

# CENTRELINE

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# All set for the general elections



It is intriguing to observe that, as the elections draw near, a substantial number of political parties have not yet initiated a comprehensive election campaign. An exception to this trend is evident in the PPP, which has actively shifted into election mode. Up until now, the momentum seemed to favor the PPP; however, a pivotal moment occurred with Asif Zardari's interview on a private TV channel a couple of weeks ago, sending waves of unrest within the party ranks. In response, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari found himself compelled to hastily depart for Dubai, abruptly interrupting the ongoing election campaign. However after meddling of some important

persons the father-son rapprochement seems to have been achieved.

There is a prevailing sentiment within the PPP that having Asif Zardari at the helm could pose a significant challenge due to his less-than-impeccable reputation. Concerns linger that the party might face substantial setbacks if it ventures into the elections with Zardari in a prominent role. In contrast, Bilawal Bhutto is seen as a more forward-looking and popular politician, having improved his credentials over time. Bilawal himself believes that his tenure as the foreign minister in the PDM government garnered him international acceptance as a prospective leader for Pakistan. While Bilawal's optimism about his global standing holds some merit, the reality at home presents a myriad of challenges. Leading a party historically marred by allegations of corruption, Bilawal confronts the daunting task of addressing public skepticism and countering the party's past tarnished image. Despite his aspirations for international recognition, the intricate web of domestic challenges demands careful navigation for Bilawal to solidify his leadership and enhance the party's credibility in the eyes of the electorate. But that is possible only when he has full support of his father. According to certain sources, there have been attempts by the Establishment to court the PTI, utilizing figures such as President Arif Alvi and former minister Muhammad Ali Durrani as intermediaries. These reports suggest that the PTI was presented with an offer, proposing control over two provinces—Punjab and KPK. However, a condition was attached, stipulating that either Ch. Pervez Elahi or Shah Mahmood Qureshi should be endorsed by the PTI Chairman to lead in Punjab. Imran Khan reportedly declined this proposition outright.

Despite the intricate political maneuvers and strategies employed by both the IPP and the PML-N, they have thus far been unsuccessful in garnering the support of the people. The public sentiment continues to favor the PTI and its chairman, who is perceived by many as a messiah figure. This suggests that, despite the efforts and tactics implemented by other political entities, the PTI maintains a distinctive and enduring appeal among the populace. Primarily, key political parties, notably the PML N, have yet to initiate full-fledged election campaigns. The party is currently engaged in organizing corner meetings and dialogues with business entities, indicating a potential lack of preparedness. Analysts posit that the party is grappling with significant internal challenges, particularly in the pivotal province of Punjab. Furthermore, concerns within the party about its ability to draw substantial crowds loom large. The perceived failure to convincingly dispel suspicions of collusion with the Establishment has created apprehensions, possibly deterring a significant voter turnout. These multifaceted challenges collectively raise apprehensions about the feasibility of conducting the elections as scheduled on February 8, 2024, because if the so-called 'King's Party' cannot secure a win then the powers-that-be don't see any rationale in facilitating the election drill on February 8. As Nawaz Sharif secures legal reprieves and the PTI's internal challenges persist, it increasingly seems inevitable that the upcoming elections will proceed as scheduled. Evidently, conducting timely and comprehensive elections stands out as the sole viable option to navigate the country out of its current quagmire.

**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 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 also served in Pakistan Telecommunication Company (PTCL) as Media Advisor/ Director Communication. He launched Diplomatic News Agency (DNA) in 2012. In May 2020 he launched Pakistan's First & only Diplomatic Newspaper Daily Islamabad POST.

DR. MAEN KHREASAT

# Jordan's relationship with Pakistan is historic and strong

Interview of H.E. Dr. Maen KHREASAT Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to Pakistan

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti



**Y**OUR Excellency! On behalf of “Centerline Magazine”, “Islamabad Post” newspaper and “Diplomatic News Agency” I wish to welcome you as the new Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in Pakistan, and also to appreciate your efforts for enhancing the bilateral relations between Pakistan and Jordan. I am also thankful to you for giving us time out of your busy schedule.

