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Dubai hosts grand global launch of Burj Azizi, world’s second tallest tower

Dubai has witnessed a spectacular global launch event for Burj Azizi, poised to be the world’s second tallest tower, at the Coca-Cola Arena.

The grand ceremony was attended by over 15,000 distinguished guests, including government officials, investors, business leaders, diplomats, media personnel, and influencers. The event was further elevated by a stunning performance from American singer Jennifer Lopez.

According to the UAE media reports, Burj Azizi will stand at an impressive height of 725 meters upon completion in 2028, making it the second tallest tower in the world. The 131-story skyscraper will offer a unique blend of residential, hospitality, retail, and entertainment spaces.

The luxury shopping mall inside the tower will house outlets of globally renowned brands. Spacious one, two, and three-bedroom apartments, along with a business center, cinema, restaurants, cafes, and a supermarket, will be part of the project, ensuring world-class facilities for residents and visitors alike.

The tower will also feature a prestigious seven-star hotel, offering an unparalleled experience in luxury hospitality. The hotel will boast specialty restaurants representing various international cuisines, including Arabic, Chinese, Persian, Indian, Turkish, French, and Russian, providing guests with an exquisite gastronomic journey.

Upon completion, Burj Azizi is set to break multiple records, including the highest observation deck on the 130th floor, the tallest hotel lobby on the 111th floor, the highest nightclub on the 126th floor, the tallest restaurant on the 122nd floor, and the highest hotel room on the 118th floor. Additionally, the tower will house a dedicated museum that will showcase the history and construction journey of this architectural marvel.

Expressing his delight at the launch, Mirwais Azizi, Founder and Chairman of Azizi Developments, stated, “It is truly a moment of pride to see a vision come to life after years of dedication and relentless efforts from experts worldwide.

Burj Azizi stands as a testament to Dubai’s engineering excellence and architectural innovation, marking a significant milestone in the city’s skyline.”

He extended his gratitude to the leadership of Dubai for their unwavering support and encouragement, specifically thanking His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai, for his visionary leadership. “I am also deeply grateful to Dubai’s authorities for their steadfast cooperation in bringing this ambitious project to reality,” he added.

With its groundbreaking design and record-breaking features, Burj Azizi is set to redefine luxury and elegance, further cementing Dubai’s reputation as a global hub for architectural brilliance.

Nomadic Tribes and Social Challenges in Punjab

The presence of nomadic tribes and Pakhiwas (پکھیواں) in Punjab has become a serious issue that demands the immediate attention of the provincial government. Due to their lack of permanent residence, these groups remain unregistered in government records, making it difficult to monitor their activities.

Reports indicate that a significant number of Pakhiwas men are involved in criminal activities, including drug trafficking, theft, and robbery. Some even work as informants or touts for the police. Their criminal networks contribute to the deterioration of law and order in various regions.

On the other hand, the women of these communities are also engaged in negative activities. They can be seen begging in markets, bus and truck stations, and public places, but often, their begging serves as a cover for immoral activities. They are particularly active in areas with a high concentration of male labourers. This behavior not only disrupts societal norms but also contributes to the increasing crime rate.

Wherever these communities settle, they bring numerous issues, including theft, drug dealing, and social disorder. The Punjab government must take urgent action. The first step should be to officially document them, enabling identification and monitoring of their activities. Additionally, law enforcement agencies must be mobilized to curb their criminal activities and ensure public safety.

The increasing presence of Pakhiwas in urban areas is causing problems such as encroachment, environmental pollution, and public health risks. They illegally occupy vacant spaces, parks, roadsides, and sidewalks, disrupting urban aesthetics

and hindering transportation. Their activities also pose environmental hazards. They burn wood, rubber, and other harmful materials as fuel, releasing toxic smoke and increasing carbon emissions. This contributes to air pollution and exacerbates respiratory diseases among city residents. The Chief Minister of Punjab must take immediate steps to address these issues.

Pakhiwas should be systematically relocated to designated areas where they can be provided with basic facilities and encouraged to adopt a better lifestyle. Proper arrangements should be made for the education and training of their women and children. Additionally, strict enforcement of environmental laws should be ensured, banning the burning of materials that cause smoke and pollution. Such measures will help maintain urban areas free from encroachments and environmental hazards.

Several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) claim to be working for the welfare, education, and health of nomadic tribes and Pakhiwas in Punjab. However, their efforts appear to be largely superficial. If these organizations were truly effective, some noticeable improvements would have been evident in the lives of these communities. Unfortunately, their living conditions, lifestyles, and social behaviors remain unchanged.

