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## Fake marriages: is it an offshoot of CPEC ?



**T**he heart rending stories of fake Chinese marriages have jolted all and sundry both in Pakistan and China. Tales of utmost misery and painful ordeals a number of Pakistani girls underwent at the hands of Chinese fake grooms and their Pakistani facilitators speaks volumes for the cruelty and apathy of the society as a whole especially towards the have-nots in Pakistan. Poverty was a curse and continues to be a curse in this land of the pure. Despite tall claims and rosy dreams presented to this hapless creature by the so-called leaders of this country, miseries of the poor

continue to multiply. It is because of our unjust and lopsided social and political system that the poor are even forced to sell themselves in order to make their both ends meet.

Interestingly tens of thousands of Pakistanis perform religious rituals such as Umra and Hajj every year and hundreds would flock to religious congregations to listen to their leaders speaking about morality and ethics but even then Pakistan ranks 117th among the most corrupt countries of the world. And unlike level of corruption in non-Muslim countries is much lower albeit those societies too are faced with myriads of challenges of different sorts.

The obvious reason for ever-increasing poverty ratio and social injustices appears to be our being away from Islamic teachings enshrined in the holy Book and then of course non-implementation of Constitution of Pakistan. Undoubtedly, our Constitution provides panacea for all our problems but since it has never been implemented in letter and spirit, our predicaments continued to aggravate. And specter of poverty ostensibly is a direct off-shoot of non-implementation of the Constitutional provisions particularly those relating to poverty alleviation and social development.

Therefore in this backdrop, act of Pakistani girls falling prey to Chinese lucrative marriage offers makes sense. However what transpired after these marriages of course is not only condemnable but punishable also. And good news is that the process of punishment has already taken its course.

At the same time the entire saga also exposes vulnerability of the Chinese system where such unscrupulous and anti-social elements can survive and thrive without any check. It also should not bode well for the credibility and efficacy of the security and immigration apparatus of both countries under whose noose this gruesome activity nourished and prospered unabated.

Then, as we know the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project is about to enter the second phase. The Chinese vice president visit to Islamabad on May 26 indeed contributed significantly towards further strengthening of bilateral cooperation, however both sides still need to grapple with difficulties, coming their way, by bridging the trust deficit, if any, for the ultimate good of CPEC and most importantly Sino-Pak relations.

Chinese side especially need to understand that Pakistan government and the security institutions had to take huge pains in explaining the people of Pakistan that CPEC would prove a game changer for them and improve their lots as they are likely to get jobs and other fringe benefits. Incidents like fake marriages therefore should not augur well as they might trigger doubts in the minds of Pakistani people and intelligentsia, who somehow are not ready to buy the idea that Pakistan is going to benefit more than China out of this project.

On fake marriages issue both sides need to intensify their cooperation and try to bring to justice all those involved in this nasty practice. Chinese visa system also needs a re-visit and role of middle men in this regard must be eliminated. Ostensibly, Pakistan and China are trusted friends and will have to be like this even in the prospect. Therefore they had to make sure that bilateral relations are not derailed or affected due to such incidents.

*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 *Khairain 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.



LUQMAN ALI AFZAL

# Hospitality industry's vital role in tourism promotion

**Founder and CEO of Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal gave an exclusive interview to CENTRELINE and DNA news agency. Luqman, in a very short span of time, has excelled in the hospitality business. In recognition of his services, the President of Pakistan Arif Alvi bestowed upon him the prestigious Pride of Performance award. He has given the best period of his life in promoting and cultivating a new breed in culinary and hospitality industry. As an entrepreneur, he believes that the way forward for upcoming professionals is to indulge in mechanizing their product and opting for unique selling products. Let me share with you that he is the first Pakistani businessman who has been awarded Pride of Performance by the President of Pakistan on "Entrepreneurship" this March. At 40, he has achieved what many strive for in the experimenting hospitality industry of Pakistan. Here are excerpts from his interview.**

**By Ansar Mahmood Bhatti**

**Q**1: Please tell us something about your background and struggle that led you to be a leading figure in the hospitality industry?

I won the bid for Monal restaurant at Pir-Sohawa in 2006 and today Alhamdulillah I am running more than six outlets in different cities and many more to come" ... there is no looking back for this entrepreneur. It was during my days at LUMS as an undergraduate student of BSC Honors that I developed interest in the food business and partnered to run a Convenient Store in LUMS as a student.

At the time of my graduation, I sold the Convenient Store on 4 times profit and with 10 times's larger customer base thus validating myself as a successful businessman. After winning the bid for Monal Restaurant in Islamabad, I faced an uphill task. It was a big gamble for me as I had to move from Lahore to Islamabad, hire staff, rent accommodations and deal with bureaucracy and on top of it market the eatery which was located on a deserted hill.

Let me also point out here that the hospitality industry is contributing significantly to the national economy therefore this industry needs



special attention of the government, for better facilitation from the government would ostensibly help this industry serve customers in a better way.

**Q2: Did you face any hurdles in the start**





**LUQMAN ALI AFZAL**

**and how did you overcome those hurdles?**

There was a barricade at the entry point of Pir Sohawa and only locals were allowed to travel after 6:00pm. Due to increasing crime rate, general public was very reluctant to go even to Daman-Koh leave alone Pir Sohawa. It was the full use of my educational knowledge and experience of running an eatery at LUMS which came handy and I started to make entry in the power circles of the capital. One needs to understand the requirement of the customers, their behavior, their needs and then manage accordingly. I learnt it while at LUMS when I was handling 1200 students per day, from different cities and backgrounds coming to my Convenient Store as customers. In no time, I managed to convince the then Inspector General of Police, Islamabad to monitor smooth flow of traffic to Pir Sohawa so that the denizens of the city can dine out at the new locale even late at night when half of Islamabad was asleep and only a five star hotel was available for food or coffee.

Leaving no stone unturned, I also made inroads into the diplomatic circles convincing them to enjoy sumptuous

Lahori food in a serene environment on a hill top with a breathtaking view of the city. My efforts paid-off and Monal restaurant became a must visit site for not only the diplomats living in Islamabad but also the foreign visiting dignitaries and delegations.

Monal started operating at a time when Islamabad was getting a major face lift, courtesy of the then Chairman CDA Kamran Lashari. Saidpur village was being remodeled, Arts and Craft Village plan was laid out, parks were being cleaned along with up gradation of many neglected sites... the task team of CDA was in full swing and Islamabad was all set to become a tourist hub.

