

CENTRELINE

PAKISTAN'S PREMIER NEWS & DIPLOMATIC AFFAIRS MAGAZINE



FORMULA "E" IN SAUDI ARABIA

**Crown Prince
Muhammad Bin Salman
sees Diriyah create
history**



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I (Wahid Mushtaq) being the President of Entrepreneurs Organization Capital Chapter is a matter of immense delight and gratification. EO Islamabad chapter shall enable business owners to learn from each other. The purpose of EO is to educate, transform, inspire and offer invaluable resources in the form of global events, leadership-development programs, an online entrepreneur forum and executive education opportunities.

Similarly, EO strives with aim to build a thriving network and a think tank of successful entrepreneurs/businesspersons, to serve the unique needs of the complete entrepreneurs.

EO Islamabad intends to provide its members with access to executive education events, networking opportunities and mentorship programs. It will also help strengthen the global business landscape by partnering with local businesses and encouraging job growth. EO Islamabad chapter shall enable business owners to learn from each other, leading to greater business success and an enriched personal life. EO's global mission is to empower entrepreneurs with the tools, accountability and community to aggressively grow and master their business. EO's ultimate goal is to achieve a successful entrepreneurial world. I believe, for an entrepreneur, positive impact can be achieved through their professional activity, their investments and personal actions. Beyond the strict limits of the professional sphere, a business with a positive impact therefore aims to make the world a better place both from a social and environmental standpoint.



In my view, this initiative is very timely in terms of making investment towards economic growth, job creation and balanced regional development. The Islamabad chapter is dynamic and I would pledge for your active involvement to take it further as an effectual initiative.

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Executive Editor

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Founding Content Head

Lt Col Ihsan Piracha ® (Late)

Deputy Editor

Mazhar Tufail

Advisor

Prof. Dr. Farid A. Khwaja

(Arar-e-Kamal)

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Marketing Head

Nusrat Khan

GM Marketing & Sales

Fiaz Choudhry

0300-5538251

Photo Journalists

Sunny Ghouri

Muhammad Shahid

Shahbaz Sindhu (LHR)

Head Office: # 11, Block 18-A (Awan Plaza)

G-8 Markaz, Islamabad-Pakistan 44000

Tel: 051-2261960, Fax: 051-2280074

Cell: 0333-5203232

centrelinemag@gmail.com

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Accountability season sets in



Perhaps for the first time in the history of Pakistan, the accountability process has been initiated against the all powerful politicians including business tycoons albeit it is not clear whether the concerned authorities shall be able to take this process to its logical end. The road to across the board accountability ostensibly is fraught with innumerable obstacles therefore the authorities doing this will have to come up with some extra-ordinary patience and skills and courage also in order to achieve this goal.

After Sharif family, the axe of accountability has fallen on Zardaris also because the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) has found the former President of Pakistan and his family members guilty of siphoning off billions of rupees abroad through various fake accounts and carriers. In their public rally on December 27, on the occasion of death anniversary of Benazir Bhutto, both Asif Zardari and Bilawal Zardari lashed out at the government and the security establishment also for what they called the 'selected accountability', purpose of which, according to them was to bully the opposition parties. It was quite strange and intriguing to see both father and son speaking in favour of the Sharif family – a family who according to them had instituted false cases against them and even put them behind the bars for sins they actually never committed.

It is quite astonishing to see PPP leaders smitten with PML N and its leadership, though this goodwill gesture will not be of any help for them for the Sharif family itself is in hot waters therefore unable to come to their rescue. In fact both the leaderships are dying for a last straw, which in the given circumstances, seems a Herculean task. Cases against them are so strong that an escape seems difficult.

However, having said that, one has to admit that things can change overnight in Pakistan and it may happen in the cases of Nawaz Sharif and Asif Zardari. The probe bodies are perhaps more interested in recovering the looted money rather than keeping these big-wigs behind the bars therefore as soon as a way out is found, these 'most-wanted' people may be allowed to fly to a destination of their own choosing.

And that is where the shoe actually pinches! The half-hearted and haphazard accountability processes have contributed greatly towards bad political and economic condition of the country. The only difference is that this time the powerful people have been taken to task nevertheless it all may prove a futile exercise if at the end of the day they are given a clean chit.

As regards across the board accountability, there is no second opinion that the society can only flourish and a country can only make advances in all fields provided the accountability process takes its course without any fear and favour. Undoubtedly, there are so many other people who have looted the national exchequer with the same spirit and ease and thus needed to be proceeded against. Corruption, according to an English writer Emma Duncan, has penetrated deep into Pakistani society and thus has become part of the system. So if corruption is removed from this system, the entire system may collapse.

It would be in the benefit of all if the ambit of accountability is expanded to others also including media, judiciary, military and especially those who are part of the incumbent government. Intellectual corruption is yet another monster that has weakened the very basis of the state and society. If things have come to such an embarrassing pass in Pakistan, pseudo intellectuals and sometimes genuine intellectuals are equally responsible for that. It reminds me of Geoffrey Chaucer's famous quote from Canterbury Tales that, "if gold rusts; what shall iron do".

Summing up, all those who have committed corruption and charges are proved must not be given any safe passage this time.

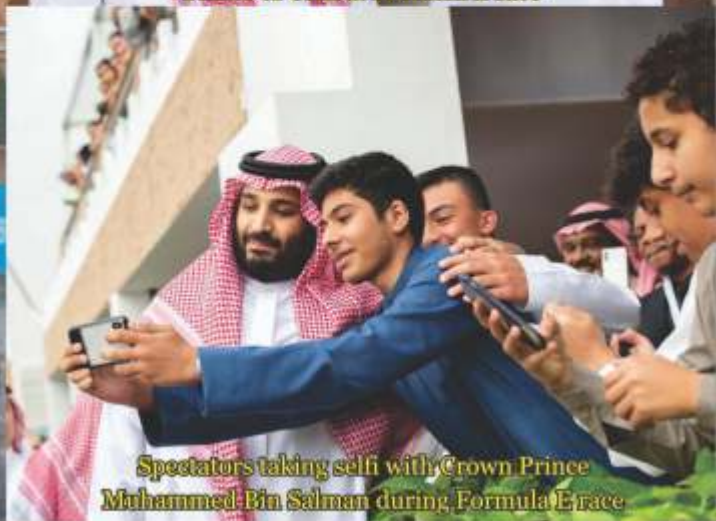
Ansar

Chief Editor's Profile: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti is a career journalist. He started off as District Correspondent of Daily *The Muslim* in 1988 from Gujrat. Later he moved to Islamabad and joined *Pakistan Observer* as Sub-Editor / Op-ed Writer, in 1993. In 1995 he again moved to The Muslim as Sub-Editor and he left The Muslim in 1997 to join *The Nation* as City Editor and Diplomatic Correspondent, where he remained till 2002. His association with *The News* spans over three years from 2002 to 2005 as Columnist. In 2005 Mr. Bhatti switched over to Khabrain Group as Columnist / Special Correspondent. In 2010 he was made Resident Editor of *The Post*, a sister publication of *daily Khabrain*. In 2010 he launched his own publication *Centreline*. He has authored two books on European Union. He has also served in *Pakistan Telecom Company (PTCL)* as Media Advisor/Director Communications. He Launched Diplomatic News Agency (DNA) in 2012.

HISTORIC FORMULA E IN SAUDI ARABIA



Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman with Crown Prince of UAE at Formula E race



Spectators taking selfi with Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman during Formula E race

**Motorsport, rock bands,
tourists ... welcome to the
new Saudi Arabia**

Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman sees Diriyah create history

**- Attends Formula E race; mixes
up with people; thousands
invited to witness the historic
event held at Saudi soil**

**ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI
IN RIYADH**

RIYADH (DNA) - Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman, deputy premier and minister of defense, attended the finale of the Ad Diriyah E-Prix championship race on the outskirts of Riyadh.

He was accompanied by Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Muhammad Bin Zayed and Bahraini Crown Prince Salman Bin Hamad.

Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman mingled with the crowd and posed for selfies with many of the attendees.

Portuguese Antonio Felix da Costa held off a late charge from defending world champion Jean-Eric Vergne to win the opening race of the Formula E season.

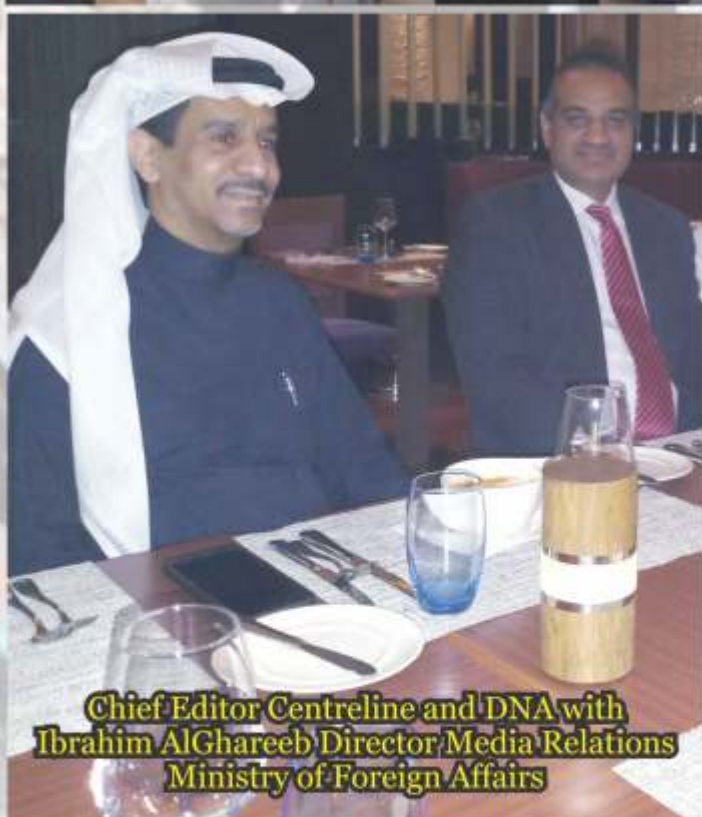
DS Techeetah's Vergne snatched the lead at the halfway stage of the Ad Diriyah E-Prix but a drive-through penalty meant he finished second behind BMW Andretti's Da Costa, with Jerome D'Ambrosio completing the podium for Mahindra Racing.