A major obstacle to their rehabilitation is their own reluctance to change. They are unwilling to abandon their traditional ways and integrate into mainstream society. Instead of embracing education, hard work, and a dignified life, they prefer to continue their old ways. This is why both government and NGO efforts have largely failed. To solve this issue, practical steps must be taken beyond symbolic welfare projects. These

steps should include social training, skill development programs, and housing initiatives that can encourage them to transition into a more productive and lawful way of life.

During British rule, a law was introduced to control such communities. In 1871, the British colonial government enacted The Criminal Tribes Act, which aimed to regulate and forcibly relocate specific tribes and communities in India. Under this law, thousands of families were labeled as criminals, their movement was restricted, and they were relocated to designated settlements. This law institutionalized discrimination, treating entire communities as inherently criminal.

A recent news report from Multan has highlighted a serious issue. According to the report, a journalist interviewed a drug addict and asked him where he buys hashish (charas) and crystal meth (ice). The addict revealed that these drugs are sold by Liaqat and his relatives, who reside in makeshift settlements in New Shah Shams Colony, Block C, under the jurisdiction of Shah Shams Police Station. These drug dealers reportedly operate under the protection of local influential individuals and the MDA enforcement team.

The presence of these settlements and nomadic tribes in New Shah Shams Colony is not only fueling drug-related crimes but also posing a constant threat to local residents. The government must take immediate and strict action. The Chief Minister of Punjab should issue orders for the immediate removal of these illegal settlements and initiate a comprehensive documentation process for nomadic communities across all districts and tehsils. Additionally, the police must be required to compile a complete database of these individuals in their respective areas to prevent future criminal activities and ensure public safety. “A stitch in time saves nine.” Mr. Zain-ul-Abideen.Abid is senior analyst. He can be reached zakhanmultan@yahoo.com

The U. S. and Europe: Parting Ways

Vice President J. D. Vance’s unwarranted, harsh, and undiplomatic remarks to European leaders deeply wounded the longstanding alliance between the U. S. and Europe. His speech was not just a critique—it was an outright attack on European traditions, governance, and society. He accused European nations of curbing illegal migration, suppressing democracy, restricting freedom of speech, and running inefficient institutions comparable to third-world countries. Furthermore, he charged Europe with exploiting U. S. taxpayers by using American funds to bolster European infrastructure, stockpile foreign exchange reserves, and strengthen military capabilities—all at the cost of making America economically weaker.

Germany’s Defense Minister Boris Pistorius dismissed Vance’s speech as a gross distortion of reality, emphasizing Europe’s unwavering commitment to democracy and institutional integrity. Kaja Kallas, the European Union’s chief diplomat, interpreted the remarks as an intentional attempt by the U. S. to provoke conflict with Europe. Former Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt echoed these concerns, describing the speech as “significantly worse than expected.”

The once-unshakable transatlantic alliance is now unraveling at an alarming pace. For decades, the U. S., the United Kingdom, and France wielded significant power within the international governance system, using their collective veto at the United Nations as a formidable force. However, with the U. S. adopting an increasingly confrontational stance, it risks isolating itself, pushing the world

toward a new multipolar order. Power centers are shifting, with Europe, China, and Russia emerging as independent forces, while India continues to rise as an economic and geopolitical player.

One of the most significant implications of this rift is that Europe will no longer feel obligated to align with the U. S. in future conflicts. Unlike in the past—when Europe was pressured into supporting wars in Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, and the intimidation of Iran—European nations are now reconsidering their blind allegiance to American foreign policy. Historically, U. S. legitimacy in global conflicts depended heavily on European backing. But as trust wanes, European leaders are unwilling to continue sacrificing their national interests for policies they no longer see as justified.

This unprecedented divide did not emerge overnight. Trump’s disdain for Europe laid the groundwork for the current crisis. He persistently accused European nations of freeloading off American financial contributions for defense, arguing that the U. S. had no real stake in Europe’s security. He further criticized European leaders for allowing demographic shifts due to pro-immigration policies, fueling nationalist rhetoric on both sides of the Atlantic. His threat to occupy Greenland was yet another display of disregard for European sovereignty. Now, with J. D. Vance’s antagonistic remarks adding fuel to the fire, Europe’s patience has worn thin.

For the first time in modern history,

the U. S. is actively alienating its closest allies, triggering an identity crisis within the Western alliance. Europe, which once relied on American leadership and protection, is beginning to reassess its position in the global order. This shift carries two major consequences.