**1: Let us first start with your personal impressions about Pakistan as this is your second posting, now as an Ambassador in Pakistan?**

Good morning Mr. Bhatti and welcome to the Embassy as an old and dear friend. I wish to thank you and “Centerline Magazine” for giving me this opportunity to highlight few important points concerning my previous experience in Pakistan and the bilateral relationship between Jordan and Pakistan.

It is both a pleasure and an honor to serve my country in a very dear brotherly and friendly country. Jordan's relationship with Pakistan is historic and strong. I am a career diplomat where I served in many capitals before including Ottawa, Tokyo, Brussel, Tunis and last in Islamabad. As this is my first Ambassadorial mission abroad, I feel privileged to be here again. From day one, I was welcomed and extended all the courtesies and high attention by the esteemed Government of Pakistan to make my mission a successful one. On a personal level, the warmth and hospitality of the Pakistani people is quite amazing and beyond description.

Pakistan is a beautiful, rich and important country in South Asia and the Muslim world. It has undoubtedly played, and still playing, a pivotal role in the world affairs and has always been a voice for peace and stability. My previous experience in Islamabad, both official and personal, enabled me to advance my career and enjoy what this brotherly country has to offer, and it is a great honor for me to be back as the Ambassador of Jordan in Islamabad.

In God's well, I intended to carry out my duties to enhance the economic and trade bilateral exchange up to a higher level to match the highly strong political and military cooperation.

**2: How would you describe the bilateral relations between Pakistan and Jordan especially in the fields of trade, economy and culture? Tourism is yet another area where**



**both countries can boost cooperation. Please share your vision as to how engagement in this particular sector can be intensified?**

I will work with my Embassy team on two levels. The first is to present higher visibility of Jordan in Pakistan by taking part in conferences, exchange with think tanks, public cultural events, and reinforce the ties between cultural bodies and Universities. Secondly, by building a cultural human bridge throughout higher education exchange and encouraging Jordanian students to study in Pakistani Universities and visa versa. I am a strong believer of People-to-People relationship which further strengthens the official and business bilateral ties.

On the trade and investment front, I find that we need to do more to bring together our business community and Chambers of Commerce & Industry. Both economies provide for genuine business opportunities. For example, Jordan is a leading world exporter of Phosphate fertilizers and Potash. We can add to this the unique Dead Sea products in cosmetics. Jordan also is a leading Middle East manufacturer and exporter of pharmaceuticals. I encourage Pakistani business community to visit Jordan and experience the suitable business climate,

**“Pakistan is a beautiful, rich and important country in South Asia and the Muslim world. It has undoubtedly played, and still playing, a pivotal role in the world affairs and has always been a voice for peace and stability. My previous experience in Islamabad, both official and personal, enabled me to advance my career and enjoy what this brotherly country has to offer, and it is a great honor for me to be back as the Ambassador of Jordan in Islamabad”**

especially that Jordan has Free Trade Agreements with leading economies in the world to enable Jordanian exports to penetrate smoothly into these huge markets. I estimate that the exchange of business delegations will tremendously help to explore the opportunities and form closer ties between the business community on both sides. For Pakistan, there is an enormous potential in agriculture and food industries, cattle and livestock, leather and leather manufactured products, military hardware, and IT sector.

Tourism also is a main attraction to visit Jordan and explore the ancient history of the country and visiting the wonders of Jordan in Petra the red-rose city, the Dead Sea unique environment, Prophets and Maqamat Essahabah the Companions of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). In addition, Health Tourism is considered yet another attraction to visit the country and benefit from the state-of- the art medical services provided for by the private sector.