The city-based single-seater series began its fifth season with a first-ever race in Saudi Arabia, which also saw the debut of the Gen2 car that can hit a top speed of 280 kph and will have sufficient battery power to last an entire race. Previously, drivers have had to stop and change cars.

"It's amazing, it's been tough, it's been long months of work and I am really happy with that," the 27-year-old winner said.

After some thrilling overtaking, Brazilian former Formula One driver Felipe Massa came home 14th in his first ePrix with

Chief Editor Centreline and DNA
with Saudi Minister of National Guards



**Chief Editor Centreline and DNA with
Ibrahim AlGhareeb Director Media Relations
Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Venturi.

Belgian Stoffel Vandoorne, who said farewell to McLaren F1 for a seat at HWA Racelab, finished in 17th place.

It may be mentioned here that thousands of people from across the globe thronged the landmark Formula E championship.

The pre-race events continued to attract tens of thousands of people.

The Formula E is an International Circuit event organised by an international sport body. It is the first time that event is being held in Riyadh Saudi Arabia and various organisations including several ministries and associations are involved. Thousands throng to Formula E landmark event being held in Riyadh.

To facilitate the guests adequately the Saudi authorities established various help desks. Even at the airport, the Formula E visitors were given special treatment.

As part to celebrate this occasion, the Saudi authorities from all sectors invited their friends to witness the atmosphere and environment and of course the competition also.

Three journalists from Pakistan including the Editor of DNA news agency Ansar Mahmood Bhatti attended the event.

All the hype surrounding Formula E sent a wave of excitement through the streets that you could sense as you approached the Allianz E-Village, an electronic village with reality toys galore that will take you to the another world.

Thrilled visitors who had come early had the advantage of avoiding the crowds and the busy queues as they paced their way through the village. However due to a large number of visitors, guests had to stand in long queues to get into the village.

The Formula E-Prix took up the whole of Ad Diriyah, a family zone and cultural village. The best way to move around was by one of the many buses that transports visitors to the security checks. The visitors ostensibly had to face some hiccups also however the authorities were quick to take on bottlenecks within no time.

Authorities said certain difficulties were witnessed only because it was the first mega event being held in Riyadh. The officials said the lessons learnt from these experiences will help them conduct the event even in a more efficient manner next time.

On the ride to the cultural village at dusk you could see the place all lit up with twinkling fairy lights. It was magical and beautiful. One person on the bus gushed at the beauty of it, the mixing of the old and the new, the cultural and the technological.

People were dancing in the crowds singing to the lyrics, and once the DJ



stopped the music you could hear the crowds scream with excitement. The jam packed venue of concert spoke volumes for the interest of people for such events.

First-time concert-goer Yara Saud, an 18-year-old college student, had been waiting for this event since it was announced. Being a huge fan of Jason Derulo, she said: "I can't believe that I'm attending my favorite artist's concert in my home town. This is Crazy!"

"Saudi whassap. This is a dream come true for me! Since we are in Saudi Arabia I want to do things a little different," said

Jason Derulo, who put up a thrilling performance equally enjoyed by the locals and those came from across the globe.

As a special treat for his Saudi audience he gave the first performance of a new song, stating on the stage that his mother taught him to never visit empty handed: This was his gift to Saudi Arabia.

It was truly a unique experience of witnessing Saudi people mingling, dancing, singing and enjoying themselves in a huge outdoor area.

The entire venue was decorated with



Journalists from Malaysia and Pakistan

Meeting with Mr. Faheim Adviser Information Minister of Saudi Arabia



clourful lights. Numerous food outlets and stalls set up by various companies added colour to the event.

But in truth, the event was about much more than high-tech electric cars hurtling round a race track — thrilling though that was. The three-day festival of motorsport, culture and entertainment was Saudi Arabia's chance to prove that it can put on a show to rival anything in the world, and which only two years ago would have been unthinkable.

The event was also the first to be linked to the Sharek electronic visa system, allowing foreigners other than pilgrims or business visitors to come to Saudi Arabia.

Jason, from the US, is spending a week in the country with his German wife, riding quad bikes in the desert and visiting heritage sites. "I've always wanted to come for many, many years ... I'm so happy to be here and that they're letting us be here," he said.

Aaron, 40, a software engineer, traveled from New York for two days. "Saudi Arabia has always been an exotic place

... and I didn't think I'd ever be able to come here," he said.

About 1,000 visitors used the Sharek visa, a fraction of what Saudi Arabia aims eventually to attract.

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other than pilgrims
or business visitors
to come to Saudi
Arabia.*

"Hopefully we will learn from this and see what we need to do for the future, but I can tell you from now that there is a lot of demand," said Prince Abdul Aziz bin Turki Al-Faisal, vice chairman of the General Sports Authority.

His optimism was backed by Kirill Dmitriev, chief executive of the Russian Direct Investment Fund and a visitor to Ad Diriyah. "Such events will attract tourists and are a true celebration for young Saudis who desire a bright future," he said.

"The vision of moderate Islam, promoted by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, is important both for the region and the entire world, and its realization needs to be appreciated, respected and supported."

The event ended on December 15 night with a spectacular show by US band One Republic and the superstar DJ David Guetta. "Just when you think things can't get better, they suddenly do," said concertgoer Saleh Saud.

"This is the new Saudi Arabia, and I can't wait to see what's going to happen next." =DNA

Malam Jabba a must-visit place

Malam Jabba (also Maalam Jabba, Urdu: مالم جبہ) is a Hill Station in the Hindu Kush mountain range nearly 40 km from Saidu Sharif in Swat Valley, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province of Pakistan. It is about 300 km from Islamabad and 51 km from Saidu Sharif Airport.

Malam Jabba is home to one of the two ski resorts in Pakistan; the other is at Naltar, Gilgit Baltistan.

On the main Madyan-Kalam road, the road turns to the right at Manglor town (12 km from Saidu Sahrif), for the Malam-Jabba Dara which has a series of small villages and settlements like Salanda, Jehanabad, Talegraam, Badar, Ser, Malam, Kishora, Spine Oba, and finally Jabba.

Malam is a small village which comes prior to Kishora village on the main Malam-Jabba road.

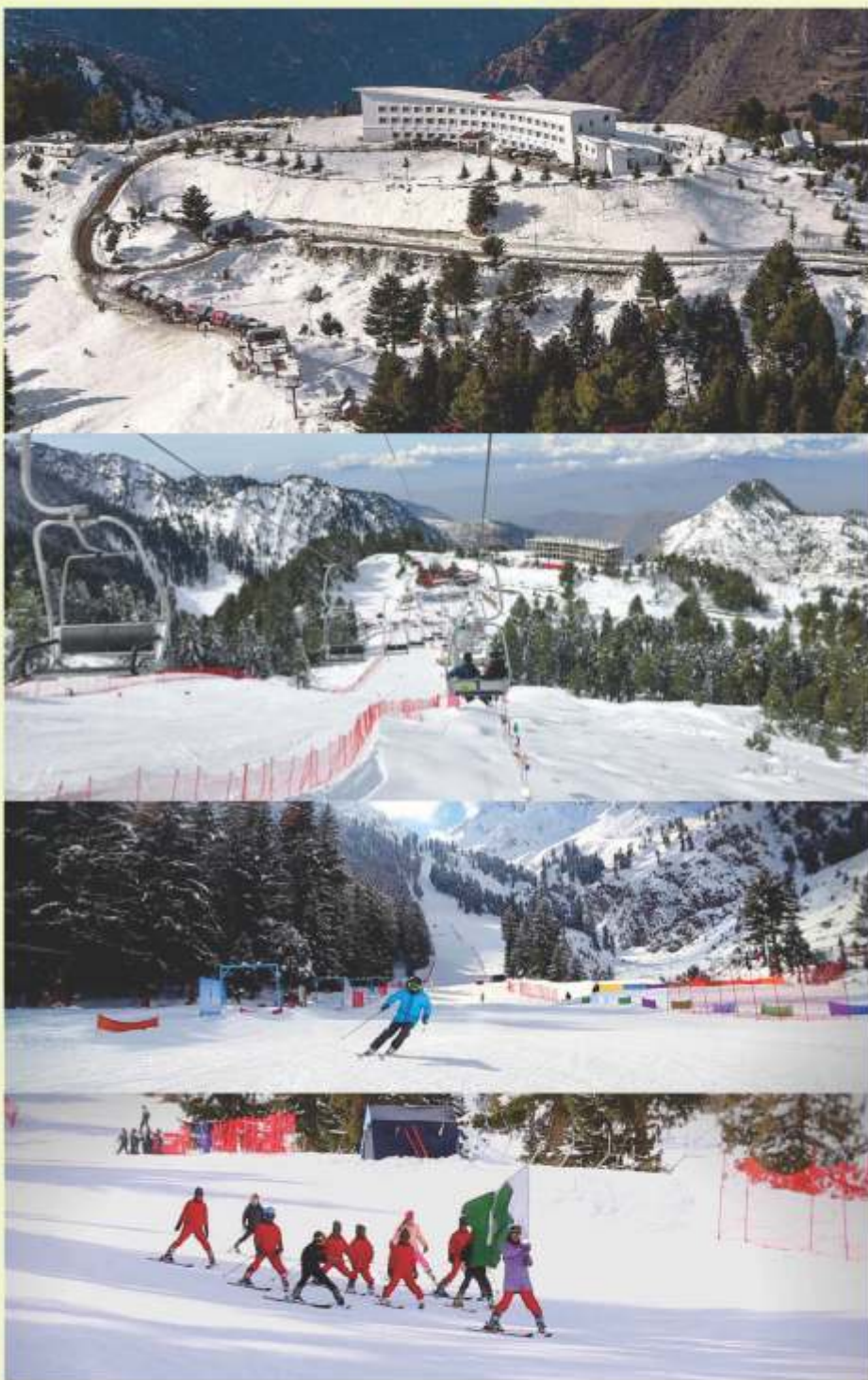
Malam is nearly 17 km from Manglor while Kishora is at 18 km distance. Jabba (12 km from Kishora) is the upper most part of the whole Dara (gorge).

