-777 aircraft for the purpose. The national airline after discussing the issue with the exporters and other stakeholders has decided to drastically reduce the freight charges for mango export up to \$2.5 per 500 kg for UK and Europe whereas \$1 per 500 kg for other export destinations.

Repatriation of more than 600 stranded Pakistanis from Kuwait 22nd June 2020

In order to alleviate the situation of stranded Pakistanis in Kuwait in the wake of pandemic, the Speaker National Assembly, Asad Qaiser directed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to arrange flights to Kuwait. Subsequently, three special PIA flights were operated to bring back Pakistanis stranded in Kuwait. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed that a comprehensive plan has been devised through which PIA will fly to different destinations to bring back stranded Pakistanis abroad.

The Speaker National Assembly on this occasion said that safe repatriation of Pakistanis stranded in foreign countries due to Corona pandemic is our top priority. He assured that all resources will be used to repatriate migrants from abroad.



Three special PIA flights were operated to bring back Pakistanis stranded in Kuwait.

DIPLOMACY THROUGH PARLIAMENT

The year 2020 brought with it unprecedented wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and as a result, all the regional and international parliamentary activities moved to virtual platforms. However, prior to the outspread of the pandemic, the Honorable Speaker, Deputy Speaker and Members of the National Assembly actively participated in both the bilateral/multilateral parliamentary events and projected Pakistan's stance on various important contemporary issues. Despite the restrictions the pandemic imposed on physical meetups, nevertheless, first half of the year has still been active on various diplomatic fronts.

Besides international events and activities, the Honorable Speaker National Assembly has been actively engaged in calls on and meetings with the Ambassadors/High Commissioners/Diplomats of foreign Missions based in Islamabad as well as the foreign dignitaries visiting Pakistan which remained an important feature of diplomatic activities. Likewise, the Parliamentary Friendship Groups in the National Assembly of Pakistan also remained focused on fostering bilateral ties with friendly countries by interacting with their counterparts as well as the Diplomats of their respective countries based in Islamabad.

Commonwealth of Australia

Pakistan, Australia to bolster trade

26th February 2020

High Commissioner of Australia Dr. Geoffrey Shaw called on Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser, in which matters pertaining to enhancement of parliamentary engagement and cooperation in diverse sectors of economy came under discussion. The speaker said that Australia had expertise in agriculture, live-stock, and soil conservation, therefore, collaboration in these fields would be beneficial for Pakistan.

Australian High Commissioner Dr. Geoffrey Shaw agreed with the speaker for enhancing parliamentary interaction and exchange of staff for on-the-job training and assisting Pakistan in developing both agriculture and livestock sectors. The High Commissioner apprised the speaker that Australia had an outstanding water management and soil conservation system, therefore, such expertise could also be shared with Pakistan. He informed that his country would extend its all-out support to Pakistan on regional and international forums.

Federal Republic of Germany

NA Speaker meets German Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mr. Niels Annen and Ambassador of Germany Dr. Bernhard Stephan Schaghrck

13th January 2020



Minister of State of the Federal Foreign Office of Germany Mr. Niels Annen called on Speaker NA Asad Qaiser at Islamabad on 13.01.2020.

“The present Pakistani political hierarchy envisions a qualitative transformation in its relation with Germany for building a broad based, substantive and long term partnership encompassing all areas of mutual cooperation especially parliamentary relations” said the Speaker National Assembly while talking to German Minister of State of the Foreign Office of Germany Mr. Niels Annen and Ambassador of Germany Dr. Bernhard Stephan Schaghrck during a meeting in Islamabad.

The Speaker appreciated the German leadership's keen interest in expanding and deepening bilateral relations with Pakistan and acknowledged the Germany's generous assistance for social sector development, constant support for the wider EU market access and securing trade concession for Pakistan under GSP plus scheme.

The Speaker also apprised the German Minister about the ongoing lockdown in occupied Kashmir. He stressed for international support for settlement of Kashmir dispute in accordance with aspiration of Kashmiri people and international commitments. He apprised the German dignitary about the pro-investment policies of the government besides economic activity generated as result of CPEC project.

Mr. Niels Annen said that Germany believes in settlement of all disputes through negotiation and international commitments and would continue playing its due role in settlement of contentious issues. German Minister appreciated Pakistan's role for peace efforts in Afghanistan. Mr. Niels agreed that Pakistan had immense

economic potential and that the German investors were keen for participating in the economic activity in Pakistan.

Parliamentary Interaction and Exchanges an Apt Way to Build Close Relations: NA Speaker

20th February 2020

In a meeting with H.E. Dr. Bernhard Stephan Schlagheck, Ambassador of Germany, Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser said that relations between Pakistan and Germany were characterized by shared democratic values and multifaceted corporation. He said that Parliamentary cooperation and interaction between National Assembly and German Parliament Bundestag could deepen the existing bonds. Speaker Asad Qaiser however suggested for intensification through collaboration in trade, cooperation in agriculture, energy and other sectors. He also suggested for cooperation in establishment of a center of excellence for exchange of knowledge and human development.

Ambassador of Germany Dr. Bernhard Stephan Schlagheck appreciated the remarks of the Speaker and agreed to strengthen of bilateral relation through exchange of Parliamentary and trade delegations. The Ambassador apprised the Speaker that German developmental agency was actively engaged in Pakistan in Education and vocational training sectors. He informed that Germany along with European Union Development agency has chalked out a comprehensive plan be executed for vocational and technical training in collaboration with Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. He further informed that Germany would certainly look into the suggestion for establishing a center of excellence and capacity building.



Ambassador of Germany Dr. Bernhard Stephen Schlagheck called on Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser at Parliament House on 20.02.2020

Parliamentary diplomacy can play a key role in strengthening Pak-German relations: Speaker NA

4th March 2020

Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Germany Dr. Mohammad Faisal met with Speaker National Assembly

in the Parliament House to discuss ways to enhance bilateral trade and Parliamentary relations with Germany.

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Pakistan Supports Afghan led and owned peace process: NA Speaker

14th January 2020

An Afghan delegation led by Haji Mohammad Mohaqiq, Second Deputy Chief Executive of Afghanistan and Head of Hezb-e-Wahadat Mardum-e-Afghanistan met with Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser in Parliament House. The delegation comprised of sitting and former Members of the Welosi Jirga, Members of the Hezb-e-Wahadat Mardum-e-Afghanistan and Civil Society Representatives.

While talking to the delegation, Speaker National Assembly said that Pakistan would always support Afghan led and owned peace process. He also suggested that relations between both the countries could be further consolidated through enhanced interaction between Members of the parliament from both sides and that Afghanistan's participation in the CPEC could be beneficial for socio-economic development of Afghanistan besides serving as gateway to Central Asia and beyond.



Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser in a group photo with Afghan delegation at Parliament House on 14.01.2020

National Assembly to Hold National Dialogue to Take up Challenges to Post US-Afghan Peace Deal

29th February 2020

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser welcomed the US-Afghan peace deal signed in Qatar and said that achieving sustainable peace and security and ensuring long-term development, progress and prosperity in Afghanistan and the region was in Pakistan's best national interest. He reaffirmed Pakistan's resolve and continued commitment to the Afghan peace process.