**Q3: How important is the role of hospitality**

*There is no doubt that Pakistan has a lot of potential in tourism but in order to attract tourists, we need to set our house in order. For example, leave alone a foreign tourist, even if a local tourist wants to travel from Islamabad to Hunza, will he find decent clean toilets on this long journey?*



### industry in promotion of tourism?

There is no doubt that Pakistan has a lot of potential in tourism but in order to attract tourists, we need to set our house in order. For example, leave alone a foreign tourist, even if a local tourist wants to travel from Islamabad to Hunza, will he find decent clean toilets on this long journey? will there be a nice restaurant where a family can eat or a workshop where he can fix his car if the breaks fail? So the answer is, unless and until we have our basic infrastructure in place, the volume of tourists will not increase. Our infrastructure has to be looked into before we open our areas to foreign tourists.

If taken care of properly, the tourism and hospitality industry has the potential of contributing to national economy to great proportions. Look at our regional countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Nepal and even Uzbekistan, where tourism and hospitality industries contribute significantly to the national exchequer.

### Q4: What kinds of measures are needed to attract more and more tourists to the touristic places?

Roads, clean toilets, descent restaurants, rest areas and health facilities along the tourist belts need to be in place for tourists to facilitate them on a



smooth journey. This is the basic requirement. There cannot be two opinions on the fact that in order to boost tourism, the industry needs professionals to run it and the government has to play its role in the struggling services sector. There is a dearth of professionals in Service industry because we discourage our children to go to universities to learn how to become a professional chef or a restaurant manager. We call them waiters and cooks and do not give them the same respect that we give to an IT professional or a banker. Until and unless we accept this as a respectable field or profession, it is very difficult for professionals to work in the hospitality industry. We need to get away with this stigma.

### Q5: It is generally believed that hotel business is a profitable business. Is that true?

People usually in Pakistan open a restaurant on misconceptions that it is a money minting business and they go ahead without any study or survey. Those who advise are either paid employees who also believe that the owner is already in profit within one month of opening or chefs who believe that their product will sell like hot cakes. After 6 months of launch, the Italian restaurants add Chicken Biryani and chicken Karahi to their menu and a Chinese eatery starts selling pizza and burgers along with Chinese dishes.

This fiasco and lack of expertise results in either shut down of the restaurant or a handover to another unprofessional business man of the same sort.

I have put in almost 20 years of my life in the service industry. Starting with two employees at LUMS Convenient Store, today my staff volume has swelled Alhamdulillah to 2700. If one wants to sell Roll Paratha then he should open Franchises all over the country and the Roll Paratha should taste the same wherever you eat. It's about time that we promote our own desi products and be proud of it.





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# highlights religious tourism potential of Uzbekistan



ISLAMABAD, (DNA) – Ambassador of Uzbekistan Furqat Sidikov has highlighted the potential of his country in especially religious tourism adding Pakistani people were welcome to visit Uzbekistan and explore Uzbek potential. He made these remarks while speaking during a conference held at the Uzbek embassy. Noted religious figures of Pakistan as well as members of civil society attended the conference. Ambassadors of Central Asia, Azerbaijan, Russia and Belarus also attended the seminar. Ambassador Furqatbek Sidikov highlighted Uzbekistan's religious tourism potential through documentaries and presentations. He talked about various important places of Uzbekistan in various cities.

The ambassador particularly talked about potential of Bukhara in especially religious tourism. He also informed the audience about various religious sites located in the historical city of Samarkand.

It may be mentioned here that the Uzbek government early this year hosted a grand Ziyarah tourism conference in which delegates of over 120 countries participated. The delegated besides attending the opening session of the conference, had a chance to visit various historical places such as Imam al Bukhari shrine, newly-established Imam al Bukhari Research Center, Registan Complex; Arab Madrassa; Klan Minar; Oriental Bazar etc. Uzbekistan is a must visit place particularly for those who really are interested in religious tourism and knowing about various historical and religious developments that took place in the region in difference periods.

The Uzbek government is keen to promote this kind of tourism for which it has taken a number of measures. The recently-launched bullet train



from Tashkent to Samarkand and then Bukhara has greatly reduced distances. Now, it takes on four hours to reach Bukhara from Tashkent. After this facility, number of tourists to especially Samrkand and Bukhara has increased manifold.=DNA



# Sadiq Sanjrani, diplomatic corps attend Senator Shahzad Waseem iftar



ISLAMABAD (DNA) – Senior PTI leader Senator Shahzad Waseem hosted a well-attended iftar dinner for his colleagues and members of diplomatic corps. Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani attended the event as chief guest while envoys of USA, Britain, Japan, Turkey, France, China, Canada and many other countries graced the occasion with the presence. Governor Punjab Ch. Sarwar, Chairman Senate Foreign Affairs Committee Senator Mushahid Hussain, federal and state ministers and prime minister special assistance were also present on

the occasion. Senator Shahzad Waseem in his brief remarks thanked the guests for accepting his invitation. He said the purpose of the event was to provide friends and colleagues with a chance to interact with one another. Senator Shahzad also expressed his gratitude to members of diplomatic corps and his fellow Senators for sparing time for the event. Later guest mixed up with one another and exchanged pleasantries. Governor Punjab Ch. Sarwar interacted with the diplomatic community one by one and appreciated their role in promoting bilateral relations, =DNA







## Iftar Dinner



ISLAMABAD, MAY 20: Secretary General APNS, Sarmad Ali, Members of Federal Committee of APNS, Ex. PIO Mian Jehangir Iqbal, Former Information Secretary Ashfaq Gondal and others posing for a group photo on the occasion of Iftar dinner hosted by Chairman Federal Committee of APNS Mohsin Bilal.=DNA



## Saudi Arabia keen to establish cultural center in Islamabad: Ambassador Saeed Maliky



ISLAMABAD, (DNA) - Nawaf Saeed Ahmad Al-Malki, Ambassador of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in a meeting with Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information & Broadcasting, Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan said that Saudi Arabia is keen to establish cultural centre in Islamabad with a view to strengthen cultural collaboration between the two countries.

He said that Saudi Arabia was also looking forward to the skilled labour from Pakistan with regard to the vision 2030. Pak-Saudi relationship is not confined to the Governments, rather it represents a people-to-people bonhomie, he added.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information & Broadcasting welcomed Saudi keenness to set up cultural centre in capital city of Pakistan and assured her full assistance in that regard.