The Malam Jabba Ski Resort, owned by the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, had a ski slope of about 800m with the highest point of the slope 2804 m (9200 ft) above sea level.

Malam Jabba Ski Resort was the joint effort of the Pakistan with its Austrian counterpart.

The resort was equipped with modern facilities including roller/ice-skating rinks, chair lifts, skiing platforms, telephones and snow clearing equipment. Unfortunately the resort was destroyed by the Taliban when they were in hold in Swat Valley.

Now that writ of the government has been reinstated and peace established, tourism has picked up. The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has awarded the tender for rebuilding the Malam Jabba skiing resort to a private company. Work is going on in full swing and is slated for a 2017 completion date. Skiing has already been restored and a skiing festival was held in January 2015.



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New Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic in Peshawar

The Czech Republic has opened its new Honorary Consulate in Pakistan in Peshawar on October 30, 2018. With honorary consulates in Lahore and Karachi, it is the third honorary consulate of the Czech Republic in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. It is also one among the few consulates located in the city.

The honorary consular functions over the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province will be exercised by the newly appointed Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic in Peshawar, Assad Saifullah Khan. Khan has legal education and works as CEO in Kohat Textile Mill apart from holding leading positions in other companies. His father, former Federal Minister and Senator of Pakistan Salim Saifullah Khan, is Honorary Consul of Turkey in Peshawar.

The timing of the ceremonial opening of the new honorary consulate was linked to the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the Czech modern statehood. The event was attended by the Ambassador of the Czech Republic in Pakistan, Ján Fűrý, the Deputy Ambassador and Consul of the Czech Republic in Pakistan, Mrs. Jaroslava Bobková, the Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mushtaq Ahmed Ghani, the Honorary Consul, Assad Saifullah Khan, high dignitaries of the province, representatives of the local media and many others.

The opening of the honorary consulate and the Czech National Day celebrations in Peshawar were accompanied by a concert by the Czech virtuoso cellist, František Brikcius. A ribbon-cutting ceremony and speeches by the new Honorary Consul, the Ambassador and the Speaker of the Provincial Assembly were integral part of the event. An exhibition about important personalities of the Czech history, entitled "Great Czechs Seen by Little Eyes" was also displayed at the occasion.

The Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic in Peshawar will not deal with visa issues and will not offer verification services either. However, it is ready to further scientific and technical, economic, cultural, educational, sports and other relations between both countries, to assist natural and legal persons to establish contacts with partners in the other country, to extend assistance to Czech nationals in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, etc.



Best hair transplant services at Wellness Lounge

Wellness Lounge in Islamabad is the state of the Art clinic which provides multiple medical Non-surgical and surgical hair transplant services, Clinical Derma Care and Aesthetics Services, Lifestyle Medicine and Weight Management Services and Family Medicine and Preventive Medicine Care, under one roof.

One of its specialties is Hair Transplant via FUE latest technique performed by the highly professional plastic surgeons and hair surgeons who have performed hundreds of hair transplant surgeries with excellent results.

Here is brief information about the latest FUE Hair Transplant technique

What Is Fue Hair Transplant?

FUE stands for Follicular Unit Extraction. It is the most advanced and effective technique, which involves extracting individual hair follicles from the area having thicker hair or more hair density known as donor area and transplanting them to the bald area known as recipient area where they start growing just like surrounding hair.

What Makes You A Good Candidate For Fue Hair Transplant?

Anyone who is suffering from baldness and have good health can be a candidate for FUE Hair Transplant but here are some points that will make you perfect candidate for the procedure.

- You are not too young because hair loss in young age can be temporary and your hair may grow back again.
- You are physically healthy and active person. This will help you recover soon and get desired results in less time.
- You have thick hair in the donor area. Thicker the hair in the donor area are, better and more natural looking the results will be.

What You Need To Know And Follow Before Getting Fue Hair Transplant

FUE Hair Transplant is a minimal invasive surgical procedure. Following some pre-surgical instruction will help you cope with the side effects easily.

- Quit the use of any kind of blood thinners for two weeks before the surgery.
- Quit using aspirin and other anti-inflammatory medications for a week before surgery.
- Your surgeon must be aware of any medications you are taking.
- Do not smoke for at least one week before surgery.
- Do not drink for at least three days prior to surgery.

How Fue Hair Transplant Is Performed?

Here are the steps involved in the procedure:

- Consent is obtained from the patient after explaining the procedure, its side effects and



complications, medical advice before and after the procedure

- Administration of anesthesia – the first step of the procedure involves administering anesthesia that ensures painless surgery. Local anesthesia is used for this purpose.



- Extraction of Hair Follicles – hair follicles in groups of 1-4 follicles are then extracted from the donor area using extremely tiny punching tool.
- Preparation of recipient site – the recipient site is then prepared for transplanting the extracted follicles.
- Insertion of extracted follicles – finally hair follicles are inserted in the recipient area in the direction of surrounding hair.

What You Need To Know And Follow

After Fue Hair Transplant

Post-surgical instructions are as important as pre-surgical instructions are for quick and smooth recovery and successful results. Here are some common instructions to be followed:

- Use all the medications and ointments as instructed by the doctor regularly.
- Avoid direct sun exposure for few days after surgery.
- Keep your head elevated while sleeping for at least one day after surgery.
- Avoid any strenuous physical activity for first two days after surgery.
- Keep your scalp clean You will be reviewed after a few days for a checkup.

Results Of Fue Hair Transplant

- Final results may take few months to become visible.
- The outcomes will be natural looking.
- The transplanted hair will be exactly like the existing hair in texture and growth.

Benefits Of Fue Hair Transplant

FUE Hair Transplant has numerous benefits. Have a look on some of them:

- Minimal incisions – extremely tiny tool is used to extract hair and therefore incisions are nearly invisible.
- No scarring – since there are no visible incisions, there are no visible scars.
- Minimal side effects – as the surgery is minimal invasive, no severe side effects are associated with it.
- Less recovery time – patient recovers completely within few days after surgery.
- Donor area is unaffected – as minimal invasive method is used to extract hair follicles, the donor area remains unaffected.

It is a day case procedure and you would be able to go home after the surgery is performed. Here is an example of one of our patient received excellent results with hair transplant

For further information and advice, Please contact Wellness Lounge at : 051-8740815-6 or 03355858268

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 Hasnain hosted
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 Aitzaz Ahsan,
 President PRF
 Zahid Maqbool and
 Chief Editor
 Centreline and
 DNA and Media
 Adviser PRF in
 attendance.*



Moroccan businessmen invited to invest in Pak tourism sector

ISLAMABAD (DNA) – Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reform Makhdum Khusro Bakhtyar has said that Pakistan is among the countries blessed with beautiful natural scenery and landscapes where tourism can be promoted in a befitting manner through an effective strategy.

He stated that Moroccan investors in collaboration with local companies can invest in Pakistan's tourism sector especially in northern areas which will give boost to tourism industry in the country.

The Minister said this while talking to Ambassador of Morocco Mr. Mohamed



KARMOUNE who called on him here at Islamabad on Monday.

Khusro Bakhtyar said that there are several potential areas where Moroccan companies could invest to mutual benefit of two countries.

He emphasized that government is committed to enhance tourism, trade and economic cooperation with Morocco as well as initiate joint ventures in diverse areas to further bilateral partnership between two brotherly countries.

Highlighting the investment prospects in Pakistan, the Minister underlined the need to explore more areas adding that Moroccan investors should be encouraged to benefit from investment opportunities in Pakistan.

The Minister noted that Morocco enjoys important geostrategic location adding that Pakistan is following 'Look Africa Policy' the purpose of which is to enhance trade and commercial relations with Africa.

The Man Who Lived the Hundredth Cut

Tahir Mehmood

The girl was twittering, the old man was brooding, the night was spreading, life was now giving way to the engulfing slumber, and the dark was thickening. So far, there were no signs of the train that were to take them to the remote town of their destination.

They had just begun a river-side night errand. It had become their routine for the last few years since they had met. She used to work at a local radio station when he had first met her on a cold December night. He was charmed by her spontaneity and vivacity, and she by his sombre manners. She was never to forget the night of December 16, once they met on an isolated and almost empty platform of the otherwise busy city railway station. It was a quiet night and she triggered the conversation as most of the time later she had to do it. He was a quiet companion and hardly spoke. However, his calm manners did exude an unusual deadly peace that strangely she had fallen in love with in coming years. To begin the conversation, she just pointed towards the big watch at the platform that was showing both date and time but somehow the date was not properly visible from her position. He replied, it was December 16, and she could not ignore the sheer pain in his low voice, once he uttered, December 16. His face darkened too for a while, and then he appeared normal. The conversation transitioned from cursoriness to curiosity, and gradually turned soul-absorbing. She became a pupil, and he the lost Master. That one night led to many nights full of conversation with

"So when will we find justice and peace?"