The Speaker said that a National dialogue would be arranged in Islamabad to look into the challenges arising out of the post US-Afghan peace with specific reference to

Pakistan. He further said that representatives of political parties, parliamentarians, academia, intelligentsia, diplomats, media personnel and civil society will be invited to take part in the discourse and will provide policy guideline for devising future strategy arising after peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan Gateway to Central Asia: NA Speaker 16th June 2020

In a bid to foster friendly relations with the western neighbour, Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser met with the Ambassador of Afghanistan H.E. Mr. Shukrullah Atif Mashal, where he emphasized the need for intensifying contacts between the legislatures of both the countries by enhancing these contacts through Parliamentary Friendship groups besides establishing contacts between Trade and Commerce Committees of both the Parliaments. The Speaker also suggested that Afghan students and citizen could take advantage of relaxed visa conditions for education and medical purposes. Afghan Ambassador Shukr Ullah Atif thanked Pakistan government for its continued support to the peace process in Afghanistan.

Meeting with Pakistan's Special Envoy to Afghanistan Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq Khan 24th June 2020

In a meeting with Pakistan's Special Envoy to Afghanistan Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq Khan, Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser emphasized on the importance of bilateral ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Speaker emphasized the need for intensifying contacts between the legislatures, people and business communities of both the countries for common benefit. He said that Afghanistan was gateway to Central Asia, therefore, collaboration in economic activity could bring prosperity for both countries.

He informed that Parliamentary Friendship groups and Trade & Commerce Committees of both the Parliaments would play a pivotal role in enhancing bilateral cooperation and trade. The Speaker suggested the establishment of border markets to capitalize trade potential of both sides. Ambassador Mohammad Sadiq Khan apprised the Speaker about the initiatives of the Government of Pakistan for providing visa facilities to students, businessmen and patients intending to visit Pakistan.

Kingdom of the Netherlands

NA Speaker seeks Dutch support on Kashmir 18th February 2020

“Netherlands has always been a staunch advocate of civil liberties and human rights; its support would be helpful for putting pressure on India for resolution of Kashmir

issue,” said the NA speaker during his meeting with Ambassador of Netherlands Willem Wouter Plomp. Referring to the FATF issue, Speaker Asad asked for Dutch support for getting Pakistan out of the grey list. He said that Pakistan was determined to root out the menace of terrorism and its financial supporters, therefore, various measures were initiated in terms of legislation and its enforcement.

Ambassador of Netherlands Willem Wouter Plomp agreed that Kashmir issue was a flashpoint for the regional peace and the issue needed to be resolved in line with the aspiration of people and UN commitments. He said that his country was appreciative of the efforts of Government of Pakistan for taking stringent measures for cutting financial supply to terrorism. He assured that Netherlands would support Pakistan for getting out of the FATF grey area.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser shaking hand with Ambassador of Netherlands Mr. Willem Wouter Plomp at Parliament House on 18.02.2020

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Pakistan is Proud of its All Weather Friendship with Saudi Arabia: NA Speaker 6th January 2020

In a meeting with the Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Nawaf bin Saad al-Malki, Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser lauded Saudi-Pak relations and said that Pakistan highly values its all-weather friendship with Saudi Arabia. He appreciated Saudi Arabia's role in social and economic development of Pakistan. He also apprised the Ambassador about the prospective Alamabad welfare town in Alamabad, district Swabi to be established with the cooperation of the Air Force of Pakistan and Social Organizations which would cater food, medical and education facilities besides residence to the orphan, destitute, widows, transgender and other needy people.

Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Saad al-Malki expressed confidence that the recent visit of the Pakistani parliamentary delegation had opened new avenues of co-operation with Saudi Arabia and that the trade

committees of the Parliament of both the countries could play an important role in promoting bilateral trade. He also appreciated the role of Pakistani immigrant residing in Saudi Arabia for development of his country.



Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Mr. Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki called on Speaker NA Asad Qaiser at Islamabad on 06.01.2020

People's Republic of China

Meeting with the Chinese Ambassador Mr. Yao Jing

23rd June 2020

“Relations between Pakistan and China are based on shared geopolitical, economic, historical and strategic interests and both the countries had always stood with each other at difficult times”, said the Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser while talking to the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Mr. Yao Jing.

The Speaker said that Special Economic Zones being established under the CPEC would further generate economic activity in the country and suggested for enhancing interaction between business communities of both the countries to further strengthen the existing business relations. He also suggested for enhancing interaction and cooperation between Parliamentary Friendship Groups and Commerce & Agriculture Committees of both the Parliaments. He appreciated Chinese medical support in the time of crisis. Chinese Ambassador Mr. Yao Jing said that his Chinese Embassy would like to involve local development partners for enhancing its social welfare outreach besides mobilizing Chinese companies operating in Balochistan.



Islamabad 23.06.2020: Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser in a meeting with Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Mr. Yao Jing and Chairman Salayani Welfare Trust Maulana Muhammad Bashir Farooqi.

Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Pak-Bosnia Parliamentary Interaction to Boost Multilateral Ties: NA Speaker

28th January 2020

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser met with the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovinian H.E. Mr. Sakib Foric in Parliament House. The Speaker while talking to the Bosnian Ambassador said that Pakistan attached immense importance to its ties with Bosnia and wanted to enhance the relationship through increased parliamentary interaction besides cooperation in diverse sectors. He said that CPEC had provided opportunity for Pakistan to become a logistic and economic hub for South Asia, Central and Western Asia, Middle East and Western China. He also said that Bosnia being the Member of the European Union should support resolution of Kashmir issue in accordance with the aspiration of people of Kashmir and UN resolutions.

The Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovinian Mr. Sakib Foric said that his country attaches importance to its relations with Pakistan since Pakistan was one of the few countries to extend assistance to his country after it came into being. He said that Kashmir issue was a longstanding dispute and needed to be resolved in accordance with UN resolution. He said that Bosnia had been subjected to worst human crises in the past thus knew the gravity of the situation.



Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina Mr. Sakib Foric called on Speaker NA Asad Qaiser at Parliament House on 28.01.2020

Republic of Kazakhstan

Enormous Economic Potential Needs to be Utilized for Mutual Benefit of Pakistan and Kazakhstan: NA Speaker

6th March 2020

In a meeting with Ambassador of Kazakhstan H.E. Mr. Akan Rakhmatlin, Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser discussed the enormous economic potential that exists between Pakistan and Kazakhstan, which needed to be utilized for mutual benefit of both the countries. He

also stressed the need to establish air links between both the capitals in this regard. He expressed his desire to further strengthen bilateral relations through promoting parliamentary and commercial cooperation through Pak-Kazakh Friendship Group in the National Assembly, promoting relations between the two countries, parliaments and supporting each other on global forums. He also informed about visa policy for the business community intending to visit Pakistan has been relaxed and visa issuance had been facilitated on arrival which Kazakh investors can utilise.

The Kazakhstan Ambassador Akan Rakhmatlin appreciated Pakistan's role in promoting development and prosperity in the region and for establishing peace and security. He further said that direct air connectivity between Islamabad and Almaty could promote trade and tourism in both countries.



Ambassador of Kazakhstan Mr. Akan Rakhmetullin called on Speaker NA Asad Qaiser at Parliament House on 06.03.2020

State of Palestine

International Community Should Take Notice of the State Sponsored Atrocities in Palestine and Kashmir: Says Speaker NA

3rd March 2020

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser said that the people of Pakistan are committed to liberation of Palestine and their hearts beat with their Palestinian brothers and that Pakistan strongly condemns Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories and turning them into Israeli settlements which were historically part of Palestine. He expressed these views while talking to Palestinian Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Mr. Ahmed Jawad Rabei in a meeting in Parliament House.

The Speaker and the Ambassador discussed the current situation in Palestine and Kashmir, issues being faced by Ummah and other issues of mutual interest. The Speaker said that Pakistan believes in settlement of all disputes through negotiations and will continue to provide moral, diplomatic support to the Palestinian people.