She said that Pakistan has enjoyed warm relations with Saudi Arabia since the birth of the country in 1947 as this relationship is rooted in the centuries old religious, cultural and commercial links between the two peoples.

The Government and the people of Pakistan hold the Royal family in highest esteem and have deep veneration for Custodian of Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, she added.

Dr. Firdous said the recent visit of Saudi Crown Prince to Pakistan is of immense importance as both countries inked agreements to further solidify economic cooperation and strengthen strategical partnership. The remarks of Crown Prince "I am Ambassador of Pakistan in Saudi Arabia" is reflective of strong fraternal bond that exists between the two brotherly countries. She said that Pakistan had always received generous economic and financial assistance from Saudi Arabia, at times of crises. Both sides also discussed executive program for culture and media cooperation between the two countries and decided to work out a calendar of cultural activities.

The Special Assistant also lauded the role of Saudi Ambassador, Nawaf Saeed Ahmad Al-Malki in further cementing ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. =DNA



# Pakistan's stand on Nagorno-Karabakh exemplary: Azerbaijan MP



By Ansar M Bhatti in Baku

**B**AKU, (DNA) – Zahid Oruj Member Azerbaijan Parliament and Head of Azerbaijan-Pakistan Friendship Group in Azerbaijan Parliament has lauded Pakistan's role on Nagorno-Karabakh issue adding Pakistan has supported Azerbaijan stand-point on this issue at all forums including the United Nations.

Azerbaijan has a sort of bench mark indicator of our friends and whoever has supported us on Nagorno-Karabakh issue is a great friend of Azerbaijan. The position that has been demonstrated by the Pakistani side in last 10 years is exemplary and worth emulating. Zahid Oruj expressed these views while talking to senior Pakistani media people who met him in Baku. The media delegation was led by President APNS Hameed Haroon. He further said that position taken by Pakistan in this particular issue is important and has its own political and diplomatic weight. It can encourage other Muslims countries to take a similar course on this issue.

While further appreciating Pakistan for its whole-hearted support he said unflinching support shown by Pakistani government reflects sentiments and approach of people of Pakistan as well who consider Azerbaijan people as their brothers.

He said Azerbaijan government and people had similar feelings and sentiments for government of Pakistan and people of

Pakistan.

On Kashmir, Azerbaijan fully supports Pakistan and shall continue to extend this support at all forums, he added. Zahid hoped that relations between the two countries in all fields shall grow gradually and steadily adding governments of both countries would surely find ways and means to enhance and strengthen bilateral cooperation.

He said Azerbaijan genuinely wanted to resolve issue of Nagorno-Karabakh issue but Armenia was not ready to talk peace.

"It was in fact due to intransigence of Armenia that the issue was still un-resolved." He said at one time Karabakh was a uniting factor for Armenia but now it is opposite and it happens to a disintegrating factor for Armenia. The leadership of Armenia has never told truth to Armenian people about Karabakh.

Armenia as a matter of fact has no resources or ability to run affairs of Karabakh therefore they are inflicting agony upon people of Karabakh by maintaining continued occupation of the territory.

When asked to comment on the connectivity prospects between Azerbaijan and Pakistan he said there has to be some economic rationale that why this kind of air link should exist.

He however did not rule out possibility of re-launching air operations between both countries subject to sufficient load and economic viability.=DNA



# Azerbaijan greatly values ties with Pakistan: Hikmat Hajiye

By Ansar M Bhatti in Baku



BAKU, (DNA) – Hikmat Hajiye Head of Foreign Policy Affairs Department, office of the President of Azerbaijan has said Azerbaijan accords immense importance to its relations with brotherly country Pakistan. He said Pakistan in fact was the third country after Turkey and Romania that recognized Azerbaijan therefore our relations are deep-rooted and have historical perspective. He expressed these remarks while meeting with a delegation of senior Pakistani journalists, who are in Baku to attend 5th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue starting from May 02.

He said due to drastic steps taken but the incumbent government the level of poverty has decreased to only four percent while ratio of unemployment has also reduced considerably.

He said owing to economic and social reforms of the government Azerbaijan now happens to be the high income countries of the world. He said much emphasis has also been laid on improvement and development of infrastructure in the country and country now stands out as one of the most development states not only in the region but in the world also.

Hikmat Hajiye further said Azerbaijan is keen to enhance and strengthen trade and economic relations with Pakistan. Azerbaijan is also taking keen interest in Gwadar port adding Gwadar can really be beneficial. Apart from political relations, Azerbaijan and Pakistan have potential to cooperate in defence field also.

To a question about direct air links he said there was a direct flight between the two countries however it had to be stopped because according the airline it was not economically viable.

While agreeing with the proposition that direct air links were a sine qua non for strengthening of trade and economic relations, he said both sides have to find ways and means in order to resolve connectivity issues.

While identifying various avenues of mutual cooperation he said Pakistan is good in textile and Azerbaijan would like to encourage Pakistani exporters to export textile related products. This can certainly cement bilateral relations between two countries. Likewise, Pakistani mangoes are also very popular in Azerbaijan. Similarly Pakistani oranges are also very popular and Azerbaijan imports citrus from other countries. It can be yet another area which can bring both countries closer in terms of trade and economic relations.

He also underlined the need for deeper cooperation in tourism sector also. Both countries are blessed with a plethora of touristic attractions therefore tourists from both countries can be encouraged to visit these places.

Giving a historical perspective of Nagorno-Karabakh issue he said Azerbaijan is thankful to Pakistan for its unflinching support on the issue adding Armenia's intransigence was a main hurdle in the way of settlement of the issue. He also said Azerbaijan supports Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir. =DNA



# Pakistan's Sirbaz makes history at World's 4th highest peak without Oxygen

## DNA REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels held a press conference on 28th May 2019 to celebrate Sirbaz Khan, who became the first Pakistani to successfully climb the summit of the fourth world's highest mountain –Mount Lhotse (8516 m)without using supplementary oxygen. He completed his summit on the 14th of May at 9:47 am. There were 12 climbers in total in the team, but this is the first time a Pakistani climber has been able to do this. Sirbaz along with his team was the first to summit Lhotse this year and by fixing ropes on the mountain they opened it for all other climbers. Serena Hotels sponsored the expedition under its Adventure Diplomacy Initiative that aims to encourage human engagement with nature in ways that test physical prowess, endurance and commitment, mountain activities being a core part of these activities. This initiative kicked off when Serena founded the Adventure Diplomacy Group (ADG), consisting of 7 diplomatic missions to support the Pakistani mountaineer siblings, Samina and Mirza Ali Baig. Samina Baig is the first Pakistani as well as the



first Muslim women to summit the highest peaks in all seven continents.

Aziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels said, "It is a great privilege for us to support Sirbaz Khan on his expedition. At Serena Hotels, we have been supporting talent to promote Adventure Tourism where needed and try to bring diverse experiences to our community through our various initiatives."

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## Eugenia Ivanissevich's works showcased in the Capital

ISLAMABAD, (DNA) A photographic exhibition of works of Eugenia Ivanissevich was arranged under the aegis of Embassy of Argentina.

Art lovers and members of the diplomatic corps attended the event and took keen interest in pieces of art displayed during the exhibition.

Eugenia Ivanissevich lives and works in London. She holds a Masters in Photography of the Royal College of Arts, and a BA in Fine Arts of Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design, London.

Her solo shows include the 2009 Format Festival, Young Emerging Artist Commission Award, QUAD, Derby; and "Lo histórico y lo imaginario de Casa Mojana" (History and Imagination of the Mojana House), 2009, Spanish Cultural Centre, Montevideo, Uruguay.

She took part of many group shows in London, including the 2012 LEICA Student Prize,

Dyson Building, Royal College of Art; the 2013 PINTA London Latin American Art Fair; the 2015 PHOTO LONDON; the 2017 exhibition "How Looking Gets In The Way Of Seeing," at the Twelve Around One Gallery; and the Exhibition this year at Peckham 24, London "Material/ Immaterial".

She also showed her works at the 2010 URRA Artists in Residence exhibition at the Galeria del Infinito, Buenos Aires, Argentina; the 2012 F estival de Photographie de Deauville, France; and the 2016 Altitude + 1000 Festival de Photographie de Montagne, Rossini re, Switzerland.

Eugenia Ivanissevich in 2013 won The Arts Foundation Award 2013 (UK), Still Life Photography Category.

In 2018 she was shortlisted for Prix Louis Roederer, Festival de Photographie de Deauville. Royal College of Art Travel Bursary. In 2011 LEICA Prize competition she remained runner up.





Her other awards include Royal College of Art David Vilimer Award. Royal College of Art, Travel Award. 2009 FORMAT 09 Exposure Commission Award to Young Emerging Artist, QUAD. She lectured at British universities and cultural centres in Buenos Aires (Argentina) and Montevideo (Uruguay). Currently she lectures at the University of Bournemouth and is a Masters Degree tutor at the Royal College of Arts.

Her publications include HEILAN The Best Chinese Contemporary Literature (2013), issue 125, which featured her series "On the Island"; the catalogue of her solo 2009 exhibition "Lo histórico y lo imaginario de Casa Mojana" (History and Imagination at the Mojana House); and the collective experimental book "Material/ Immaterial" (curated by Rodrigo Orrantia), presented at Offprint Paris 2018.=DNA



## Day of Memory and Honour commemorated at Uzbek embassy

ISLAMABAD, (DNA) - Embassy of Uzbekistan commemorated the "Day of Memory and Honor" in Uzbekistan with the participation of representatives of the Uzbek Diaspora and their families permanently residing in Pakistan. The Embassy handed over to all members of the Diaspora the "Ribbon of Honor", which symbolizes the flag of Uzbekistan.

The participants were given the opportunity to honor the memory of their ancestors, to show special respect and attention to the older generation, who made a worthy contribution to the maintenance of peace and development of the country. The Ambassador of Uzbekistan Furqat Sidikov congratulated the participants of the event with a upcoming Memorable Date "Day of Memory and Honor" (celebrated on 9th of May) and elaborated on the significance of this day in the modern development of the country, the education of future generation. The decisive participation of Uzbeks in the Second World War was particularly noted, and their generosity, nobility and humanism are being tested not only in relation to their loved ones, but

also to other people, who have suffered grief at that period. Representatives of the Diaspora highly commended the fact that during the



Second World War, the Uzbek people showed unfeigned mercy by accepting about one million evacuated children, women, old people, sharing with them the last piece of bread and shelter.=DNA



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Uzbek Dy PM Elyor Ganiev holds meetings  
with Pakistan PM, Army Chief

# Uzbekistan-Mazar-i-Sharif Kabul-Peshawar railway corridor to trigger prosperity

**DNA REPORT**



The Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, Mr. Elyor Ganiev, and his accompanying delegation held important meetings with Prime Minister Imran Khan, Chief of the Army Staff and Planning minister.

The Prime Minister highlighted the historic and cultural bonds between Pakistan and Uzbekistan and underscored the importance of closer trade, economic and energy links between the two countries.

The Prime Minister also recalled his

interaction with Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on the sidelines of the Belt and Road Forum (BRF) in Beijing in April 2019 focused on bilateral relations and connectivity.

The Uzbek Deputy Prime Minister conveyed warm greetings of the Uzbek President and gave a detailed briefing on the transport railway corridor-Uzbekistan-Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar.

Appreciating the briefing, the Prime Minister agreed that the Railway link will not only

benefit Pakistan, Afghanistan and CARs but also enhance connectivity of the region with China, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Europe. The Prime Minister also stressed the importance of reinforcing political, economic, energy and cultural collaboration between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, as part of Pakistan's vision for deeper engagement in Central Asia.

**MEETING WITH CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF**

Elyor Majidovich Ganiev, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan







called on General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) at GHQ,. COAS welcomed the dignitary to Pakistan. The two discussed matters related to mutual interest including regional security and connectivity. COAS said that Uzbekistan is a brotherly country and cooperation between both will not only help in improving peace and stability in the region, but also usher in economic prosperity as well.

The visiting dignitary appreciated the role of Pakistan Army in battling the scourge of terrorism in the country and for maintenance of peace and stability in the region.

#### MEETING WITH Federal Minister for Planning

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Reform Makhdum Khusro Bakhtyar has underlined that establishing transport and energy corridors will not only enhance regional connectivity but also boost trade and investment. He stated that Uzbek companies can develop production lines in special economic zones under CPEC framework for mutual benefit of both countries. The Minister said this during a delegation level meeting with Deputy Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, Mr. Elyor Majidovich Ganiyev, here in Islamabad on Monday. Ambassador of Uzbekistan Mr. Furqat Sidikov, Secretary Planning Zafar Hasan, members Planning Commission and senior official of the ministry

were also present in the meeting. The minister highlighted that by 2050 electricity demand in Pakistan would reach 50,000 MW adding that Pakistan is committed to CASA-1000 energy project being financed by World Bank.