"Look, nomad travel from mountains to valleys, from oceans to deserts, and from known to unknown. In this motion lies the life. The rivers mostly flow from high mountains, and this flow is the power that gives life to many species but yet tramples, too."

"The one who gets what he wishes, never questions the injustice. A deprived soul shall always seek easy compensation through justice; usually the goal is pursuit of self-desire. Nature is manifested through the expressions of power, and power is rarely seen bent towards a just-order."

"Should this mean abandoning the effort?"

"In effort lies the essence. If power cannot be contained, it can be constrained."

"There is a need to transform the desires: both individual and collective. In old times,

priests and preachers taught to master 'abstinence'. In present times, the abundance can somewhat reduce the deprivation."

"Dominance and greed?"

"For that, the man shall have to wait for the change in its genes and codes."

"The animals survive; the man is busy in continuous struggle to preserve."

"The flow can be channelized, power can be regulated, wild can be tamed, diffusion reduces the intensity. Despite all, you will need the hot sun of power to harvest your food and fruit. The Nature adores power."

"And, the life goes on?"

"Where is my freedom?"

"My question, too."

The approaching train blew the whistle, and they hurried to embark on the new journey.

It wasn't long before she fell in love with him.

"Must not stay separated for long?"



"When love is explained in terms of gender impulses and instincts, its longevity is in question."

"I need...?"

"I do not like...?"

"That is enough...."

"We know our desires only. Self-love is a good reason to live but it is gullible, too. It ignores our narrow streams, and works on self-fulfilment."

"Where do I go?"

"My way."

"We are the soulmates; we do not seek union." They met again and again!

It was yet another December 16 night. The man had gone out and had not returned so far. Time and curiosity led her to read his unfinished piece of writing. This was a letter to one of his old comrades. The man's words were full of pain and sorrow: "Dear one, you know, I can never forget the pain and the

loss. I had gone to the East Wing with a hope and pride. I wanted to heal the wounds and to nourish the old bonds. I knew the time was less and work was more. The East and West were one, but now too much self-love was causing complaints and quarrels. The enemy was adding salt in a way that palate and palatial hid the poison. There was so much fog that the path carved years ago dwindled in tears and cries. I can never forget the mutilated bodies of men and women who had gone from the West Wing to serve the East Wing. Their body-parts cut, burnt and thrown on the streets where they used to live joyfully, is an unbearable burden on my soul. I still remember the small infant of a fellow West Wing poet whose dead body cut into pieces was placed on a heap of dead bodies of the father, mother, brothers and sisters. The natives suffered too, but why and for whom? I wish to go back to tell them that love could still be revived.

"A well-intended disagreement should never be pushed to the valleys of bitterness. In disorder and discord lie the seeds of anarchy and conflict. We must never forget that one of the attributes of conflict is destruction."

On that December night, the conversation mostly remained one-sided. The man kept outpouring his heart filled with love and pain. The white snowflakes thickened as the words turned intense and black. There was a painful melody of love and remorse, separation and desire for reunion. The ambers were getting dim and cold, but the two hearts were warmed by the magic of love. The night grew dark but dawn was not out of sight. In those magical moments, she fell asleep. She slept unusually long on that long December night.

In that nostalgic beautiful morning, she opened her eyes, and found two beautiful red roses beside her pillow. Next to her laid a piece of paper that had a line scribbled on it, which read: We are soulmates; we do not seek union. She looked around, but found no trace of the man.

The writer is a traveller and student of human history. He can be reached at tmabbasi@yahoo.com and [tweetsat#tmabbasi](https://twitter.com/tmabbasi)



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CEO Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal wins prestigious VC's Alumni Award

Luqman Ali Afzal acquired the spirit of entrepreneurship while he was still a student at LUMS - he managed the 'Khokha', a very small business venture, with only two employees, seventeen years ago at LUMS. Today, his single-handedly established enterprise, the Monal Group employs over 2,400 people at four restaurants, two banquet halls, and two amusement parks. The operations of the Group are spread in Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Lahore, with a yearly turnover of more than half a billion rupees, and



Luqman Ali Afzal with his wife Ayesha

Area' in Islamabad, and an outdoor catering wing, which also includes two banquet venues. In 2015, the company added another three restaurants simultaneously, one each in Lahore, Rawalpindi and the Centaurus Mall, Islamabad. The most recent addition to The Monal Group, Asian Wok was inaugurated in April 2018 in Islamabad and offers Chinese and Thai Cuisines.

Afzal is an active member of the LUMS Islamabad Alumni Chapter. He eagerly mentors LUMS students and alumni looking for advice on

entering the food business. He is also currently teaching at the LUMS continuing education initiative, Lifetime Learning at LUMS, and works with Rizq, a LUMS alumni-led social enterprise which combats food wastage and hunger in Pakistan. Monal Foundation manages a school and a hospital in Luqman's ancestral village. The hospital is completely free and daily serves more than 500 patients and specializes in issues related to pregnancy, children, diabetes, hepatitis and eyes.



contributing more than PKR 200 million annually in taxes, duties, fees and rentals to the government exchequer.

'The Monal Restaurant, Islamabad,' created immense employment opportunities for local people in the area. Today, the Restaurant has become an iconic tourist attraction and has transformed the socio-economic dynamics of the surrounding villages, enriching the lives of over 600 families. Over the years, the company diversified by developing a 'Family Entertainment

“I Am Uzbekistan” documentary screened at Uzbek embassy



Serena Hotels host 4th Mountain film festival

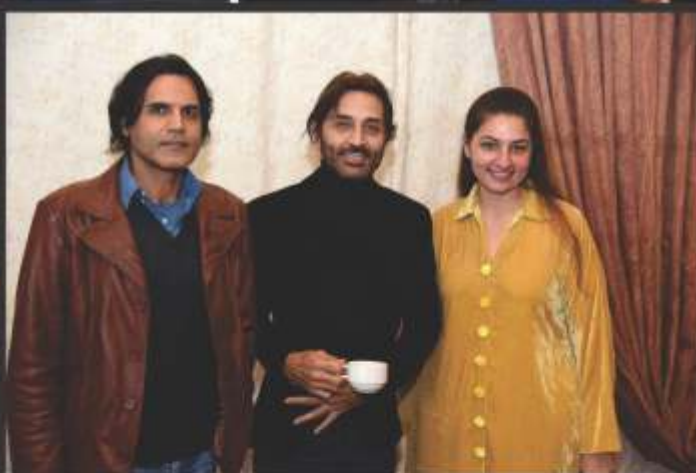
ISLAMABAD (DNA) - Serena Hotels hosted the inaugural ceremony of the 4th edition of the Pakistan International Mountain Film Festival (PIMFF).

Colonel (Retd.) M. Sher Khan who holds the distinction of being the first Pakistani to have climbed Rakaposhi (7,788 metres) and Nanga Parbat (8,126 metres), along with numerous other peaks was the chief guest. Wajahat Malik, founder of PIMFF welcomed the guests to the ceremony and screening of The Frozen Road.

Aziz Boolani, CEO of Serena Hotels, said, "It is a great privilege for us to inaugurate the Pakistan International Mountain Film Festival 2018 which will continue for two days.

We bring diverse experiences to our friends and community thereby adding value. Serena Hotel's Adventure Diplomacy Initiative encourage human engagement with Nature in ways that test physical prowess, endurance and commitment, mountain activities being a core part of these activities.

The Frozen Road, one of the most extraordinary films in the programme, depicts an incredible month-long expedition through Canada's remote and



frozen Yukon Territory to the Arctic Sea. Ben Page began the three-year bike trip in 2014 and chronicles a single month in the

riveting film. PIMFF screens short films, documentaries, features and animations related to mountain adventure sports,

nature, environment, climate change, mountain tourism, mountain cultures and communities. =DNA

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Japanese heritage, culture showcased during calendars exhibition

ISLAMABAD (DNA) – The Embassy of Japan in cooperation with the Rawalpindi Arts Council organized Japanese Calendars Exhibition 2019 at the Rawalpindi Arts Council.

Takashi Kurai, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, inaugurated the exhibition together with the other distinguished guests.

Japanese Calendars Exhibition is an annual feature of the cultural activities which is very popular among the people of Pakistan.

This year, around 100 calendars have been put on display in the exhibition with the cooperation of Japan Calendars Association and various Japanese companies. Ambassador Takashi Kurai, while speaking at the inaugural ceremony said that a variety of Japanese calendars have been put on display in this exhibition which represent the beauty as well as the true life image of Japan.

"Our purpose is to introduce various aspects of Japan to the people of Pakistan. The calendars put here today showcase a vibrant depiction of the Japanese heritage and cultural identity by reflecting images from traditional and contemporary arts, from sports,

DNA



automobiles, nature, heritage and architecture to Japanese Kimono and Ikebana" said Ambassador Kurai. Ambassador Kurai further added that today's exhibition not only gives a picture of the socio-cultural development of Japan, but also exhibits the aesthetic features by Japanese calendar artists.

"By looking at these calendars, the visitors can imagine Japan so near to their eyes even if it's far way" said the Ambassador. Ambassador Kurai

appreciated the cooperation extended by the Rawalpindi Arts Council for holding this exhibition. Most of the calendars being displayed are produced by private Japanese companies, and most of them are printed on recycled paper which is a fine example of Japan's efforts to be eco-friendly.

After the exhibition, all the calendars will be distributed to the lucky visitors through lottery that will be conducted later on by the Embassy.