Palestinian Ambassador Mr. Ahmad Jawad Rabi appreciated the of solidarity and goodwill for Palestine. He expressed his gratitude for giving educational opportunities to more than 50,000 Palestinian students who graduated from Pakistani universities and were contributing to the development of Palestine.



Ambassador of Palestine Mr. Ahmed Jawad Amine Rabei called on Speaker NA Asad Qaiser at Parliament House on 03.03.2020

United Kingdom of Great Britain

NA Speaker urges UK to relax visa rules for Pakistanis

24th January 2020

The National Assembly speaker has urged the British High Commissioner to insist upon his government to relax its visa requirements for Pakistani nationals following its announcement of updated travel advisory for the country. Speaker Asad Qaiser articulated his thoughts during a call on with British High Commissioner to Pakistan Dr Christian Turner. He also informed Dr Turner that the government and relevant agencies of Pakistan had taken numerous steps for countering terrorism. Therefore, friendly countries such as the UK should play their due role in removing Pakistan from the grey-list of the FATF. Mr Qaiser also lauded ongoing projects of the United Kingdom in Pakistan for parliamentary development and proposed that relevant committees in the two parliaments dealing with commerce and trade collaborate with each other.

Dr Turner informed Mr Qaiser regarding their new travel advisory to Pakistan which now allows its citizens to travel by road to the north of Pakistan. He added that the advisory was upgraded in the wake of the improved security situation of the country.

Later, British Council Regional Director Mr. Adrian Chadwick along with Country Director Mr. Amir Ramzan also called on Speaker NA Asad Qaiser at Parliament House on 11th February 2020.

KASHMIR ADVOCACY

I Consider It My First Duty to Highlight Kashmir Regionally and Globally Through Parliamentary Diplomacy: Speaker NA

3rd February 2020

In a meeting with Sardar Masood Khan, the 27th President of Azad Kashmir, NA Speaker Asad Qaiser expressed his strong position on the issue of Kashmir that he considers it his duty to advocate the plight of Kashmiris worldwide through parliamentary diplomacy. The President AJK expressed his gratitude over effective advocacy of the Government of Pakistan on international forums and said that it is because of the Speaker's effective parliamentary diplomacy that the issue of Kashmir is a subject of debate in international parliaments today.

All Political Parties United on Kashmir Issue: Fakhar Imam

17th February 2020

Chairman Kashmir Committee, Syed Fakhar Imam has lauded the statements of the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres about Kashmir issue and that his unbiased remarks over the issue favour the long lasting Pakistani stance regarding the matter.



Islamabad the 17th February 2020: Chairman Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir Syed Fakhar Imam presenting copies of the recent resolutions on Kashmir passed by National Assembly and Senate of Pakistan to the Secretary General UN Mr. Antonio Guterres during his visit to Islamabad.

All-Party Parliamentary Kashmir Group led by Hon. Ms. Debbie Abrahams called on Syed Fakhar Imam, Chairman Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir

19th February 2020

A delegation consisting of 12-Members of the UK Parliament's All-Party Parliamentary Kashmir Group (APPKG) led by Hon. Ms. Debbie Abrahams, MP, Chair of All Party Parliamentary Kashmir Group (APPKG) (Labour Party) called on Syed Fakhar Imam, Chairman,

Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir and Members of the Parliament at Speaker's Lounge, Parliament House.



Chairman Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir Syed Fakhar Imam in a group photo with All-Party Parliamentary Kashmir Group (APPKG) in British Parliament led by its Chair Ms. Debbie Abrahams, MP at Parliament House on 19.02.2020.

The Chairman said that while the world's most important political leaders, Parliaments and credible newspapers and media houses have condemned the Indian government over Human Rights violation in India, the international community and Parliamentarians like our honourable guests here must play their affective role to pursue their governments to speak loudly on the unprecedented Human Rights violation being committed by the Indian Arm forces and for the right of self-determination of the Kashmiris as enshrined in the United Nations resolutions and its charter.

The leader of the group from UK appreciated the detailed account of the situation given by the Chairman. She said that there is a need make a way to translate the resolutions of the UN Security Council for holding a free and fair plebiscite under the auspices of United Nations in to reality. She also said that the third report of the United Nations Human Rights Commission can only be further processed when the recommendations made in the earlier reports are implemented by the parties concerned.

The meeting was attended by Members of the Parliament of both countries namely: Hon. Mr. Tahir Ali, MP, Hon. Ms. Hon. Ms. Judith Cummins, MP, Hon. Mr. Imran Hussain, MP, Hon. Ms. Sarah Briteliffe, MP, Hon. Mr. James Daly, MP, Hon. Mr. Mark Eastwood, MP, Hon. Lord Qurban Hussain, Ms. Yasmine Dar, Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, Mr. Sher Ali Arbab, MNA, Mr. Khurram Dastgir Khan, MNA, Dr. Nisar Ahmed Cheema, MNA, Ms. Asma Qadeer, MNA, Ms. Zaib Jaffar, MNA.

Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary General on Jammu and Kashmir met the Chairman along with the Members of the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir

2nd March 2020

In the 10th (in-camera) meeting of the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir, the Chairman Syed Fakhar Imam

thanked the Special Envoy of the OIC Secretary General on Jammu and Kashmir Ambassador Yousaf Aldobeay, and his 5 Members delegation for visiting Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir. He also appreciated the OIC's condemnation of the India's illegal actions in IOJ&K, reiteration of its principled position on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, as well as its holding of two meetings of the Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir as welcomed steps. However, the gravity of the situation in IOJ&K warrants greater involvement of the OIC. Moreover, the OIC should send a fact finding delegation to Indian occupied Kashmir in order to obtain first-hand information about the deteriorating inhumane condition of the Kashmiris.

The Hon. Members of the Committee also emphasized on the need of unity among the Muslim ummah/OIC Members on the issue of Palestine and Kashmir. They also urged the special Envoy for support to the hapless people of IOJ&K in their testing times with an appeal to OIC countries to use their political influence and economic clout to prevent India from committing further atrocities in IOJ&K.

Women MPs hold the Flag

CPA – UK Program on Women and Gender in Legislation, Scrutiny and Oversight

27 – 31 January, 2020
London – UK

From 27th-31st January 2020, CPA UK hosted Members of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus of Pakistan for a programme focused on Women and Gender in Legislation, Scrutiny, and Oversight at the UK Parliament and other locations around London. The Secretary of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC), Hon. Munaza Hassan MNA, led the delegation of eight Members of the National Assembly (MNA) and five Members of the Provincial Assemblies (MPA) of Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa respectively. Hon. Shandana Gulzar Khan MNA, Chair of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP), also participated in the programme.

The delegation explored issues related to Women and Gender in Legislation, Scrutiny, and Oversight at different levels of representation: the UK Parliament, the Greater London Assembly, a London Borough Council, and a London constituency. In addition to introducing delegates to the UK Parliament and Westminster committee system, speakers – including parliamentarians, party candidates, councilors, and academics – discussed gender-sensitive scrutiny, legislation to improve gender equality, and diversity and inclusion. Delegates also participated in a half-day training programme on external communications to further increase the impact and reach of the WPC's and delegates' own communications efforts. Two Senior Media and Communications Officers of the House of Commons shared strategies for informing the public of parliamentary work, for example through impactful press releases. CPA UK has a long-term partnership with the WPC and since 2012 has undertaken a number of programmes aimed at enhancing the role and capabilities of women parliamentarians. We look forward to continuing to strengthen and grow this relationship.

The visiting envoy apprised the Committee about the activities and efforts of the OIC Secretary General to address the complaints of the Kashmiri brethrens as well as to solve the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the resolutions of the UN Security Council.