**3: Both countries have also been engaged in political consultations with a view to further strengthening and deepening brotherly ties. If you can share some details, please?**



set up for future collaboration. In addition to the training and officers' courses, and joint and multilateral military exercises with friendly countries, we regularly exchange High Level visit between the two Armies and Forces. Having no doubt, since independence Jordan and Pakistan have shown steadfast commitment to each other's security and mutual support and solidarity in critical moments. This is the Pride of our relationship.

**4: Your Excellency! Jordan has been repeatedly referred to as an "Oasis of Stability" in a turbulent region. It has been mostly unharmed by the violence that swept the region. Which factors you think keeps the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan away from these kinds of violence?**

**To name a few we can mention:**

- The Moderation of the Hashemite Leadership (Al Albayt), where HM King Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein is the 41st decedent of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). The leadership exemplifies moderate Islam in its best ways and stands steadfast against fanaticism and radicalization. HM King Abdullah is the Custodian of the Holy sites in Jerusalem (both Muslim and Christian)
- Jordan has always called for a just, permanent and comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian Problem that leads to self-determination for the Palestinian people and the establishment of an independent, viable and contiguous Palestinian State with east Jerusalem as its capital. In addition, Jordan has played a pivotal role in the Middle East Peace Process to achieve the goal of statehood to the Palestinians and is the first host of Palestinian refugees community outside Palestine.
- Tolerance, harmony and peaceful co-existence between the different ethnic and religious components of the Jordanian society has significantly supported the unity of the people.

**5: What is the role of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to maintain peace in the region because if stability occurred in the Middle East region then Jordan would be the one of the directly beneficiary country in the region?**

- As discussed earlier, Jordan is playing an important role to stabilize the region and to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people and other innocent victims of conflicts.
- On the political level, the steadfastness of the Jordanian leadership towards peace is unequivocal. This commitment stems from the conviction that only a just and lasting peace based on international legitimacy would bring stability and prosperity to all peoples of the region, and Jordan is committed to support a negotiated peace settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. I wish to thank you again, dear Mr. Bhatti, for this opportunity and for visiting the Embassy, and looking forward to maintain this friendship for the benefit of our two Nations.

We have an established mechanism for political consultations between our Foreign Ministries, where we conducted the first meeting on the level of Foreign Secretaries in Islamabad in 2016. We are looking forward for the 2nd meeting to take place in Amman during 2024. On a higher level, our communications and discussion continue regularly between our Leadership on important matter, and on the level of Foreign Ministers, Jordan and Pakistan coordinate bilaterally and in multilateral forums especially in the United Nations.

Another important mechanism and milestone is anticipated in 2024, namely, the 10th Joint Ministerial Commission JMC in Islamabad. The convening of this important meeting with serve as a platform to review our trade and bilateral relations and serves as a catalyst to strengthen this cooperation including signing new agreements and MoUs to enhance the already important and cordial bilateral relations.

On the Military cooperation field, this is considered to be the Gewl of our partnership. The Joint military committee convenes annually to review and advance this important cooperation and

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# Ottoman Fashion Show in Pakistan

Madam Meryam Pacaci, wife of the Turkiye ambassador hosts the show at the Turkiye residence

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Madam Meryam Pacaci, the wife of the Turkiye Ambassador to Pakistan Mehmet Pacaci hosted a rare fashion show titled "Ottoman Fashion Show", introducing famous Turkiye fashion designer Cemile Gul in Pakistan. Spouses of the diplomatic corps were invited to be part of the show and admire skills of Ms. Cemile Gul, had flown all the way from Turkiye to Pakistan to make her works known to Pakistanis and the international community living in Pakistan as well. The caftans designed and produced by Cemile Gül, a fashion designer from Kütahya, who sewed clothes from Ottoman motifs for the wives of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Prime Minister and some ministers, reflect the magnificence of that period. Gül said that after working as an embroidery teacher at the Kütahya Public Education Center for about 20 years, she retired and opened a 12-square-me-

ter workshop. Stating that she later expanded the concept of business and established and put into operation an art gallery, museum and showroom, Gül said, "We have a fashion house in Bursa. Here, too, we design and produce women's clothes from the Ottoman period, henna clothes that young people can wear, evening dresses and wedding dresses. In addition, we are trying to keep Ottoman embroidery alive in home textiles."