Pakistan, Tunisia talks to proceed ahead for finalizing PTA

ISLAMABAD (DNA) - Adel Elarbi, Ambassador of Tunisia in Pakistan was invited for meeting by Secretary Commerce Mr. Mohammad Younus Dagha today to discuss bilateral trade issues and proceed ahead with remaining work on Preferential Trade Agreement. Tunisian Ambassador mentioned the warm, cordial and brotherly relations between the two countries and desired to make the trade relations commensurate with the political relations. Tunisian Ambassador appreciated the "Look Africa Policy" of Ministry of Commerce and assured his full cooperation for any proposed bilateral engagements.

Younus Dagha, Secretary Commerce warmly reciprocated the sentiments of Tunisian side and emphasized on boosting the existing trade ties.

secretary Commerce emphasized the need for holding 3rd meeting of Joint Working Group (JWG) on Trade and signing of Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) between the two countries. Request List of

Pakistan for the proposed PTA was presented to the Ambassador.

Tunisian Ambassador welcomed the suggestion of holding single country exhibition in Tunis and assured cooperation for making this exhibition a successful regional event. Pakistan will exhibit textiles, sports goods, rice, pharmaceuticals, surgical instruments etc. in the exhibition.



National Day of Thailand





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Saudi funded housing complex inaugurated at Ayub Medical Institute

ABBOTTABAD (DNA) - Within the framework of the developmental and humanitarian programs funded by the Saudi Fund for Development in Pakistan through the Saudi Arabian grant of SR 600 million, the Saudi housing complex was inaugurated at Ayub Medical and Teaching Institute, Abbottabad.

The Ambassador of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Nawaf bin Saeed Al Malki, said that the inaugurated project was a grant from the Saudi Arabia Government, through the Saudi Fund for Development to our brothers in Pakistan.

The complex consists of 19 buildings each building have six Apartments, with a capacity of 456 people, at a cost of about (10.5) million USD.

He added that this project is one of 31 projects to be implemented from the grant. These projects will be followed by other projects, by Allah willing, which will be implemented through the Saudi Fund for Development from the second grant of 375 million Riyals, including the construction of a hospital in Islamabad, consisting of 200 beds at a cost of \$20 million And another project is the construction of 8,000 housing units in the Baluchistan region at an estimated cost of about \$ 26 million.

The Ambassador stressed that these projects are part of the humanitarian role played by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under the directives of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud and the Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to support the needs of the brotherly people of Pakistan.

The opening ceremony was attended by Eng. Abdullah Bin Mohammed Al Shuaibi, Regional Director, Operations Department, in Saudi Fund for Development, representing by the Vice President and Managing Director, Dr. Khalid Bin Salman Al Khudairi, and the Deputy Head of Mission of the Saudi Embassy in Pakistan Mr. Habibullah Al-Bokhari, senior officials of the Pakistani government, and representatives of the Ayub Medical Complex.

For his part, Director General of Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority, Brigadier General Aftab Qureshi expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

He added that the Kingdom is considered one of the biggest supporters of development in Pakistan, pointing out that the Saudi Fund has contributed in

DNA



implementation of several development projects in Pakistan, especially in the fields

improve the road network and restore the areas affected by the earthquake and

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of education and medical services, floods and terrorism. =DNA



National Day of Kenya

I have found Pakistan a great country to live, says HC Julius Bitok

ISLAMABAD (DNA) = Colourful cultural performances and traditional Kenyan cuisines provided the guests with a real feast during the National Day reception hosted by High Commissioner of Kenya Julius Bitok.

Federal Minister of Privatisation Muhammadmian Somroo and a large number of guests hailing from various walks of life attended the reception. Moreover, the ambassadors of all the all African countries share the stage with the host.

High Commissioner Julius Bitok, ever since his arrival in Pakistan, is all agog in giving new dimensions to bilateral relations. During his tenure the trade volume has gone significantly up while relations in other fields also happen to be on positive trajectory.

In his remarks on the occasion the high commissioner said Kenya and Pakistan were good friends.

High Commission Bitok said Pakistan was a great country and what the international media says about it is just not true.

It is a peaceful country full of opportunities. It has rich culture, music, art and poetry. The real treasure in Pakistan is its warm, hardworking, friendly and welcoming people.

Pakistan is faced with a view challenges related to peace and security but Pakistan is a valued world partner in the fight against Global threat of terrorism. Kenya has confidence in Pakistan's government capabilities to overcome these challenges. We shall in this regard continue to work in peace, security and socio-economic development of Kenya and Pakistan so that our people can live in respect and dignity.

"Our relationship started long before we established first diplomatic ties. The two sides have long followed the principle of sensor of friendship in mutual respect. Kenya and Pakistan have been collaborating for long in various fields of development. Pakistan needs to further reach out to Kenya and engage the business community through institutions like the Chambers of Commerce and industry".

He said they had a specific mandate to improve bilateral relationship and strengthen trade cultural and political relationship with a great nation of Pakistan.

A relationship has been cordial before and even after inception of Kenya High Commission in 1984 bilateral trade has risen over the time for 200 million USD 10 years ago to over 650 million USD in 2018.

He said, they wanted to aggressively engage with Pakistan business community. "This year I personally visited 7 chambers of commerce and industry in sectors of interest to Kenya namely rice, surgical instruments, textiles and pharmaceuticals. I am also closely in contact with Pakistani authorities for direct flights of Kenya Airways (KQ) to Karachi".

He said, the efforts of the Government of Pakistan in fighting terrorism and corruption menace have been commendable. This can increase direct foreign invest remarkably. =DNA





Japanese ambassador pays farewell call on COAS General Bajwa

RAWALPINDI (DNA) – Japanese Ambassador to Pakistan Takashi Kurai called on Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Friday to bid farewell at the end of his service tenure in Pakistan.

According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the meeting between both the dignitaries that took place at General Headquarters (GHQ) discussed matters of the mutual interest.

General Bajwa appreciated ambassador's efforts in strengthening the bilateral relations and assured him full support for all initiatives

aimed at further enhancing the same. Earlier on December 5, the National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of Japan Mr Kentaro Sonoura had called on COAS Qamar Javed Bajwa at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) press release, matters of

DNA

mutual interest including bilateral security cooperation and overall regional situation were discussed during the meeting.

On the occasion, Kentaro Sonoura fully supported Pakistan's efforts for the peace in Afghanistan through political reconciliation, reads the statement. =DNA





Korean film screened at PNCA





Splendid musical show enthralls audience at Kazakhstan Independence Day

ISLAMABAD (DNA) – Ambassador of Kazakhstan Barlybay Sadykov hosted a colourful and grand reception to mark 27th Anniversary of Independence Day in Islamabad.

Beautifully decorated venue coupled with traditional Kazakh cuisines ostensibly added color to the event. A musical performance by Kazakhstan artists was yet another feature of the event that greatly entertained the audience.

Federal Minister of Maritime Affairs Ali Zaidi who was the chief guest on the occasion, could not resist himself from praising the mesmerizing performances of the artists, when he came on the podium to deliver his remarks.

The minister rightfully thanked the Ambassador of Kazakhstan for bringing the music group to Pakistan and thus providing people with a chance to enjoy splendid Kazakh songs.

Ambassador of Kazakhstan also spoke on the occasion. He thanked the audience for attending the function in large number.

While giving an abridged account of bilateral relations, the ambassador said in twenty seven years of independence, poverty in Kazakhstan has been reduced to 2.7 per cent in 2017, the literacy rate is one of the highest in the world and the country is also one of the biggest oil suppliers in the world.

He acknowledged how Pakistan was one of the first countries to recognize and establish diplomatic relations with Kazakhstan, something which the Ambassador said still resides in the hearts and memories of the Kazakh people.

Leadership of Pakistan has always paid great attention to Kazakh foreign policy he said. One of the important hallmarks of the bilateral relationship with Pakistan is the decision taking at the Astana Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) where Pakistan was given full membership of the organization in 2017.

He also underlined the excellent cooperation between the two countries in the military sphere where the main areas of cooperation at the moment are military education and military technical cooperation.

He said that Kazakhstan was interested in training its military personnel in Pakistan as well and hoped that the new Pakistani government would continue to maintain good relations as have predecessor governments.

Pakistan, one of the first countries to recognize Kazakhstan's independence and establish bilateral relations, shares a common vision of peace and security in the region.

Both countries have been collaborating at an international level as well – each country has supported the other at various fora such as membership in the Security Council.

He wished to take these relations forward with same spirit and enthusiasm. Later the ambassador along with the chief guest and colleagues cut cake. National anthems of both countries were also played before cake cutting. =DNA





Indonesian embassy distributes wheel-chairs among special persons

ISLAMABAD (DNA) -The Indonesian Embassy, Islamabad in collaboration of Saaya Association organized on Monday a lively program to observe the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and distributed wheel-chairs. Chairperson of the Indonesian Women Association Rita Berlinia Amri and other members of the association, President Saaya Association Mian Asim Raza, persons with disabilities and their families attended the event.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairperson IWA Rita Berlinia Amri extended warm welcome to the distinguished guests with disabilities and expressed her pleasure for joining hands with the Pakistani friends to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of

society and development.

She announced of distributing gifts of wheel chairs to twenty Persons with Disabilities. She hoped that Embassy's this sincere gesture will highlight the responsibility that the society had to shoulder and help those with disabilities in meeting the challenges of life successfully. She was moved to learn about Mr. Mian Asim Raza and his team of Saaya Association who themselves were persons with disabilities.

She highly commended them for making a difference and setting an example of willpower and positive attitude by not considering their impairment an excuse and committing themselves for the noble cause of helping persons with disabilities. Chairperson IWA encouraged the guest

persons with disabilities to have self-belief, never underestimate their gifted abilities and prove themselves equally important and useful persons of the society.

President of the Saaya Association Mian Asim Raza appreciated IWA for the distribution of the twenty wheel chairs for the deserving persons with disabilities through the platform of his association.