The meeting was attended by the Hon. Members namely: Ms. Nuzhat Pathan, Mr. Muhammad Akram Cheema, Mr. Aurangzeb Khan Khichi, Ms. Sobia Kamal Khan, Ms. Asma Qadeer, Ms. Ghazala Saifi, Ms. Uzma Riaz, Ms. Naureen Farooq Ibrahim Khan, Mr. Khurram Dastgir Khan, Ms. Kiran Imran Dar, Chaudhry Abid Raza, Dr. Nisar Ahmed Cheema, Ms. Zaib Jaffar, Mr. Muhammad Jamal Ud Din, Nawabzada Iftakhar Ahmed Khan Babar, Mr. Rafique Ahmed Jamali, MNAs Senator Mushahidullah Khan, Senator Sherry Rehman, Secretary, Ministry of Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan Mr. Tariq Mehmood Pasha, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to OIC Amb. Rizwan Saeed Sheikh and Senior Officers of Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also present in the meeting.



Women MPs with Dr Rupa Huq MP, Ealing Mayor Councillor Dr Abdullah Gulaid, Ealing Council Leader Julian Bell, Councillors Dr Aysha Raza and Tariq Mahmood hosted the delegation at Ealing Town Hall. Photo Credits: CPA

64th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

8 – 20 March, 2020

Paris, France & New York, USA

The sixty-fourth session of the Commission took place from 8 - 20 March 2020. Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan, MNA/ Chairperson CWP participated in the event.

The Commission had to undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. It assessed current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It also contributed towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through a gender perspective. Further, the Commission decided on its next multi-year programme of work for 2021 and beyond. The ten-day session included a ministerial segment with round

tables and other high-level interactive dialogues, a general discussion and a series of interactive events.

In accordance with the practice of recent '+5' reviews, Ministers and high-level government representatives are expected to adopt a Political Declaration to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and to give further impetus to accelerated implementation. The Commission usually adopts a small number of resolutions on different topics. In addition, summaries by the Chair of the Commission of high-level round tables and interactive dialogues highlight key issues discussed, including recommendations for further action. These summaries are not negotiated.

Public Hearing on Harassment Laws

Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) in collaboration with Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) organised public hearings on 17 and 20 February 2020 on "The Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2010". Honourable Members of National Assembly, Eminent female lawyers, students and academia participated, and raised different issues they faced in their daily life.

The main objective of these consultation was to highlight the role of WPC as a forum to withhold women aspirations and agenda for inclusive and gender responsive parliament and to increase public awareness on the issue of harassment and equitable workplace for all.

The consultation was the first step toward engaging citizens to create public support for the parliamentary initiatives for action against harassment and review the effectiveness of the law to achieve its objectives.

International Women's Day 2020

Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) hosted International Women's Day on Wednesday 11 March 2020 at Serena Hotel Islamabad. The event was graced by Honourable President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Arif Alvi and First Lady Begum Samina Alvi.

WPC took a non-conventional approach as compared to last year for a more awareness raising impact. The event was called 'Char Aurtai Char Kahaniya' (Four Women, Four Stories) and highlighted the struggles, perseverance and success of four inspirational female entrepreneurs. As

a tribute to four hard working women from low income backgrounds, a brief documentary was showcased to reflect their challenges, struggles and ultimate triumph. These four women represented the efforts of women from marginalized sectors across Pakistan who despite lack of resources and social support have set up their own businesses. These women are not only financially independent but are also contributing or are sole providers for their families.

Consultation on Draft Amendments to Federal Legislation

A Consultation on Draft Amendments to Federal Legislation related to Women's rights was organised by Women's Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) in collaboration with UN Women Pakistan at Marriot Hotel on 18th August, 2020. Dr. Faqir Hussain, Senior Legal Expert presented the Draft Amendments on Muslim Family Laws Ordinance 1961, The Family Court Act 1964, The Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929, The Law of Citizenship.

The Parliamentarians recognized that laws need to be periodically reviewed and analysed in the light of empirical evidence, research studies, reports of government-appointed commissions/committees, together with observations/directions of superior courts to improve the content.

PARLIAMENT & THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Consolidation of Child Rights Laws

One of the mandated tasks assigned to the SDGs Task Force Special-Committee on Child Rights (CR) was to work on a legislative review aimed at identifying gaps in legislation and prioritization of the actions for every child to realize their rights. In collaboration with UNICEF, the Special-Committee completed a legislative review of child related laws. It was observed, that most laws in Pakistan focus on prohibition of certain anti-child practices. Very few laws provided state guarantees for the provision of free services to fulfill basic needs of a child - crucial for their balanced and holistic development like nutrition, medical services, and early childhood care and education (ECCE). It was felt that comprehensive and inclusive legislative framework relating to child rights is missing. Legal inconsistencies, overlaps and gaps were identified. In January 2020, the CR Special-Committee, alongside the Standing Committee on Law and Justice was tasked to draw together different enactments on similar topics into a single Act. The new legislative instrument would address lacunas, and replace provisions in different Acts passed over the years. Chairperson CR Special-Committee Hon. MNA Mehnaz Aziz Akber is leading the process.

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Regional Seminar on SDGs

During the Jan-Mar 2020 quarter, major efforts and time was directed to ensure an effective international multilateral engagement on SDGs to be hosted by the Secretariat. Over 36 Parliaments of the Asia Pacific were sent



invitations.

While working papers were developed, thematic sessions designed in consultation with

partners, travel arrangements and logistics were managed – the conference had to be called off (on February 18, 2020), given growing regional concerns on COVID-19. The conference shall be re-scheduled at a suitable time.

Multi-stakeholder Consultation of Sub-Group SDG-8 (Economic Growth)

The National Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs Sub-Group on SDG 8 – Decent Work & Economic Growth, aims to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, productive employment and decent work for all. In this regard, a consultation was held on February 13, 2020 to formally involve stakeholders from the government and private sector. The focus of the meeting was the introduction of process of carrying out a legislative review of the existing laws, bills and amendments related to SDG-8. Furthermore, it was decided to develop a roadmap for partnering on the subject with relevant custodian ministries, government programmes and prospective partners. The Sub-Group is chaired by Hon. MNA Sajida Zulfiqar.



February 13, 2020: Members of the National Assembly and Senate in a meeting with private sector and businesses at the Parliament House – Islamabad.

Pak-Afghan Women MPs Dialogue on Sustainable Peace

Recognizing the joint commitment to improve sustainable peace and security in the region, women parliamentarians, civil society representatives, academicians and civil service officers from Afghanistan met with SDGs Task Force Members on February 17, 2020. The delegates agreed that in order to achieve peace, promotion of women in all spheres of society is fundamental to development, and acknowledged that elected women representatives have a vital role to play in shaping the socio-economic and political empowerment of women in

their respective countries. Supporting women parliamentarians by providing them with access to networks, information, and examples of best practice will help to enhance their profiles within their legislatures and will enable them to influence and encourage women in their countries to become active in the political and economic processes. Participants from both sides showed willingness to explore opportunities to collaborate on international programmes and activities that benefit women and child welfare of both countries.



February 17, 2020: Afghan delegate alongside Women Members of the SDGs Task Force and Secretariat team.

Meeting of the Sub-Group on SDGs Scorecards

One of the key strategic intents of the Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs is to develop district-wise, comparable data scorecards for each priority SDGs target. The scorecards will serve as a tool to monitor overall development framework of Pakistan. The scorecards will provide Parliamentarians and Provincial Assembly members with a detailed development profile of their constituency in relation to SDGs, enabling them to formulate and push for effective and informed legislation and oversight. Therefore, the Sub-Group aims to establish an online tool of linkages and bring together various available data sets to provide requisite data and analysis to parliamentarians as and when needed, preferably at the constituency level. This will not necessarily collect its own data but using and bringing together various datasets and information.