Cemile GÜL's entrepreneurial story began in 1978 when she enrolled in the "Ready-to-Wear" department of Kütahya Girls' Vocational High School. She adorns her dreams with her passion for dressing up as much as she loves to dress, Ottoman clothing culture and hand-embroidered patterns. "You can't get enough of success. Once you have achieved success, you cannot stop there, you need to be able to set an example for the next generations", GÜL, who also graduated from Dumlupınar University, Department of "Leather and Apparel", has also pioneered creating added value for the economy by training many colleagues with more than 20 years of Public Education Center Teaching in the field of embroidery.

She has set goal in the education process that starts with studentship, continues with apprenticeship, and ends with journeyman and mastery. One day, she will have a business and introduce the Ottoman culture first to Turkey and then to the world; It will ensure that the art of embroidery reaches where it should be with its clothes decorated with traditional motifs and home textile decoration products. In addition, the art gallery in Kütahya, which she decorated as the "Kütahya House" and exhibited products, has become one of the important places visited by local and foreign tourists.

**King's Day celebrated**

**Relationship between Belgium and Pakistan is forward-looking**

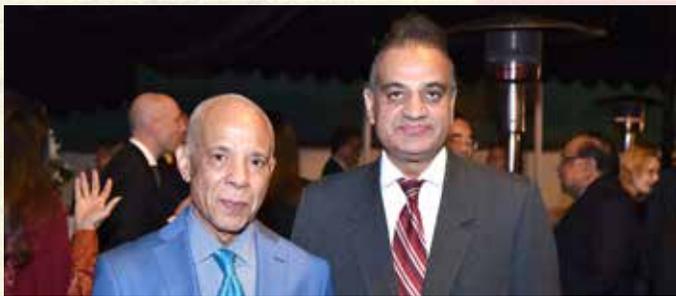
**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Belgium Charles Delogne hosted the the King's Day reception at his residence. Chief Guest Fawad Hassan Fawad, Federal Minister for Privatisation in his address termed relations between the two countries excellent. He hoped these relations would continue to grow even in the coming days. Earlier, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement on this occasion. It said that the 75 years of its diplomatic relations with Belgium encompassed the spirit of solidarity and expressed commitment to work with it towards shaping a better world for future generations. A statement by the Foreign Office said

the upward trajectory of bilateral relations was deeply embedded in people-to-people linkages and frequent high-level contacts at the leadership level. It mentioned that the institution of bilateral political consultation provided a strong foundation for a multifaceted dialogue that holds the potential to deepen this long-standing bilateral relationship. "The robust trade between the countries has witnessed continuous growth for mutual benefit," it said. "The depth of bilateral relations encompasses the spirit of solidarity and support demonstrated during times of need, such as disaster management to mitigate natural calamities," the FO statement said. The Joint Communique, issued on November 26, 1947, encapsulates the

decision of the two governments to accept respective diplomatic missions 'to strengthen the bonds of friendship and mutual interest'. Following the historic decision, the two countries opened diplomatic missions in 1948. "It is a proud moment, as the goals outlined 75 years ago paved the way for a strong bond of friendship," the FO statement added. "The relationship between Belgium and Pakistan is forward-looking, as both countries are committed to working together on multilateral forums to address common challenges, such as sustainable development and climate change, as well as fundamental values such as democracy and human rights, providing strength to these relations," it said.







## Exhibition of “Soekarno’s Legacy in Building Stronger Bonds of Indonesia-Pakistan Brotherhood” launched



DNA

**ISLAMABAD:** The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in collaboration with the National Archives of Indonesia, the National Library of Pakistan, and National Archives of Pakistan inaugurated today a week-long exhibition of “Soekarno’s Legacy in Building Stronger Bonds of Indonesia-Pakistan Brotherhood, National Library of Pakistan, 29 November-2 December 2023. The main objective of the exhibition generate more awareness among the people of Pakistan about the historic multi-dimensional Indonesia-Pakistan relationship.