Makhdum Khusro apprised that Pakistan is planning to upgrade its railway system from Peshawar to Karachi to further boost economic activities. The visiting dignitary informed that Uzbekistan has constructed a railway line from Tashkent to Mazar-e-Sharif which can be extended to Peshawar thereby enhancing regional connectivity and trade. The Minister stressed the need to strengthen regional connectivity through various road and railway infrastructure projects to the benefit of all member countries. The Minister noted that bilateral trade between the two countries has increased significantly in the last two years which can be enhanced to \$1 billion by exploiting potential in various areas.

Makhdum Khusro appreciated that visiting business delegation will have an opportunity to meet Pakistani business community to explore more possibilities for future cooperation that will set in motion the launching of joint ventures in different fields. The minister called for regular exchange of business delegation between the two countries to further cement bilateral economic partnership.





Mr and Mrs Aziz Boolani  
host grand Iftar dinner at  
Islamabad Serena Hotel





# Mr and Mrs Aziz Boolani host grand Iftar dinner at Islamabad Serena Hotel



**A**ziz Boolani, CEO Serena Hotels and his wife Wiqar Boolani hosted a grand Iftar Dinner this Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

Parliamentarians, Ambassadors, Government Officials, Members of the Armed Forces, Media Representatives, Heads of the International Agencies and Corporate Executives were present along with the friends and well wishers of Serena. The Sheesh Mahal banquet hall appeared to be a testament of Arabian night, with Ramadan decorations, glittered with moonlit light surrounded with white drapes and Bedouin tents in the foyer area of hotel.

There was a wide variety of cuisine for the guests

to choose from, with live food corner showcasing food from each restaurant of hotel. A diverse healthy corner was catered for guests who were conscious about their health.

The Pakistani sweets corner attracted a large number of guests.

The management of the hotel was busy tending to the guests and ensuring a smooth flow to the event while the hosts stayed at the entrance of the hall to welcome each guest personally.

The guests enjoyed the iftar dinner in a serene environment with the traditional live music while the evening reflected anecdotes of Serena's legacy of immaculate service and feasts that were not only gastronomical but also visual. =DNA









*Mr and Mrs Aziz Boolani host grand iftar dinner  
at Islamabad Serena Hotel*

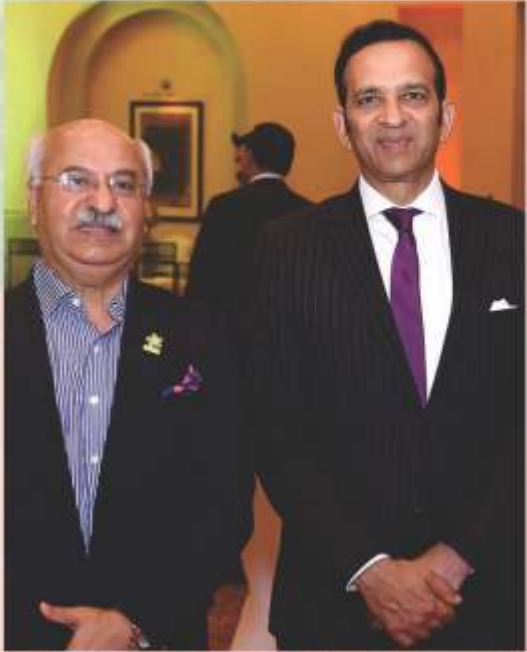








# High Commissioner of Bangladesh hosts Iftar dinner







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# Tajikistan attaches great importance to its relations with Pakistan: envoy

**R**AWALPINDI, (DNA) – Ambassador of Tajikistan Ismatullo Nasredin has said that Pakistan and Tajikistan have historical, cultural and religious background and the roots of their relation are very deep. Both countries are enjoying friendly and cordial relationship.

The envoy expressed these views with President RCCI Malik Shahid Saleem during his visit to the Rawalpindi Chamber Of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) on Monday.

He said Tajikistan attaches great importance to relations with Pakistan and there was a huge potential to transform very cordial political cooperation into economic and trade ties.

He appreciated RCCI's role in promoting trade activities through exhibitions and exchange of delegations and urged others Chambers to follow the footsteps of RCCI.

The Ambassador said that his country is ready to assist Pakistan and provide it with all the necessary support for the development of bilateral economic and trade relations in different areas including hydropower, mining, pharmaceuticals, tourism, light industry, agriculture and construction.

He said Pakistan is facing energy shortage and Tajikistan is set to supply inexpensive electricity to Pakistan in order to congregate its potential energy needs. Also electricity would be supplied to Pakistan under the Central Asia South Asia (Casa 1,000) energy project. He also



highlighted, the prospect of the schedule, that the Casa-1,000 power project is likely to be fully operational by 2020.

Pakistan trade and business community should come forward and take benefit of the emerging opportunities, he urged. Earlier President RCCI Malik Shahid Saleem, gave a detailed briefing on RCCI current and upcoming events. He expressed hope that CASA1000 MW energy project will help Pakistan to meet its energy requirement. RCCI President said that exchange of cultural business and trade information, visa facilitation, exchange of trade delegations and business to business meetings can be good source of boosting trade ties between the two countries. Textile, mining, construction and pharmaceutical sector offering promising joint venture opportunities, he added. He said tourism between the two countries can play a vital role here and urged for direct flights between Dushanbe and Islamabad. In the end, a memento was also presented to the Tajik envoy. =DNA

## Sri Lankan HC visits birthplace of ancient Buddhist Gandara

TAXILA, (DNA) – High Commissioner of Sri Lanka, Noordeen Mohamed Shaheid and Zulfiqar Bukhari PM's Special Envoy for Overseas Pakistanis visited the birthplace of ancient Buddhist Gandara in Taxila.

The visit was organized by an Interfaith harmony group to commemorate Vesak Festival.