He apprised the audience that Saaya was contributing for improving the social-economic, cultural condition of People with Disabilities through the promotion of information, knowledge, skill, Awareness & Advocacy.

The 80% Staff of the association is Person with Disabilities and Contributing on voluntarily basis.



Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony at Islamabad Serena Hotel



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Sarangi music concert at Islamabad Serena Hotel

ISLAMABAD, (DNA) – Serena Hotels hosted a wonderful evening of musical nostalgia at the Nazara Hall as part of the Sarangi Music Initiative. Sajjad Haider revisited timeless melodies in Urdu reminding the audience of bygone eras.

Sarangi is part of the Serena's Cultural Diplomacy Initiative which aims to preserve and promote the musical heritage of Pakistan.

ISLAMABAD, NOV 23: Renowned artist, Sajjad Haider performs on Sarangi during a function organized

at a local hotel, on Friday.=DNA PHOTO

ISLAMABAD, NOV 23: Renowned artist, Sajjad Haider performs on Sarangi during a function organized at a local hotel, on Friday.=DNA PHOTO

An annual competition over the past two years has given young performers and amateur bands from across the country a platform to share their talent. Sajjad Haider from Faisalabad was one of the top three finalists of Sarangi Season 02 and

returned to Islamabad Serena Hotel to entertain the audience with an outstanding live performance.

Mr. Aziz Boolani, CEO of Serena Hotels, said, "Serena continue to work actively on community support programmes by showcasing the immense talent of Pakistani artists to the before diverse and discerning audiences".

The evening was well attended by the music lovers, corporate and diplomatic community and other prominent personalities.



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RABITA dialogue at Islamabad Serena Hotel

ISLAMABAD (DNA) - Serena Hotels hosted a dialogue and discussion, under Raabta, a public diplomacy initiative, on "The Dynamic Global Economy, Fostering the Pakistan Advantage".

The panel of experts, moderated by Sidra Iqbal, included Zohair Khaliq, Member of the Prime Minister's Task Force on IT and Communications, Melinda Good, Manager Operations at World Bank Pakistan, Sarim Sheikh, President and CEO of GE Pakistan, and Hasaan Khawar, international development and public policy professional.

Melinda Good said, "We've been looking at two trajectories for the country between now and its hundredth birthday, which is 29 years from now.

One is the business as usual which has the country growing at about 5% as it has done historically and the population growing at 2.4%, a rate which is the highest in the region.

That means more people are dividing the pie. The other trajectory is the optimistic one, where on its hundredth birthday, growth has accelerated, the difficult

reforms have been done, and you've been able to invest in health and education, more women have joined the work force and these will moderate the population and Pakistan is in the upper middle income status.

Zohair Khaliq said, "There is going to be a huge demographic shift from the traditional economies of the West to the more emerging economies. According to an HSBC report, Pakistan is going to be one of the five fastest growing economies of the world; Of course this depends on a lot of things and we can't do business as usual. I think the government should focus on four things.

We have to all start paying taxes, the tax to GDP ratio is shocking. Our population growth rate is unsustainable.

We are desperately short of energy and will be in the future - the immediate answer is solar energy. Finally, everything we do should be underpinned by technology".

Sarim Sheikh said, "In 2011, I chose to move back to Pakistan because I strongly believe that Pakistan has immense unrealised potential.

What I would like to say to everybody is that there is no need to panic; there is a huge opportunity to address the issues.

The global demand versus Pakistan's own current account and fiscal deficit are in a bad state and you could end up in a stagflationary environment. There is also the changing future of work globally many jobs will disappear because of automation, digitization and artificial intelligence. We have to think about these things for the near and medium term".

Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels, said, "Raabta is the culmination of the value that Serena Hotels brings to the society.

The convening power of Serena allows us to bring together experts, policy makers and the interested citizenry to inform and engage individuals and organizations in advancing debate, create knowledge and develop a wider appreciation of complexity of socio-economic subjects".

2018 started as an all-time cyclical high for not only in the developed countries but in the developing ones as well and the good times economically are when economies must plan for the cyclical lows. =DNA





Marathon at Margalla Hills draws huge interest

ISLAMABAD (DNA) - With approximately 150 participants in the marathon and more than 150 runners in the 5.5 K run, the event provided the people of Islamabad with an opportunity to keep themselves fit and healthy.

The activity appealed to a wide cross-section of society which was evident from their huge participation in the event.

The Margalla Hills National Park carries great significance for people of Islamabad and Rawalpindi as it is the repository of indigenous flora and fauna, an escape from the traffic and chaos of city life and a source of clean air

and water.

Aziz Boolani, CEO of Serena Hotels, said, "Preserving the environment is a cause that is very important to Serena Hotels."

"Responsible natural resource management has always been one of our top priorities and we have inculcated ecologically sustainable policies within the Hotel but raising awareness and encouraging our friends and communities to do the same is also essential". Serena Hotels sponsored the Marathon as part of its adventure diplomacy initiative. Earlier this year Serena Hotels hosted the first Pakistan Karakorum Marathon, organised by the

Pakistan Air Force that drew international record holders and prize winners to Naltar, a stunning valley in Gilgit District situated at over 8,000 feet above sea level.

The 21.55 kilometre route for the marathon began at Trail 5 to Faisal Mosque, Chak Chabbi, Talhar Ridge and back to Trail-5 while the route for 5.5K started at the Trail 5 Parking to Trail 3-B, to the exercise point above the umbrella and back to Trail 5. Participants were given certificates and medals and the top three runners in both categories received cash awards. Mayor of Islamabad Sheikh Anser Aziz was the chief guest. =DNA





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National Day of UAE

ISLAMABAD (DNA) -Indian response to Pakistan's goodwill gesture to open Kartarpur Corridor was unfortunate, however, Pakistan is still pinning hopes to strengthen SAARC cooperation in future. This was stated by Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, and Economic Affairs Asad Umer while speaking at the inaugural plenary of 11th South Asia Economic Summit (SAES) held under the auspices of Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in Islamabad on Tuesday.

We really need to think out of the box solutions for regional cooperation amid tensions and confrontations between the two states, the minister said, adding that Intra-regional trade, especially trade between India and Pakistan, is one of the major growth drivers. Stressing the need to create political space for regional cooperation, he said it is our inability that we failed to get people of the region out of poverty. It is a real opportunity for those political leaders, who believe in a peaceful and prosperous South Asia.

Highlighting the government's role in promoting cross regional energy transfer and inter-regional trade, Asad Umer said channelization of non-political forums to build political space for policy making is required for an effective cooperation among South Asian states.

Commenting on the recent dollar spike against rupees, the minister said that the neutrality of State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) is intact and we believe in autonomy of the institution whereas there is no change in the government policy. He said that the recent decision on exchange rate was taken by the central bank, however, there is a need to improve the communication mechanism, that's why the SBP governor has also been taken on board to devise a communication mechanism in this regard. If needed, we will further institutionalize the structure and role of SBP, he said, adding that the financing gap is complete and we don't have any current account crisis, though a lot needs to be done.

Dr Shamshad Akhtar, the former caretaker finance minister, said that this new age of globalization and digitization, amid nationalism call for enhanced regional cooperation and connectivity. She said that re-imagining regional connectivity is often costly and time-consuming and that require patience and leadership. Connectivity should not be constrained to road development but to have ICT, digitization, energy cooperation and construction of ports, etc. She said Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can guide us to improve trans-boundary corridor, where institutions like SDPI has distinct role to play. "Regional connectivity is of course gaining momentum today, where Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) led by China can steer the effort for regional cooperation." Dr Shamshad Akhtar said that BRI has the potential to generate momentum to enhance regional partnership, which is currently in the state of deadlock especially between India and Pakistan. "Economy needs to progress on a set of new elements of requisite reforms, which include streamlining tax system, improvement in banking system, easing the procedures to do business, improving competitiveness and promoting trade facilitation





through trade regulation." Pakistan and China can play active role in regional cooperation and improve connectivity, she added, adding that there is need to think and work on that how development can be part of peace and contribute to peace efforts in the region.

Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, the SDPI Executive Director, said that when SAARC was unable to move forward, the SAES platform kept the discussion on economy and trade cooperation alive. He said that South Asian countries should keep their political differences aside for the sake for shared objectives, otherwise the region would remain least connected. Nevertheless, Dr Suleri said, we hope for improved regional cooperation, and opening of Kartarpur Corridor is a welcoming step for peaceful co-existence. He said that in this age of digitization and internet, despite differences, people of both Pakistan and India are still connected through technology. He said technology has brought the two states more closer and we need to strive for re-imagining connectivity, where everyone would have freedom to live and move across borders.

Dr Nagesh Kumar, the Head of UNESCAP South and South-West Asia Office, New Delhi, India, said that South Asia is today the fastest growing region in the world, however, we need to capture on the development gaps, such as poverty, gender inequality, poor state of health and education, etc. He said that we are not able to use the talent and potential of fast economic growth and development. He said that fresh approach to development is needed where SDGs have the potential to consolidate the unfinished business of MDGs and provide the sustainable future to the people of South Asia.

He said that the South Asian governments need to focus on jobs creation through sustainable industrialization, providing essential basic services, and universal access to health and education, proving universal social protection, ensuring food security, promoting gender equality through women entrepreneurship, and enhancing cooperation on environmental issues.

Dr Ratnakar Adhikari, the Executive Director of Enhanced Integrated Framework Secretariat, World Trade Organization (WTO), Switzerland, said that it is important for South Asian countries to invest in research and development to capitalize the potential of 4th industrial revolution. There is a need to enable the students and young generation to use the new digital technology to keep their pace with global development. He said that one of the major challenges of the region is lack of skilled labour to adapt to the technology, which require capacity building. Also, there is a need to build an enabling environment and improve regulatory system to build trust among stakeholders, he added.