February 25, 2020: Meeting of the Sub-Group on SDGs Scorecards, presentations from provincial SDG Units.

In this regard a meeting was held on February 25, 2020 to consult with provincial SDG Units. Given the wide magnitude of the task at hand, the Federal Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms has joined to technically assist the Task Force. The scorecard will be a one-window information solution on SDGs at the constituency level, while simultaneously ensuring a feedback mechanism. Former Provincial Minister for Finance, Hon MNA Dr. Aisha Ghaus Pasha, chairs the Sub-Group.

Child Rights Special Committee Consultation on Online Child Safety

Given the growing concerns about child exploitation in Pakistan and increasing number of child abuse cases coming to the light, the SDGs Secretariat arranged a consultation meeting with Parliamentarians on 'Online Child Safety' in collaboration with the Facebook Asia-Pacific HQ team on March 03, 2020. The meeting was chaired by Convener Parliamentary Task Force on SDGs Hon. MNA Riaz Khan Fatyana. The meeting was attended by Members of the Task Force, and Dr. Rubina (newly appointed) Child Rights Commissioner.



March 03, 2020: Members of the CR Special Committee along with Facebook team at the SDGs Secretariat.

Sub-Group on SDG-5 (Gender Equality)

The Sub-group of the SDGs Parliamentary Taskforce on Gender Equality (SDG-5) organized a Stakeholders Consultation on March 10, 2020 at SDGs Secretariat. The consultation aimed at working on strengthening oversight of gender sensitive legislations and policy and to create linkages with institutions working on Gender Issue. The Members of SDGs Parliamentary Task Force and senior officials from the National & Provincial Commissions on Status of Women from ICT, KPK and Punjab attended the meeting. Hon. MNA Shandana Gulzar Khan chairs the Group. The Parliamentary Group provides an opportunity for partnerships across the board to ensure effective coordination amongst all bodies working on SDG-5. The meeting included detailed presentations by the representatives of various organizations including federal

and provincial National Commissions on the Status of Women (NCSW) and UN Women. A work plan is being developed in this regard.



March 10, 2020: Hon MNA Shandana Gulzar opening the consultation on SDG-5

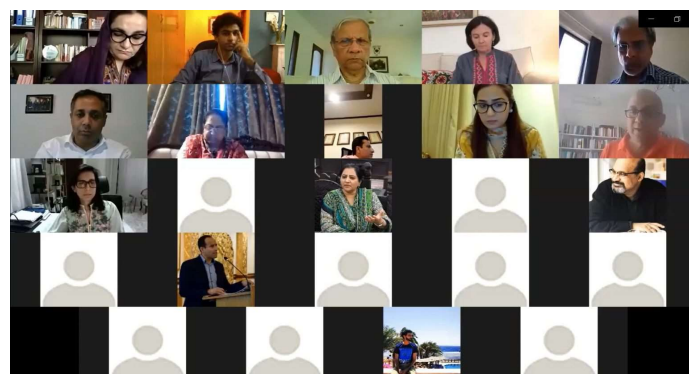
Mental Health Summit



Growing global evidence about mental disorders suggests that social factors are strongly related to mental health. Mental health conditions are one of the most common causes of disability worldwide. There is limited awareness and great stigma attached to mental illness. This is a

challenge across the world, in particular in South Asia where literacy rates are lower. Given these constraints, the SDGs Task Force hosted a Parliamentary Mental Health Summit on March 12, 2020 at the Presidency. The aim of the Summit was to learn and share experiences to bring about a legislative intervention for the protection and promotion of mental health education across the country. Besides parliamentarians, diplomatic missions, civil society, international partners, academia and media attended the event.

Roundtable Discussion (Online Webinar): Child Sensitive Budgeting and Role of Parliament



The webinar on Child Sensitive Budgeting was conducted on June 15, 2020 and it was joined by Government Officials, Honorable Parliamentarians, our partners and various civil society organizations. The discussion highlighted how fiscal space in child-centric budget allocation is so unjust and the age groups from 0-4 and 5-19 years are the most affected. It was added that this makes a strong case that we need significant changes and a prominence in budget allocation. It was concluded that we need to hold frequent meetings on such sensitive aspects to mainstream them and bring them to spotlight.

REPRESENTATION ABROAD

5th Meeting of the High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism (HLAG) from 16 – 17 January, 2020 at Geneva, Switzerland

Ms. Shazia Marri, MNA

Meeting of CPA Coordinating Committee from 18-19 January, 2020 at London – UK

Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan, MNA/Chairperson CWP

Pre Davos IPU & Davos meeting on SDGs from 20 – 22 January, 2020 at Davos, Switzerland

Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan, MNA/Chairperson CWP

2nd Meeting as Chairperson of CWP in OECD from 24 – 26 February, 2020

Ms. Shandana Gulzar Khan, MNA / Chairperson CWP

BUILDING BRIDGES

Initiatives taken within National Assembly

Incentivizing Employees of Assembly Secretariat, To Enhance Their Performance: NA Speaker

13th January 2020

Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser distributed up-gradation/ promotion letters to 239 officers and supporting staff of the National Assembly Secretariat. The officers and supporting staff who have been promoted in the next grade include 83 ex-cadre officer and 156 supporting staff. A special ceremony was held in the National Assembly for the distribution of promotion letters which was attended by Interior Minister Syed Ijaz Shah, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad, Members of National Assembly Amjad Ali Khan, Agha Rafiullah and Maulana Abdul Akbar Chitarli, Secretary National Assembly Tahir Hussain, along officers and staff members of the National Assembly Secretariat. These promotions have been made under the new rules formulated on the direction of Speaker, National Assembly for the employees of the National Assembly Secretariat. The employees promoted had been either

waiting for promotion since past several years or did not have any channel for further promotions.

Strict Economic Measures taken by the NA Speaker Results in Savings of around Rs. 360 million

15th June 2020

In compliance of the austerity drive of the Government of Pakistan, the Speaker National Assembly issued special instructions for controlling the expenditure of the National Assembly Secretariat. The Speaker National Assembly constantly oversaw the monetary matters of the National Assembly Secretariat with special emphasis on curtailing the avoidable and unnecessary expenditure. As a result of the strict economic measures taken by the Speaker National Assembly, around Rs. 360 million have been saved and surrendered to the public exchequer. The savings have been made from different heads of account by discouraging lavish and unnecessary expenditure while ensuring smooth conduct of the official obligations of the National Assembly Secretariat.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity Building Workshop on Gender Responsive Budget

12th March, 2020

Parliamentarians Orientation Program by PIPS offers thematic capacity building workshops in 23 areas of parliamentary significance in addition to an elaborate New Members Orientation Program. The orientation sessions contain topics such as: Rules of Procedure & Business of The House, Question Hour; law making process, assessing legislation & legislative research; Budget process/analysis as well as committee work and public hearings. The following 15 MPs participated in the said orientation program:

- Ms. Andleeb Abbas, Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs
- Ms. Aliya Hamza Malik, Parliamentary Secretary for Commerce, Textile & Industries
- Mr. Muhammad Yaqoob Shaikh, Parliamentary Secretary for Economic Affairs
- Ms. Shaheen Naz Saifullah, MNA
- Ms. Naureen Farooq Ibrahim, MNA
- Mr. Imran Khattak, MNA
- Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja, MNA