Rev. Dr. Sumanasiri who is currently in Pakistan on my invitation and I were invited as guests of honour and the Minister for Tourism and overseas citizens of Pakistan Hon. Zulfiqar Bukhari PM's Special Envoy for Overseas Pakistanis attend the event as chief guest. The celebrations were followed by Iftar (breaking fast). A great experience of co-existence. =DNA





## Kalam Valley; a must visit place

Kalam is a valley located at distance of 99 kilometres (62 mi) from Mingora in the northern upper reaches of Swat valley along the bank of Swat River in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. Kalam is surrounded by lush green hills, thick forests and bestowed with mesmeric lakes, meadows and waterfalls which are worth seen features of the landscape. It is the birthplace of Swat river which forms with confluence of two major tributaries of Gabral river and Usho river.[4]

It is a spacious sub-valley of Swat, at an elevation of about 2,000 meters (6,600 feet) above sea level, and providing rooms for a small but fertile plateau above the river for farming. Here, the metaled road ends and shingle road leads to the Usho and Utror valleys. From Matiltan some snow-capped mountains are visible including Mount Falaksar 5,918 meters (19,416 feet), and another unnamed peak 6,096 meters (20,000 feet) high.[6]

There are grand hotels in Kalam for tourists to rest and enjoy the cool breeze of Swat river. With a mild and generally warm and temperate climate, Kalam features a humid subtropical climate (Cfa) under the Köppen climate classification. The average temperature in Kalam is 13.4 °C, while the annual precipitation averages 639 mm. Even in the driest months, there is a lot of precipitation. November is the driest month with 15 mm of precipitation, while April, the wettest month, has an average precipitation of 93 mm.

July is the hottest month of the year with an average temperature of 24.1 °C. The coldest month January has an average temperature of 1.5 °C.

Kalam has large number of alpine glacial lakes, among them Mahodand lake and Kundol lake are very popular due to ease of accessibility. But others like Izmis lake, which is located in close



proximity with Kundol lake is one of the spectacular one in the region. Most of these lakes are accessible through tedious trekking over lush green trails across the way.

Mahodand Lake is one of the largest & scenic lake in the Swat valley, located at a distance of about 40 km from Kalam, in the Usho Sub-valley of Kalam which is laid out in the foothills of Hindu Kush mountains. It is accessible with a four-wheel drive vehicle, and is a good

resort for fishing, boating and camping. It is surrounded by snow clad mountains, lush green meadows and thick forests which hypnotise one to its center.

Kundol Lake is another charming lake in Kalam valley which is located in the north of Utror region at a distance of 19 km away from kalam. It also lies in the foothills of Hindu Kush mountains and accessible via the mesmeric valley of Ladu through a trek of 4-6 hours.

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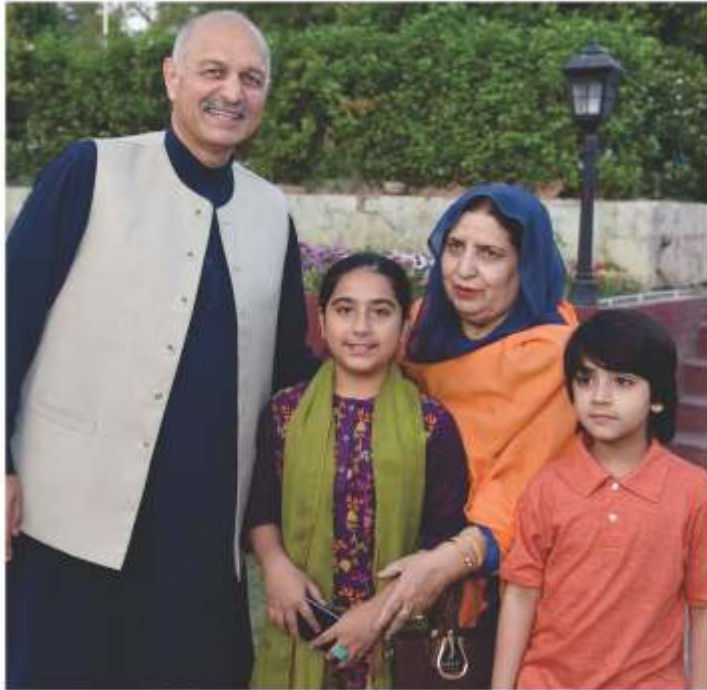
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# Mushahid Hussain hosts iftar for colleagues; diplomatic corps



**I**SLAMABAD, (DNA) – Chairman Senate Foreign Affairs Committee Senator Mushahid Hussain hosted iftar dinner for colleagues. The reception, which turned out to be a big political gathering, as representatives of all political parties were present on the occasion, provided an opportunity to guests to have free and frank exchange of views with one another. The hallmark of the event was huge participation of the diplomatic corps in the iftar reception. Ambassadors and high commissioners of almost all leading countries attended the event. Chairman Senate Sadiq Sanjrani was the chief guest.

Former Prime Minister of Pakistan Raja Pervez Ashraf, Chairmen Senate Mian Raza Rabbani and Syed Nayyar Hussain Bokhari, senators and members of National and Provincial assemblies also attended the event. Senator Mushahid Hussain in his brief remarks welcomed all guests adding for Pakistani people the month of Ramazan has huge significance for Pakistan came into being in this holy month under the dynamic leadership of Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. He said the Senate of Pakistan in fact is a unique example of unity in diversity as all the federating units are represented in this august House. –DNA













# Ambassador of Saudi Arabia Nawaf Saeed Al-Maliky hosts iftar for friends



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# D N I A

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## Spouses of heads of diplomatic missions donate books to national library



ISLAMABAD (DNA) -Within the Framework of outreach activities of the Heads of Diplomatic Missions' Spouses Group, a number of spouses of Ambassadors and High Commissioners donated 140 books from their private collections and from the collections of their Embassies to the National Library of Pakistan.

The Group and its President, Mrs Ghada Ahmed, Spouse of the Ambassador of Egypt attempts, through this donation, to reach out to the Pakistani community by introducing their different cultures through their books. The 140 books come from 10 countries and cover a wide range of subjects including, literature, religion, architecture, politics, travel and art. The donation comes in 3 languages; Urdu, English, and Arabic to cater for the needs of the readership of the National Library of Pakistan.

This gift comes from: Mrs Aynura Alizada, Spouse of Ambassador of Azerbaijan (23 vols.) Mrs Mahajabeen Ahsan, Spouse of the High Commissioner of Bangladesh (9 vols.) Mrs Nezira Foric, Spouse of the Ambassador of

Bosnia and Herzegovina (1 vol.) Mrs Soraya Hamid, Spouse of the High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam (2 vols.) Mrs Ghada Ahmed, Spouse of the Ambassador of Egypt (44 vols.)