First, the U. S. may gradually forfeit its status as the world’s preeminent superpower. Trump’s policies suggest that America no longer has the appetite—or financial capability—to maintain global dominance. The cost of sustaining this position is proving unsustainable, and rather than reinforcing its alliances, the U. S. appears willing to relinquish them. For Europe, this could be an opportunity rather than a setback. Unlike developing nations, European countries are wealthy and resourceful enough to sustain their own defense and shape independent foreign policies without U. S. intervention. Over time, they may move away from American influence, assert their collective strength on the global stage, and address international crises on their own terms.

This would also free Europe from the obligation to align with the U. S. on controversial geopolitical issues. Without the constraints of transatlantic loyalty, European nations might adopt more pragmatic stances—cooperating with China and Russia when necessary, rather than being bound by U. S.-driven narratives. This realignment could significantly weaken American influence within international institutions, eroding its ability to unilaterally dictate global policies.

However, history suggests that any vacuum left by a declining superpower is inevitably filled by another rising force. If the U. S. continues its path of isolationism and confrontational diplomacy, China is the only country with the economic strength and strategic resources to assume that role. Whether the U. S. is truly prepared to cede its global supremacy to China remains uncertain. Yet, if its current policies persist, this transition may occur sooner rather than later.

Ultimately, international relations are dictated not by sentiment but by shifting interests. The U. S.-Europe alliance, which has endured for two centuries, is now showing signs of natural decay. The once-strong commonality of purpose and shared values is giving way to nationalist and protectionist agendas. What were once minor disagreements have now escalated into full-blown political conflicts, revealing deep-seated fractures within the Western bloc.

The U. S., once the undisputed leader of the free world, now appears intent on relinquishing its leadership. By pushing its allies away, it is voluntarily dismantling the very system that secured its dominance for decades. The ultimate question remains: is America prepared for the consequences of this seismic shift? If it continues on this trajectory, the world order as we know it may be on the verge of an irreversible transformation—one in which the U. S. is no longer the central pillar of global governance.

The Writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd), Former Press Minister at the Embassy of Pakistan to France and Former MD, SRBC. He is living at Macomb, Detroit, Michigan



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

A Digital Danger: Social Media Growing Youth Mental Health Crisis

Dr. Muhammad Shahzad Ashfaq

Social media has become an integral part of daily life for many people, particularly the youth. While it offers numerous benefits such as staying connected with friends, sharing experiences, and accessing information, there is a growing concern about its impact on mental health. The digital world of social media presents a range of challenges that can aggravate mental health issues among young individuals. The dangers posed by social media to youth mental health crisis, examining the reasons behind its detrimental effects and propose potential solutions to address this pressing concern.

One of the primary dangers of social media on youth mental health is the phenomenon of comparison. Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat often display idealized versions of people’s lives, leading to unrealistic standards and fostering a culture of comparison. Different experiences of life show that excessive social media use can fuel feelings of inadequacy, low self-esteem, and anxiety, especially among young users who are more vulnerable to such influences. Constant exposure to curated images and lifestyles can create a distorted perception of reality, leading to a sense of inadequacy and a fear of missing out (FOMO) among youth.

When individuals compare their own lives to the highly curated and often unrealistic content posted by influencers, they may develop a distorted perception of success and happiness, ultimately leading to feelings of inadequacy

and insecurity. Celebrities endorsing products or lifestyles on social media has blurred the lines between authenticity and commercialism.

The constant promotion of products, services, and experiences by popular personalities can indeed create a sense of consumerism in society. This phenomenon is prevalent in the digital age where influencers, celebrities, and well-known figures leverage their platforms to endorse various brands and products to their followers. The ways in which popular personalities contribute to consumerism is through the creation of desire and aspiration. When influencers and celebrities promote products, they often present them as must-have items that can improve one’s lifestyle or enhance one’s image. This creates a sense of desire among consumers who want to emulate the lifestyles of their favorite personalities. As a result, individuals may feel compelled to purchase these products to feel more connected to their idols or to achieve a similar status.

Social media poses a significant danger to youth mental health, contributing to a growing crisis among young individuals. The pressures of comparison, cyberbullying, sleep disturbances, and addiction have profound consequences on psychological well-being. To address this issue, it is essential for parents, educators, and policymakers to prioritize digital literacy, mental health education, and responsible social media use among the youth. Promoting a healthy balance between online engagement and real-world interactions, we can mitigate the negative effects of social media and safeguard the mental well-being of future generations.

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