- Ms. Maiza Hameed, MNA
- Mr. Ali Zahid, MNA
- Dr. Nisar Ahmed Cheema, MNA
- Ms. Shazia Jannat Marri, MNA
- Dr. Nafisa Shah, MNA
- Syed Mustafa Mahmood, MNA
- Sardar Muhammad Israr Tareen, MNA
- Mr. Muhammad Aslam Bhootani, MNA

The Parliamentary Officers' Study Program

24 – 28 February, 2020

Ottawa, Canada

Fourteen parliamentary officers from the following legislatures participated in this study program: Province of Alberta; Northwest Territories; Province of Ontario; Province of Saskatchewan; Georgia; Greece; Iraq; Pakistan; Sierra Leone; Turkey; United Kingdom; and United Kingdom. The following Officers from the National Assembly Secretariat participated in the Study Program:

- Mr. Aurangzeb Marral, Deputy Secretary
- Mr. Muhammad Mushtaq, Director to Hon'ble Speaker

Project Management Unit (PMU)

The Project Management Unit was formed in July 2013 to streamline the donor-driven activity, negotiate meaningful work plans with optimum utilization of funds and acts as the central coordination cell for the Secretariat.



National Assembly Strategic Plan 2019-23:

- PMU has actively supported the National Assembly **Strategic Plan Oversight Committee (SPOC)** in its establishment/working and the **National Assembly Strategic Plan (NASP) 2019-23** has been successfully launched in February, 2020.
- Since then, PMU has been leading the exercise of National Assembly Strategic Plan 2019-23 Implementation and Logical Frameworks and Budgetary Allocations within the National Assembly Secretariat, so as to bring the

Secretariat led activities in line with the organization's strategic goals.

- Currently, annual plans and activity charts for various wings of the Assembly Secretariat are being developed to synthesize them into the overarching strategic goals.
- PMU has also previously supported in development and implementation of the NASP.

Academic Linkages:

Parliamentary Committees are crucial to help the Parliament make informed choices on specialized subjects that require deep knowledge and expertise. Pakistan's Parliament, like other mature democracies, is trying to take steps to make research-based information and analysis prerequisite of its committee system, so as to contribute to Parliament's debate and recommendations to the Government.

In order to create useful linkages with the Academia, Honorable Speaker desired that focused think-tanks may be formulated to provide aid and support to National Assembly Standing Committees. In pursuance and in line with the National Assembly Strategic Plan 2019-23, Project Management Unit invited various universities and think tanks to form partnership with the National Assembly in aid of the Standing Committee(s).



Top universities/ research institutions from around the country have agreed to support the National Assembly Standing Committees, as per their field of specialization in the following manner:

Standing Committee of the National Assembly	Institution
Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs	Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI)
Standing Committee on Climate Change	
Parliamentary Committee on CPEC	
Standing Committee on Science and Technology	Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering, Sciences and Technology
Standing Committee on Power	
Standing Committee on Law and Justice	International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), Islamabad
Standing Committee on Human Rights	
Standing Committee on Law and Justice	Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad
Standing Committee on Human Rights	
Standing Committee on Interior	
Standing Committee on Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs	Sukkur IBA University
Standing Committee on Information Technology	
Standing Committee on Interior	National School of Public Policy (NSPP), Lahore
Standing Committee on Defense	National Defense University
Standing Committee on Defense Production	

Philanthropic Work

The National Assembly of Pakistan, under the vision of the Honourable Speaker Mr. Asad Qaiser, has for the first time taken lead in performing various philanthropic activities.

❖ Persons with Disabilities (PWDs):

National Assembly of Pakistan, in partnership with the Sightsavers and other development partners, organized a successful one-day seminar for the Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) in the Parliament House Islamabad in December, 2019.

In continuation of the same, it was mutually agreed to establish mechanisms to take up this partnership of the National Assembly and Sightsavers further for following up on the recommendations of the Seminar and announcements made by the Honorable Speaker to carry the agenda further for uplift of the persons with disabilities. In this regard, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between National Assembly and Sightsavers was signed in February, 2020.

❖ Other Philanthropic Work:

Other philanthropic activities of the Honorable Speaker National Assembly include:

- Pakistan Welfare Town
- Two water filtration plants
- One-day free medical camp
- Saylani Iftar Point and provision of food
- Interest Free loans

- Panah Gah
- Interest free loans
- Arrangement of Langar at 02 points in Islamabad
- Distribution of wheelchairs
- Free eye-camp
- COVID-19 relief activities in the constituency
- Other Philanthropic Activities

Internship Programs at the National Assembly Secretariat:

One of the important components of NASP 2019-23 was that steps would be taken to “*enhance and encourage citizen participation.*” This included comprehensive **Youth Engagement Plan** by providing high caliber graduates, regular internship programs in various sections of the Secretariat.

In light of the above, PMU has continued providing various internship opportunities to talented youth/ students and graduates from all over Pakistan.

For the first half of year 2020 alone, around **80 interns**, despite COVID-19 measures and temporary suspension of the program, served in the Secretariat.

PMU is also engaged with the following universities regarding MoU signing for offering annual internships and seeking research support:

- National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad
- International Islamic University, Islamabad

CPA Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures exercise:



In February, 2020, National Assembly of Pakistan carried out the process of self-assessment of Benchmarks for Democratic Institutions shared by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). The Self-Assessment meetings were held for detailed Qualitative/Political Questions for a cross-section of Members (i.e. treasury and opposition members) at which MPs and Secretariat discussed the extent to which a benchmark was being implemented in practice and rate each benchmark according to the scale denoted in a workbook. The entire activity was spearheaded by the Project Management Unit in coordination with various wings of the Secretariat. It resulted in successful completion of self-assessment of the parliamentary procedures and practices adopted in Pakistan. The same was then communicated to the CPA Secretariat for onward finalization of Benchmarks.

Support to Parliamentary Platforms:

Provided organizational supervision and support to the following parliamentary platforms:

- Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS)
- Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC)
- Sustainable Development Goals Secretariat (SDGs Secretariat)
- Young Parliamentarians Forum (YPF)
- Parliamentary Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

Elections and Reconstitution of Young Parliamentarians Forum:

Young Parliamentarians Forum (YPF) is a cross-party Caucus for Honorable Members who are under 45 at the time of general elections. It serves as a platform for young legislators for sharing and developing ideas, improving

legislative and leadership skills, forming inter-regional and inter-party networks and working on mutual areas of interest.

The incumbent 15th National Assembly has a large number of young members, and among them many first-time legislators. Project Management Unit facilitated the elections of the Young Parliamentarians Forum's (YPF) office-bearers, hence the Forum's Board was notified on 20th December, 2019 and it has been formally activated since. Project Management Unit facilitated in its reconstitution and coordination of meetings of the Board members. PMU has also supported the YPF in devising its annuals work plans.

Restructuring of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Secretariat:

The SDGs Secretariat of the National Assembly of Pakistan was established to assist and support the Parliamentary Taskforce on SDGs to ensure effective parliamentary oversight, evidence based research leading to legislation, and technical assistance for honorable parliamentarians. In order to ensure formal structuring of the National Parliamentary Taskforce on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a Governance Committee and an Executive Committee for the said taskforce have been approved. Furthermore, instructions/ bye-laws for the SDGs Taskforce have also been approved for effective and orderly working of the SDGs body.

Central Coordination of Donor funded projects – The ‘Support to Parliament’ Project / IP5 Project:

The IP5 Project is an assistance package of EUR 15 Million to the Parliament, signing of the financing agreement of which (by EAD) took place in December 2018. PMU led the consultation. The project implementation is due to start tentatively by the second half of year 2020 by the GIZ and PIPS. The overall objective of the IP5 programme is to support the consolidation of parliamentary democracy in the federal and provincial legislatures of Pakistan – Senate, National Assembly and 4 Provincial Assemblies.