Earlier, Mr Shafqat Kakakhel, the former ambassador and Chairperson of SDPI's Board of Governors, said that the region underwent conflicts during the past two decades, however, most of the South Asian states have achieved high growth rate amid poverty and conflict. Stressing the need to enhance inter and intra-regional cooperation for sustainable development, he said that SAARC platform should not be the victim of political differences and all countries of the region should cooperate to resolve mutual and shared challenges such as poverty, climate change, trade, etc

Nepalese envoy for initiating direct flights to bring business communities closer

KARACHI (DNA) – Ambassador of Nepal Ms. Sewa Lamsal Adhikari, while terming the ties between Pakistan and Nepal as "excellent", stressed the need to initiate direct flights between the two countries which would surely bring the people and business communities closer to each other and also help in promoting plenty of trade and tourism opportunities available in both countries.

In order to improve trade and investment ties between the two countries, she stressed that there was a need to identify the potential sectors in both countries whereas the business and industrial community of Karachi could look into the possibility of exporting surgical, pharmaceutical, textiles, leather products, Gems & jewelry, lawn fabrics, fruits, vegetables and agricultural products particularly dates which are not being produced in Nepal.

Honorary Consul General of Nepal Mushtaq Chappra, President KCCI Junaid Esmail Makda, Vice President Asif Sheikh Javaid, Chairman of Fairs, Exhibitions & Trade Delegations Subcommittee Naveed Farooki and KCCI Managing Committee Members also attended the meeting.

Sewa Adhikari advised the business community of Karachi to visit Nepal with a view to further explore opportunities of enhancing trade ties with their counterparts in Nepal as there was a huge potential to improve the existing trade ties between the two countries.

She categorically stated that Nepal wants to improve trade ties with Pakistan and the Nepalese Embassy would fully facilitate all the future endeavors of business community of Karachi which were focused on improve Pakistan-Nepal trade and investment.

"Nepal has been producing good quality big cardamoms which are being exported to numerous countries.

Pakistan has also been importing cardamoms



from other countries to overcome local demand therefore, I suggest that Pakistani traders should look in the possibilities of importing cardamoms from Nepal", she added.

She also appreciated that Pakistan's support to the people of Nepal during difficult times, particularly the overwhelming support extended by the business community of Pakistan in response to the earthquake that struck Nepal in 2015.

President KCCI Junaid Esmail Makda, in his remarks, stated that enhanced trade between Pakistan and Nepal can prove to be extremely advantageous considering the low transport costs.

Nepalese businessmen are comfortable in doing business with their Pakistani counterparts whereas Pakistan and Nepal have common national and international perspectives with wide scope and potential for boosting trade and commerce.

He informed that the volume of trade between Pakistan and Nepal has not reached to significant levels due to limited trade operations.

However, in 2017, Pakistan's export to Nepal increased gigantically by 225 percent to \$11.72 million against exports of mere \$3.60 million

in 2016, as Pakistan exported \$9 million worth of sugar.

Pakistan's imports from Nepal declined 9.6 percent during 2017 to \$0.93 million as against the imports of \$1.03 million in 2016.

"The trade volume is very low which requires collective efforts from both sides. In this regard, the Karachi Chamber is willing to cooperate and will be more than happy to send a business delegation to Nepal with a view to explore new avenues for enhancing trade", he added.

Identifying some of the potential sectors, he mentioned that tea consumption was one of the highest in Pakistan whereas Nepal was the finest tea producers that can create trade opportunity between the two countries.

"Similarly, Nepal is also one of the best quality producer of coffee. Hence, the Pakistani coffee entrepreneurs must avail advantage of geographic proximity in having these products at competitive price", he added.

Direct air link between Nepal and Pakistan, increased exchange of business delegations and establishment of display centers in each other's countries will boost the trade ties and enable both the countries to enjoy increased profits, he opined.=DNA

SAUDI EMBASSY DISTRIBUTES MEAT AMONG AFGHAN REFUGEES

ISLAMABAD (DNA) –Embassy of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia along with the Saudi Islamic Bank for Development distributed Adhahi mea among Afghan refugees at Haripur area.

The initiative is part of Saudi government's plans to extend maximum

possible help to refugees.

Saudi Arabia, apart from humanitarian work, is also busy in help Pakistan in various other fields. Recently a

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residential complex was inaugurated in Ayub Medical Center, which would provide accommodation facilities to hundreds of staff members.=DNA



STIRRING INDONESIAN CULINARY EXPERIENCE INTRODUCED IN PAKISTAN

ISLAMABAD (DNA) - Indonesian Embassy in collaboration with COTHM Islamabad organized a lively culinary workshop that brought an exclusive stirring Indonesian culinary experience to learn and enjoy scrumptious, signature and authentic Indonesian food recipes.

Welcoming the participants, Indonesian Ambassador Iwan S. Amri said that the workshop was essentially built around at familiarizing the participants with the Indonesian culture and cuisine.

He said that the food tells you a lot about the history, traditions, climate, culture and the evolution of the communities, nations and the regions.

He informed the participants that Indonesian cuisine was diverse, encompassing influences from more than 6,000 inhabited islands of the world's largest Indonesian archipelago of sprawling 18,000 islands.

There was such a rich variety in the

Indonesian cuisine that one should sample specialties in each area, he added.

Among the most common in Indonesia nationwide "Sate" (Skewered Grilled Meat with peanut sauce), and "Nasi Goreng" which is famous Indonesian fried rice recipes were taught at the workshop.

The two signature food recipes are from those 30 Indonesian indigenous recipes that have topped in the recent international polls. Indonesian cuisine is diverse, encompassing influences from more than 6,000 inhabited islands of the world's largest Indonesian archipelago of sprawling 18,000 islands.

Steamed rice is the common staple, traditionally accompanied by vegetables, soup and meat to provide flavor and nutrition. Spices and hot chili peppers are the essence of most cooking, and in some areas they are used generously.

Each province or area has its own cuisine, which vary in the method of cooking and

ingredients.

To the thrill of the participants, traditional Indonesian dances of "Legong" and the "4 ETNIS" were also performed by the Indonesian students.

The workshop was attended by about 100 participants who curiously and attentively learnt the centuries old exclusive Indonesian food recipes and its presentation direct from the renowned Indonesian Chef present there.

Appreciating the Embassy, Executive Director COTHM Islamabad said that the workshop has been a wonderful experience for the participants who thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from the workshop to their culinary skills inspirations. The participants described the workshop as unique opportunity to have some glimpses into Indonesian rich and diverse Indonesian culture and cuisine for which they were grateful to the Embassy. =DNA





CEO Freeline Movers Alamgir Shah holds 5th Invitational Golf Tournament



Azerbaijan envoy, Dr. Fehmida Mirza discuss matters of mutual interest

ISLAMABAD (DNA) - The Ambassador of Azerbaijan, Ali Alizada called on the Federal Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination Dr. Fehmida Mirza in her office this afternoon.

The Minister warmly welcomed the guest and said that Pakistan attached great importance to its relations with Azerbaijan and the incumbent government is committed to explore more areas of cooperation with Azerbaijan.

The envoy said that Pakistan is a strategic brotherly country of Azerbaijan and the government and the people of Azerbaijan are always keen to strengthen relations with Pakistan.

"We share very cordial and warm brotherly relations with Pakistan. We support each other on regional and international issues.

We appreciate Pakistan's support on Nabor issue and at the same time we support Pakistan on Kashmir Issue" said the envoy.

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The Minister appreciated Azerbaijan's stance on Kashmir and said that although the Government is committed to have friendly relations with all the neighboring countries yet such long standing issues should be resolved to have sustainable development in the region.

The Minister reiterated the importance of CPEC and said that it is not confined to

just two countries but has open up to Central Asian.

It is not just an infrastructural project but can provide and opportunity for peace and stability in the region.

Both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation between the two countries in multiple areas including energy, sports and social sector development. =DNA

Ihsan XI defeat Nishtar club to win Quaid-e-Azam hockey cup

ISLAMABAD, DEC 29 (DNA) - Ihsan XI defeated Nishtar Hockey Club during a friendly match played in connection with Quaid Day, at Naseer Bunda Hockey Stadium, on Saturday

Mubashar Bhatti Member of Norwegian National Cricket Team and senior hockey player Tariq Bhatti were the chief guests.

Ihsan XI from the outset over-powered the opposite team and scored an early goal that virtually brought Nishtar hockey club under pressure.

However, in the 20th minute of the game Hassan Bhatti scored an equalizer through a splendid penalty corner push. Awais Bhatti scored second goal from Nishtar in the dying moments of the first half thus putting his team in a vantage position.

However the Ihsan Xi then made some extraordinary moves and scored three more goals to clinch the match by 4-2.

The coach of Ihsan XI, Ihsanullah Khan who is a former member of Pakistan hockey team, while talking to DNA lauded excellent hockey skills exhibited

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by both the teams and wished them best of luck.

He hoped that his team would perform well in the upcoming tournament to be

played in Lahore. International Umpire Sohail Janjua and National umpire Mohammad Azeem supervised the match. =DNA





Spanish guitarist says real music hits soul, emotions

ISLAMABAD, (DNA) – The Spanish guitarist Raul Viela, 41, travelled all the way from Spain to perform in a music concert arranged by the Spanish embassy in Pakistan. The concert marked the 40 years of the Spanish Constitution. The newly-arrived Ambassador of Spain Manuel Duran in his opening remarks gave an introduction of the artist adding it was his first public event after assuming charge of the Ambassador. Guitar even in Pakistani music happens to be an integral part of orchestras and many Pakistanis have made their mark in the particular field of music. However, what Raul Viela played during the concert were pieces from the past taking the audience back into good old times.