Mrs Rita Amri, Spouse of the Ambassador of Indonesia (27 Vols) Mrs Naoko Matsuda, Spouse of the Ambassador of Japan (27 vols.) Mrs Noor Azida Ibrahim, Spouse of the High Commissioner of Malaysia (2 vols.) Mrs Zohra Soobadar, Spouse of the High Commissioner of Mauritius (1 vol.) and Mrs Gulchekhira Sidikova, Spouse of the Ambassador of Uzbekistan (4 vols.)

The National Library of Pakistan was particularly chosen due to its wide readership as it receives 600 visitors a day. It is also the largest in Pakistan, and loans its books to other libraries which means more outreach for us".

The Heads of Diplomatic Missions Spouses Group hoped that in the future, more similar initiatives will take place and more diplomatic missions would make larger donations to the National Library and to many other libraries in Pakistan". =DNA





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# Direct flight between Azerbaijan, Pakistan to operate soon

ISLAMABAD, (DNA) - Federal Minister for Aviation said that a direct flight between Azerbaijan and Pakistan is scheduled to operate soon.

Ghulam Sarwar Khan said this during a meeting with Ali Alizada, Azerbaijan's Ambassador to Pakistan who called on him here, said a press release. Both sides agreed on developing strong relations in the field of aviation.

Both sides agreed on developing strong relations in the field of aviation. Federal Minister also added that Pakistan and Azerbaijan are brotherly countries. Our relations are warm and cordial based on trust and respect. Similarly, Ali Alizada said that Azerbaijan is keen on enhancing ties with Pakistan.

Interestingly Draft Air Services Agreement (ASA) between Pakistan and Azerbaijan was agreed in 1993. Even on 30th September 2009, an MoU was agreed upon between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. As per that MoU, PIA (Pakistan) could have 7 weekly frequencies with any type of aircrafts with a restriction of 1500 seats per week in each direction.

Same goes for Azal, Silk Way West (Azerbaijan). At

present there is no air link between both countries. Due to paucity of traffic no airline from either state is operating. In order to establish an airlink, Turkish Airlines was allowed to operate flights from Istanbul to Lahore/Islamabad through Baku. However, Turkish Airlines is facing low yield. Another noticeable aspect of this emerging cooperation in aviation sector is the rising number of Pakistani tourists visiting Azerbaijan. Recent years have witnessed a growing number of Pakistanis coming to Azerbaijan for business and leisure purposes. In fact, Baku has now become the "new Dubai" for Pakistanis.

This trendy city is quite affordable in terms of both living and travel-related costs, and offers a sense of safety which Pakistanis find lacking in many countries – particularly Western countries.

In 2018, the number of Pakistani tourists visiting Azerbaijan is likely to have crossed 25,000. In 2017 the exact number of Pakistani tourists entering Azerbaijan was 17,556; only 3,800 did so in 2016. In January 2017 the Azerbaijani government created tourist visas to be accessible online – which instantly became popular in Pakistan. =DNA

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Government of Pakistan

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## TENDER NOTICE

Tender Enquiry No.03 of 2019

1. The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) invites sealed bids/proposals from well-reputed stationery suppliers/firms registered with income tax and sales tax departments, stationed at Islamabad/Rawalpindi, for supply of stationery and other miscellaneous items, on item rate basis, for the financial year 2019-20, under Tender Enquiry No. 03 of 2019.
2. The Tender Documents containing detailed information, terms and conditions etc. are available on the websites of PPRA ([www.ppra.org.pk](http://www.ppra.org.pk)) and OGRA ([www.ogra.org.pk](http://www.ogra.org.pk)). These documents can also be obtained from office of the undersigned, on any working day i.e. Monday to Friday from 10:00 a.m to 3:00 p.m.
3. The bidders will be required to submit a bid security in shape of **Call Deposit** payable at Islamabad, amounting to Rs. 100,000/- (Rupees one hundred thousand only) in favour of OGRA.
4. Sealed bids/proposals will be received latest by **June 12, 2019** by **11:00 a.m.** and will be opened on the same date at **11:30 a.m.** at OGRA Office.
5. OGRA reserves the right to accept any or cancel/reject all proposals, as per PPRA Rules, 2004.

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PHOTOGRAPH

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10



# Azerbaijan embassy staff plants tree in memory of Heydar Aliyev



ISLAMABAD, (DNA)- : Ambassador of Azerbaijan Ali Alizada along with embassy staff planted Bougainvillea trees, on the eve of his 96th birth anniversary of Heydar Aliyev nationwide leader of Azerbaijan . Heydar Aliyev devoted his all life to his motherland-Azerbaijan, to prosperity and well-being of his nation. He will remain forever in the memory and hearts of Azerbaijani nation said ambassador Alizada in his message on the

occasion. He also laid flowers on the bust, and planted the Bougainvillea trees and flowers in the Embassy of Azerbaijan to honor late National Leader on his 96th birth anniversary. The ambassador hoped that Bougainvillea trees, which are very beautiful looking, will remain as memory from staff of the embassy and people of Azerbaijan in Islamabad to honour of Heydar Aliyev.=DNA





# Ambassador of Jordan Ibrahim Almadani and spouse host iftar at Marriott Hotel







## Another fake Chinese marriage scam unearthed in Lalamusa

LALAMUSA, (DNA) – Another fake Chinese marriage scam has unearthed as three Chinese nationals have reached Lalamusa city.

According to Lalamusa police sources, three Chinese nationals arrived in Lalamusa. One of the Chinese national had already paid RS 10000 in advance to family of village Werowall.

Werowall is a small suburban village of Lalamusa and people are mostly less educated and poor. That is why the poor family seemed to have fallen prey to the temptation.

Reportedly the Chinese national offered the family to take the bride to China and pay a reasonable amount

DNA per month to the family. According to the DSP Circle Lalamusa Riaz ul Haq Gujjar and Station House Officer (SHO) of Lalamusa Sadr Police Station

Tariq Shaif said that mother of the girl Ambreen wife of Muhammad Shehzad upon getting suspicious, approached the police and lodged complaint.

Police further told that one girl named Sadaf who is already married to a Chinese national approached the said family and encouraged them to marry their daughter with the Chinese national as it can help them overcome their financial issues.

However, the family instead of accepting this offer approached the police. The police officials told that the fake groom and his two accomplices may be handed over to FIA for further investigation, =DNA





## Japan donates ambulances; handed over to Pakistan Red Crescent Society

### DNA REPORT

The Government of Japan has donated fully equipped four ambulances to the Pakistan Red Crescent Society to enhance the operational and outreach capacity of the organization in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi in the wake of unexpected calamities and emergencies.