Trainings/Workshops from Jan 1st to June 30th, 2020:

PMU successfully facilitated “Making the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) effective for the Members and staff of Balochistan Assembly PAC” from 9th to 11th January, 2020 in Islamabad by UNDP.

PICTURE GALLERY



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser chairing meeting of Business Advisory Committee at Parliament House, Islamabad on 09-03-2020



Islamabad 04.06.20: Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani called on Speaker NA Asad Qaiser



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in a group photo with participants of seminar to observe the Commonwealth Day 2020 at Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS), Islamabad



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser addressing the participants of Annual Prize Distribution of Quaid-e-Azam Group of Schools and College at Mardan on 07.03.2020



Islamabad 01.06.2020: Speaker NA Asad Qaiser briefing the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi about upcoming Session of National Assembly



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in a meeting with Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi at Islamabad on 03.03.2020. Chairman Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Chairman CPEC Committee are also present.



Islamabad 25.03.20: Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser in a meeting with Parliamentary leaders of National Assembly and Senate at Parliament House. Prime Minister Imran Khan is addressing the meeting via video link.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser addressing the participants of All Pakistan Aviation Art Competition and Exhibition organised by PAF at PNCA, Islamabad on 27.02.2020



Deputy Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri in a group photo with participants of seminar on "International Workshop on Parliamentary Processes and Constituency Relations" at Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) at Islamabad on 27.02.2020



Delegation of Awami National Party (ANP) led by Ameer Haider Khan Hoti, MNA called on Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in Islamabad on 24.02.2020.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser addressing the participants of seminar on "Interfaith Dialogue and International Cohesion" organised by Islamic Research Institute at Islamic International University Islamabad on 24.02.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser along with Chief Minister KPK Mehmoood Khan inaugurating Road Project at Union Council Salim Khan, Swabi on 22.02.2020



Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser inaugurating Girls Hostel in Bacha Khan Medical Complex at Gajju Khan Medical College, Swabi on 19.02.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in a group photo with a delegation of District Bar Association Charsada at Parliament House on 11.02.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in a group photo with participants of Seminar on "Six Years of BRI and CPEC" organized by Islamabad Stock Exchange and SDPI at Islamabad on 06.02.2020.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser and Members of the Special Committee on Agricultural Products witnessing Ceremony of MOU Signing between National Assembly of Pakistan and Vice Chancellors of different National Universities at Parliament House on 06.02.2020.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in a meeting with President of AJ&K Sardar Masood Khan, Governor GB Raja Jalal Hussain Maqpoon, Chief Minister GB Hafiz Hafiz-ur-Rehman, Speaker AJ&K Legislative Assembly Shah Ghulam Qadir and Deputy Speaker GB Assembly Mr. Jafarullah at Parliament House on 03.02.2020. Deputy Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri is also present.



Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser addressing Public gathering after inaugurating Gas Pipeline, Sports Ground and Road at UC Zarobi, Swabi on 01.02.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser inaugurating Digital Art Exhibition in-connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day in Islamabad on 03.02.2020. Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan Mr. Ali Amin Khan Gandapur is also present.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser participating in walk with Minister for Kashmir Affairs & Gilgit Baltistan Mr. Ali Amin Khan Gandapur and Students in-connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day in Islamabad on 03.02.2020



Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser inaugurating Gas Pipeline at UC Zarobi, Swabi on 01.02.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in a group photo with office-bearers of Peshawar Press Club at Parliament House on 31.01.2020.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser chairing meeting of Business Advisory Committee at Parliament House on 30.01.2020



Speaker Gilgit Baltistan Assembly Muhammad Nashad called on Speaker NA Asad Qaiser at Parliament House on 28.01.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser chairing meeting of the Joint Committee on Affecteds of Ghazi Barotha Hydro Project at Parliament House on 27.01.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser addressing the participants of Launching Ceremony of "Enhancing Food Security through Strategic Interventions in Agriculture" at Tarbella, Swabi on 25.01.2020



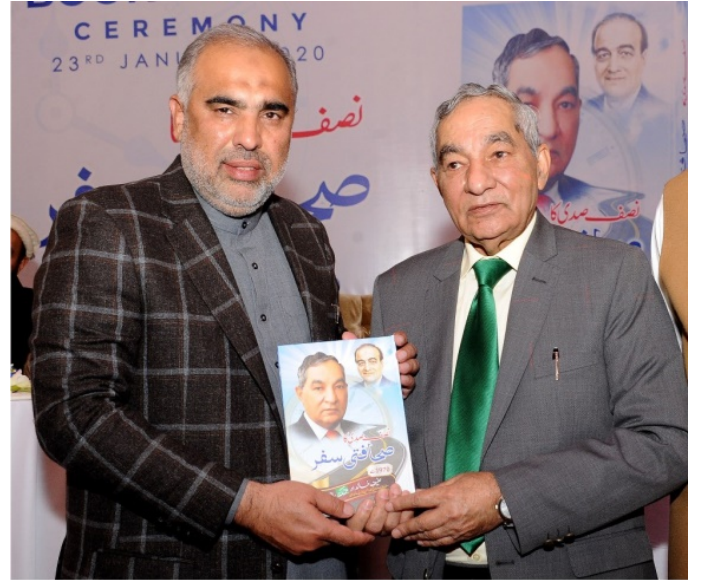
Speaker NA Mr. Asad Qaiser addressing here at Recreational Center, Right Bank, Terbella Dam, Swabi on 25.01.2020.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser distributing cheque amongst IFL borrowers at Tarbella, Swabi on 25.01.2020.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser addressing the participants of Book Launching Ceremony of Mr.Hanif Khalid "Nisf Sadi ka Sahafti Safar" in Islamabad on 23.01.2020



Mr.Hanif Khalid presenting his Book "Nisf Sadi ka Sahafti Safar" to Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in Islamabad on 23.01.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in a meeting with delegation of Media representatives from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at Parliament House on 23.01.2020



Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser addressing the participants of Prize Distribution Ceremonyj of Gajju Khan Medical College, Swabi on 19.02.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser inaugurating BS Block and Auditorium of Postgraduate College Gohati at Swabi on 17.01.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser planting a sapling on the occasion of 4th D.C Swabi Winter Sports Gala 2020 at Swabi on 12.01.2020.



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser talking to special persons after distributing Wheel Chairs at Swabi on 16.01.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser addressing Public gathering after inaugurating Panjpeer Road Project at Swabi on 11.01.2020



Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser in a group photo with students and Faculty Members of Government Post Graduate College, Swabi at Parliament House on 15.01.2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser with Faculty Members and Students of Folk Ways City School and College Qila Saifullah, Baluchistan on 10-01-2020



Speaker NA Asad Qaiser in a group photo with Faculty Members and Students of Government Girls Degree College Marghuz, Swabi in Parliament House on 10-01-2020



Deputy Speaker National Assembly Qasim Khan Suri presiding over the meeting of the House & Library Committee of the National Assembly at Parliament House on 26.02.2020



Deputy Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri in a meeting with South African delegation consists of Prince Thumbuzi Dlamini and Prince Magudvulela at Parliament House on 04.02.2020



Delegation of Canadian businessman headed by Saeed Iqbal Mayo Called on Deputy Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri at Parliament House on 06.02.2020



Ambassador of the Republic of Yemen Mohammad Motahar Alashabi called on Deputy Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri at Parliament House, Islamabad



Deputy Speaker National Assembly Qasim Khan Suri with Mian Aftab Member Provincial Assembly of Cremona, Italy who called on him at Parliament House on 26.02.2020



Deputy Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri donating Blood in blood donation camp established by Pakistan Red Crescent Society at Parliament House on 13.02.2020



Deputy Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri presenting Souvenir to Mr. Suleman Khan Mehtarazi Social worker from Quetta at Parliament House on 13.02.2020



Deputy Speaker NA Qasim Khan Suri called on President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Masood Khan at Islamabad on 28.02.20

NOTICE BOARD

OBITUARY

Member of the National Assembly (MNA) Munir Khan Orakzai passed away from heart failure in Kurram on 2nd June 2020 at the age of 61. His funeral prayers were held at his ancestral village, Manduri. He is survived by his wife, five daughters and a son. Mr. Orakzai hailed from Kurram district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and was elected to NA-45 in the 2018 elections.