Through his performance Raul tried to recap various stages from 1889 to 1938 thus providing the audience with the historical background during these years.

"If the audience feels the same emotion as the composer, it means the musician has his job done", said Raul Viela.

Raul has played in more than 20 countries travelling from Europe to Africa, North Africa and the Middle East as Soloist. He has performed for heads of states outside Spain, and at home he teaches music to hundreds of locals. He also lectures at the University of Huesca.

Raul told in a brief chat with media that he wanted to be a guitarist from the outset and he achieved this goal. His wife also plays guitar and his small son has already

started to learn all about this musical instrument.

"An artist should have a keen interest in all forms of music whether be it theatre, cinema, music or paintings. That is the definition of a true artist".

Raul said Spain is a country which has many forms of music to showcase and guitar being one of them. Even in Flamenco performance guitar is an important part.

A large number of audiences attend the musical performance and enjoyed it till the end. Another salient feature of the event was traditional Spanish cuisines served after the concert, that virtually added color to the event.=DNA



New Afghan Ambassador presents his credentials

ISLAMABAD – Afghanistan's new Ambassador to Pakistan Shukrullah Atif Mashal called on President Dr Arif Alvi at Aiwan e Sadr in Islamabad on Wednesday and presented his credentials to the President.

The ambassador remained with the President for quite some time and discussed matters of mutual interest.

The President hoped relations between the two countries will further be strengthened during the tenure of the new ambassador. =DNA



Quaid-e-Azam Day at RCCI. Tajik ambassador attends function as chief guest



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PAKISTAN, JORDAN AGREE TO STRENGTHEN BILATERAL COOPERATION

ISLAMABAD, (DNA) - Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhry Fawad Hussain has called for translating the existing relations between Pakistan and Jordan into enhanced cooperation in economy, trade and investment. Talking to Jordanian Ambassador Ibrahim Almadani in Islamabad, he said we desire to further promote, diversify and strengthen all areas of bilateral cooperation for benefit of both the countries. The minister said terrorism and extremism are common enemies and we should make concerted efforts for rooting out this menace. Acknowledging the sacrifices of Pakistan in the war against terrorism, the Jordanian

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ambassador emphasized the need to further enhance cooperation in multiple areas between the two countries.=DNA

Political consultations between Egypt and Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Ahmed Fadel Jacob, Ambassador of Egypt to Pakistan, has said that the eighth round of political consultations between Egypt and Pakistan was held on 24 December 2018 in Islamabad at the headquarters of the ministry of foreign affairs of Pakistan.

The Ambassador added that the discussions included the discussion of all aspects of bilateral relations between the two countries, with the parties expressing satisfaction with the development of bilateral relations during the current year, which witnessed the historic visit of the Mufti Seventy years after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in a major forum in Cairo in September 2018.

The two sides emphasized the importance of supporting and diversifying their cooperation in the political.

The parties also discussed a number of regional and

international issues of common interest, primarily the Palestinian question, and the situations in Syria, Libya, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Both sides expressed their appreciation for their continued coordination in international and regional forums.



Norwegian Ambassador calls on President AJK

ISLAMABAD (DNA) - Kjell-Gunnar Eriksen, Norwegian Ambassador to Pakistan, called on Sardar Masood Khan, President Azad Jammu and Kashmir. During the meeting, various matters of mutual interest were discussed. President Azad Kashmir said that the Pakistani-Kashmiri diaspora community was active in Norway. He added that because of Norway's progressive educational system, second and third generation Norwegians of Pakistani-Kashmir descent have successfully been integrated into the social mainstream and are doing well both economically and politically. He said that our diaspora community has given us a sense of pride as they have proved themselves as an influential part of the Norwegian social fabric.

President Masood Khan said that Norway has a rich experience in multilateral diplomacy and we as a nation would appreciate its continued contributions towards



maintaining peace and security in the world and the region. He also hoped that Norway would also continue its humanitarian support to AJK particularly to the AJK Red Crescent which is effectively working for the welfare of the people.

The Norwegian Ambassador said that they would continue to work towards strengthening ties between Pakistan and Norway and that Norwegian institutions would continue to extend humanitarian

support to Azad Kashmir.

He also said that the international community should collectively towards the goals of peace and stability in the region and the world.

The President invited the Ambassador to AJK and also said that AJK would welcome Norwegian investors to invest in the tourism and other relevant sectors to help further boost economic activity in Azad Kashmir. =DNA

Over 135 Pak students to leave for US for higher studies

ISLAMABAD (DNA) -: United States Chargé d'Affaires Paul Jones Tuesday congratulated more than 135 Pakistani undergraduate students who were selected to participate in U.S. Government-funded Global Undergraduate Exchange Program (Global UGRAD). Since 2010, approximately 1,700 Pakistani students have participated in the Global UGRAD program, where they spend a semester studying at U.S. colleges

and universities.

"America has a long tradition of embracing international students on its university and college campuses," Ambassador Jones noted. "In the United States, you will become great cultural ambassadors and representatives of Pakistan. I am proud we can support your educational pursuits through the Global UGRAD program."

Global UGRAD participants from Pakistan are selected from across the country and will study a variety of academic fields, which include: engineering, business administration, and the sciences. U.S. Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP) Executive Director Rita Akhtar encouraged students to take full advantage of the academic and extracurricular

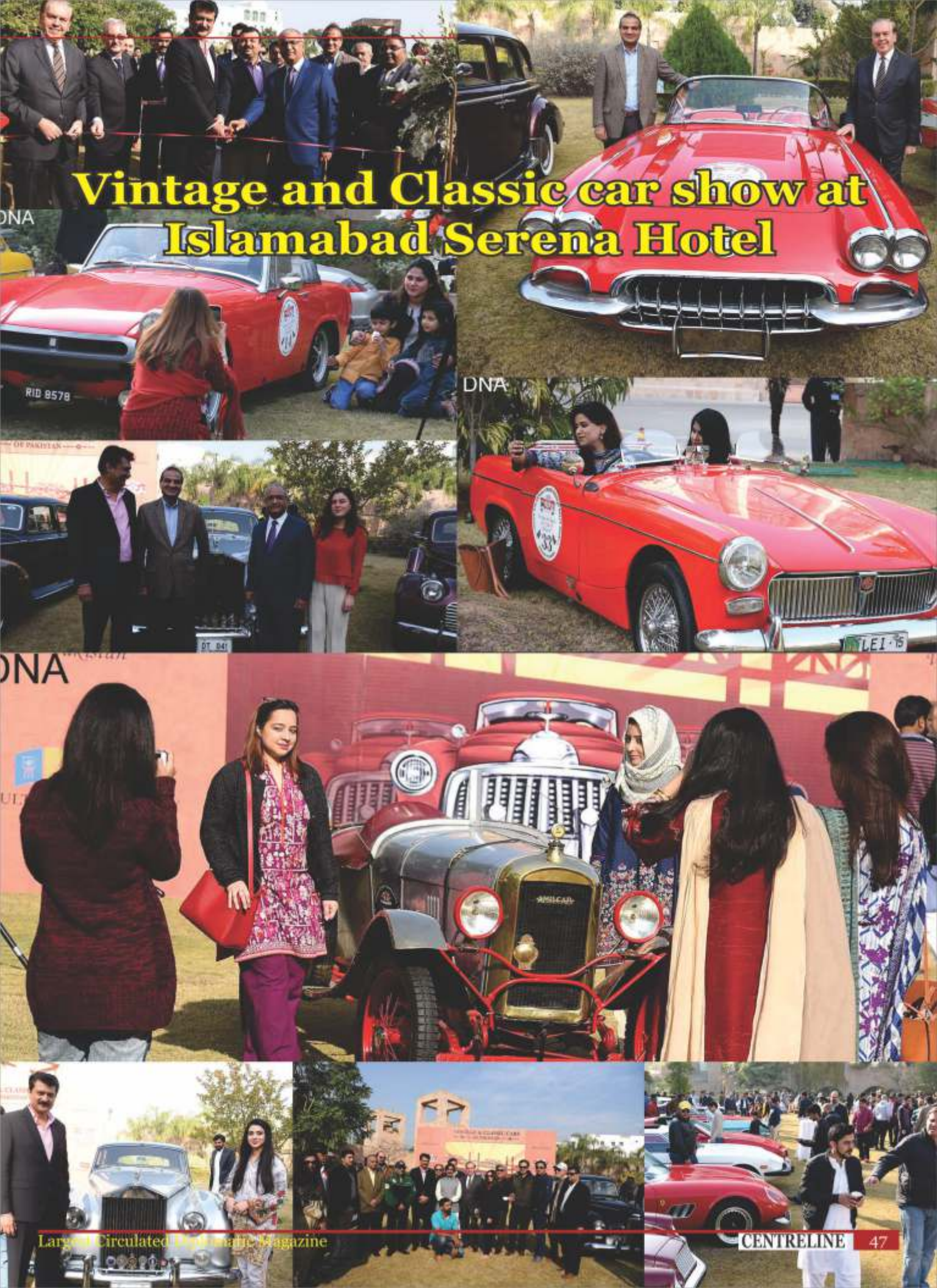
activities available in the United States.

"The Global UGRAD program gives talented students who are committed to helping their communities and country an opportunity to study in the United States," Ms. Akhtar said.

"The Program also involves exciting community service and cultural exchange activities.

When Global UGRAD participants return to Pakistan, they have opportunities to build on their volunteer experience by availing small grants through the Pakistan - U.S. Alumni Network (PUAN).

This is an exceptional group of students who will make a wonderful impression on U.S. students and faculty through this unique exchange opportunity."- DNA



Vintage and Classic car show at Islamabad Serena Hotel

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