H.E. Mr. Kuninori Matsuda, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, on Tuesday 28th May 2019 handed over these ambulances to the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), one of the largest humanitarian organizations working in Pakistan; at a handing over ceremony held at the PRCS headquarter in Islamabad.

H.E. Ambassador Kuninori Matsuda, Chairman of the PRCS, Dr. Saeed Elahi and other distinguished guests attended the ceremony.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Government of Japan had provided financial assistance of \$ 71,501 to Pakistan Red Crescent Society last year for the transportation of four ambulances from Japan to Pakistan, installation of emergency/first aid equipment and training of PRCS staff. The purpose of this project is to enhance the outreach capacity of PRCS in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi in the wake of unexpected emergencies.

While speaking at the ceremony, Ambassador Kuninori Matsuda congratulated the PRCS management for successful completion of the project. He expressed his hope that addition of four new



ambulances in the PRCS' fleet will help the organization to efficiently respond to any unexpected emergency in Islamabad and Rawalpindi and will reach the people who are in immediate need of first aid. Japan will continue to support the people of Pakistan to improve their living standards, and help Pakistan in further strengthening its institutional capacity to cater needs in times of calamities, said Ambassador Matsuda.

Chairman of PRCS, Dr. Saeed Elahi, while speaking on the occasion highly appreciated donation of four ambulances to PRCS by the Government of Japan. He added that the project will further enhance the operational capacity of PRCS in professional way. He also thanked the Embassy of Japan for extending the support in successful completion of the project.

## Uzbek embassy, NUML Varsity agree to further intensify cooperation

ISLAMABAD, (DNA) –Ambassador of Uzbekistan Furqat Sidikov held fruitful and important meeting with the leadership of NUML University Islamabad and professors of this leading educational institution.

Both sides reached important agreements to further establish academic cooperation between NUML and Uzbek higher educational institutions in sphere of language trainings etc.

Moreover, they discussed the possibilities of bilateral cooperation for exchange of students and teaching staff. Within the framework of this visit to NUML University they also discussed perspectives Uzbekistan- Pakistan bilateral relations in education.

The ambassador expressed his gratitude to the leadership of NUML University, its smart and well educated students, and professors for expressed interest in



corporation with Uzbekistan.=DNA



# Ambassador of Indonesia Iwan S Amri hosts iftar for business community







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# Zafar Bakhtawari and Waqar Bakhtawari host farewell dinner for Bulgarian ambassador





# Ambassador of Kazakhstan Barlybay Sadykov hosts Iftar dinner





# Alley of Friendship



Mayor of Islamabad Sheikh Anser Aiziz, Ambassador of Kazakhstan Barlybay Sadykov and staff of the embassy planted trees in Fatimah Jinnah Park as a sign of friendship between Kazakhstan and Pakistan.=DNA

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**(Muhammad Nasir)**

For Divisional Superintendent, Pakistan Railways, Rawalpindi.

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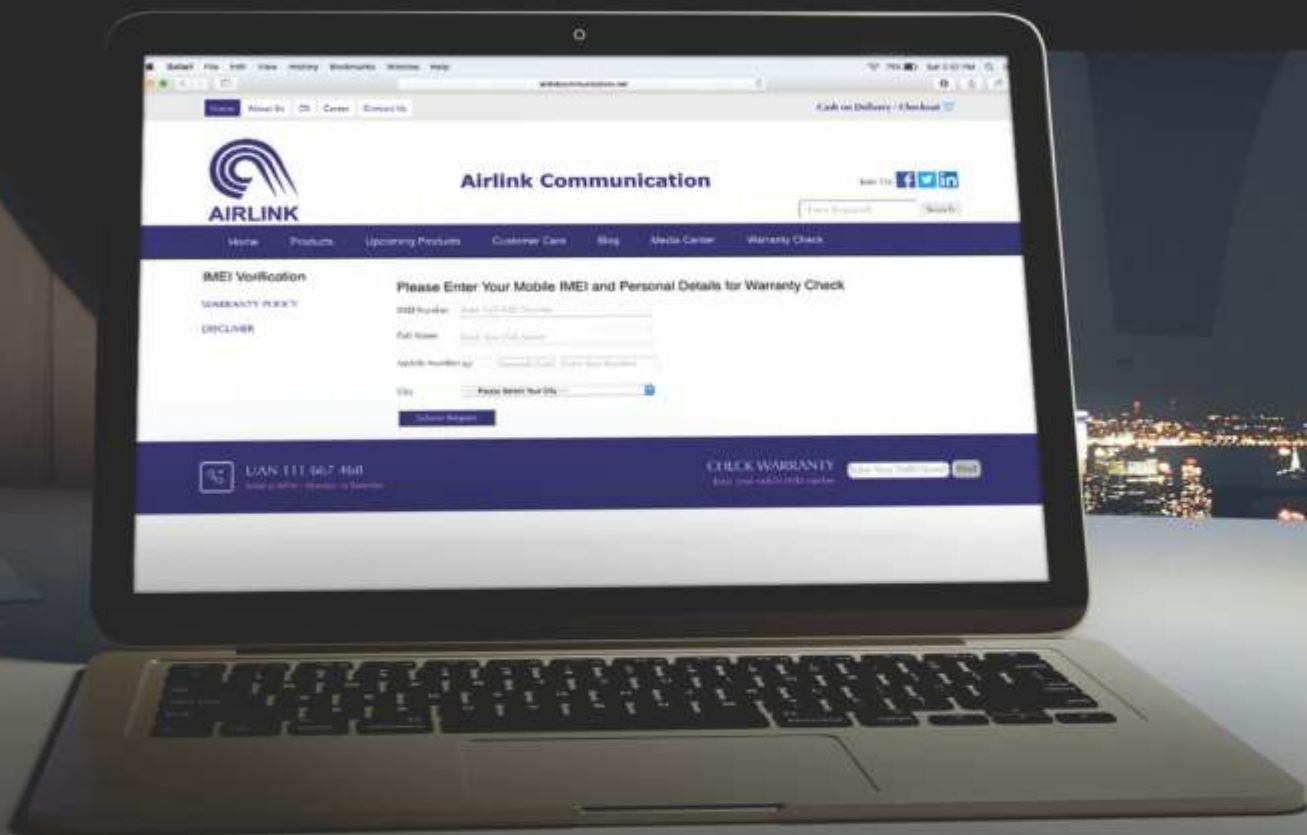
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