Another Member of National Assembly of Pakistan Muslim league-Nawaz (PML-N) Syed Ifitkhar-ul-Hassan passed away at the age of 75 on 2nd August 2020. He was elected from NA-75 (Sialkot-IV) during 2018 elections. Previously, he has been elected thrice as MNA and twice as member of Punjab Assembly.



Former Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali passed away at the age of 76 on 2nd December 2020. He had won the 2013 general elections as an independent candidate, but later joined the PML-N and used to sit on the treasury benches in the previous assembly.



PPP MNA Pir Noor Muhammad Shah Jillani lost his life to Covid-19 virus on 24th December 2020. Mr. Jillani had been elected from the NA-221 (Tharparkar-I) constituency in the general elections 2018. He was also elected from the NA-230 (Tharparkar-II) constituency during the 2013 general elections.



CONDOLENCES

- 6 Jan 2020- Speaker and Deputy Speaker expressed their condolences on death of the son of Deputy Chairman Senate Saleem Mandviwala
- 19 February 2020: Speaker and Deputy Speaker expressed their condolences on sad demise of senior journalist Mr. Fasih-ur-Rehman Khan and expressed their solidarity with their families in this hour of grief.
- 11 June 2020: Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser and Deputy Speaker Qasim Khan Suri have expressed deep sorrow and grief over the sad demise of the mother of Additional Secretary National

Assembly Syed Shamoon Hashmi. In their separate condolence messages, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker conveyed their heartfelt grief to Syed Shamoon Hashmi and prayed for the solace of the departed soul and forerance to the bereaved family to bear the great loss.

Secretary National Assembly Tahir Hussain, Additional Secretary Chaudhry Mubarak Ali and other officers also expressed their deep sorrow and grief over the demise of Syed Shamoon Hashmi's mother.

CONDEMNATION

NA Speaker and Deputy Speaker Condemn Bomb Blast at Quetta

February 17, 2020

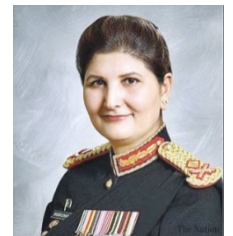
Asad Qaiser, Speaker and Qasim Khan Suri, Deputy Speaker National Assembly have strongly condemned the bomb blast near Quetta press club at Quetta and expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives. In their separate statements, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker termed it a barbaric and shameful act of terrorism. They said that the elements involved in such activities were the enemies of humanity and the country.

They said that such shameful acts could not deter the government from its firm resolve to fight against terrorism. They were confident that the culprits involved in such activities will not be spared and will be brought to justice. They prayed to Almighty Allah to rest the souls of martyrs in eternal peace and sympathized with bereaved families and also prayed for early recovery of injured.

FELICITATIONS

Speaker N.A Congratulates Major General Nigar Johar on her promotion to the Rank of First Lady Lieutenant General

30th June 2020



Speaker National Assembly Asad Qaiser congratulated Major General Nigar Johar on her promotion to the rank of Lieutenant General and assuming the post of Surgeon General which makes her the first woman to attain such position on June 30, 2020. In his message, the Speaker stated that her promotion is a reflection of the fact that Pakistani women are extremely talented and have demonstrated their skills and abilities in all walks of life.

BECOMING

By Michelle Obama

Reviewed by Bisma Rehman Zafar

Becoming is the memoir of former United States First Lady Michelle Obama published in 2018. Described by the author as a deeply personal experience, the book talks about her roots and how she found her voice, as well as her time in the White House, her public health campaign, and her role as a mother. It sold more copies than any other book published in the United States in 2018, breaking the record in just 15 days. The book's 24 chapters (plus a preface and epilogue) are divided into three sections: Becoming Me, Becoming Us, and Becoming More. Become Me traces Michelle Obama's early life growing up on the South Side of Chicago, through her education at Princeton University and Harvard Law School, to her early career as a lawyer at the law firm Sidley Austin, where she met Barack Obama. Becoming Us departs from the beginning of their relationship and follows their marriage, the beginning of Obama's political career in the Illinois State Senate. The section ends with election night in 2008 when Barack Obama was elected President of the United States and Becoming More describes their life as First Family.

This revealing memoir offers new insights into Michelle Obama's upbringing on the South Side of Chicago and the highs and lows of life with Barack Obama. The Book tells her story from her own perspective – she reveals that her life is a form of alchemy. Her childhood, growing up on the South Side of Chicago, is recalled with an essentially American kind of wholesomeness: a strong nuclear family of four, sharing a one-bed apartment upstairs while the one below was occupied by her piano teacher great aunt Robbie. Her family worked hard and kept things moving upwards. *Becoming* is frequently funny, sometimes indignant or enraged, and when Michelle describes her father's early death from multiple sclerosis it turns rawly emotional.

When Michelle Obama, turned four, she began her piano lessons with her great aunt on the proletarian South Side of Chicago, the first instruction to her by her grumpy relative was "Find middle C". That key on the keyboard, its ivory chipped looked like a carious tooth, was her anchorage, the frontier between right and left hands or between treble and bass clefs.

She learned this preliminary lesson well, as her memoir testifies: *Becoming* serenely balances gravity and grace, uplift and anecdote, though its high-mindedness does permit a few low blows at Barack Obama's infamous successor. A single sentence catches the blend of conscientious bass and giggly treble that makes Michelle simultaneously admirable and adorable. The same complementarily underlies her alliance with her husband.

Their relationship develops as a disputatious comedy of manners. At their Chicago law firm, Michelle initially appraises him an "exotic geek", and then more politely reclassifies him as a unicorn. As she tells it, they are opposing forces, like yin and yang. Michelle's sociability rubs up against Barack's need for pensive solitude. She is a far-sighted planner, whereas he prefers "an improvisational zigzag through dissimilar worlds". She constructs an identity as if tucking and folding a piece of origami; he is an improbable American original, a hybrid of Kenya, Hawaii and Kansas with an Arabic middle name, a one-man melting pot whose mixed ingredients make him eternally ambivalent. Among moneyed Wasps at Princeton, Michelle feels a misfit, "poppy seeds in a bowl of rice" but Barack suffers no such anxiety since he is unique.

In the Chapter *Becoming More* the book entails the difficulties faced by the incoming First Ladies of the United States as there is no handbook that comes with it. It comes with no salary and no set of obligations. Being the only African American First Lady to set foot in the White House, Michelle Obama was measured by a different yardstick, coexisting with Barack's strong sense of purpose. Her candour about home life – the pressure of childcare, bills, debts, work and parenting are interesting because they are so normal, and because normal is something she has never been allowed to be.

(The reviewer is Assistant Director Research in National Assembly)