The exhibition showcases a compelling collection of photographs, videos, and letters, between the founding fathers of Indonesia (Soekarno) and Pakistan (Muhammad Ali Jinnah). It offers a unique glimpse into the visits of President Soekarno to Pakistan in 1960s, underlining the shared history that binds the two nations.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Guest and Head of National Archives of Indonesia Mr. Imam Gunarto expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the people of Pakistan for their love and respect to the leaders of Indonesia especially President

Soekarno. Mr Imam emphasized “such events will strengthen the cultural relations between the two countries especially in the fields of archives and history”.

In his short remarks, the Charge d’ Affaires of the Indonesian Embassy Mr. Yusran Hadromi extended his gratitude to National Library of Pakistan and National Archives of Pakistan for their valuable contribution and support in organizing this exhibition. Mr. Yusran highlighted, “as two of the world’s largest Muslim countries, our two countries share lot of historic and cultural commonalities that provide many opportunities to grow together...President Soekarno is highly respected by the people and Government of Pakistan in recognition of his sincere efforts to bring two countries closer to each other”.

The Guest of Honor, Senator Mushahid Hussain, valued the exhibition and expressed deep appreciation to Soekarno’s role as a statesman. Senator Mushahid further addressed, “Soekarno’s revolutionary spirit echoes in the shared values of democracy, independence, and cultural diversity that continue to unite Indonesia and Pakistan. This

exhibition is a timely reminder of the strong foundation laid by our visionary leaders, paving the way for a future of collaboration and mutual prosperity” The Director General of National Library of Pakistan, Mr. Asif Iqbal Khan elaborated, “this exhibition serves as a bridge between our two nations, connecting us through the rich tapestry of history that binds Indonesia and Pakistan together”. In addition, the Director of National Archives of Pakistan, Dr Mazhar Saeed remarked, “the showcased archives underscore the importance of preserving our shared heritage, ensuring that the legacy of leaders like Dr. Soekarno and Muhammad Ali Jinnah continues to inspire generations.” The event also featured captivating performances by Indonesian students on the stage, showcasing brilliant angklung music and dance performances, including Pasambahan, Randai, and Indang dances—a vibrant representation of West Sumatra province. The Indang dance, in particular, reflects the cultural progression in the Minangkabau community, symbolizing the arrival of Islam in West Sumatra in the 13th century.

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## **Creative Minds organization fetes lawyers' community**

**Sadaf Shan, the President of Creative Minds, highlighted their contributions not only within their own community but also their efforts in assisting the less privileged segments of society**

### **D N A**

ISLAMABAD: The Creative Minds organization in Islamabad recently organized a welcome lunch to honor and appreciate the contributions of Christian lawyers in Pakistan (CLAP). This event served as a commendable initiative that highlighted the valuable role played by these legal professionals in the country. The occasion not only acknowledged their individual achievements but also aimed to strengthen connections and promote unity within the broader legal community. The event took place under the leadership of Sadaf Shan, the President and Founder of Creative Minds organization. Shah Iftikhar and Aqsa Tanveer, the team members also put in their best to make the event a success. The presence of THE influential figures such as J. Salik, Asia Nasir, Ch. Manzoor,

Sharoon Arif, Ch Ashraf Farzand, Advocate Sheharyar Shams, Advocate Saima Khokhar, Akash Tara, Tariq Chaman, Jamshed Khushi, Shahzad Safdar, Emanuel Siraj, Padri Rashid Manzoor, Safdar Masih, Ameer David, the leading figure of the Christian community, underscored the significance of the occasion and the commitment to fostering inclusivity and appreciation within the legal community. Sadaf Shan, the President of Creative Minds, expressed the purpose of the event, emphasizing the need to recognize the services of Christian lawyers. She highlighted their contributions not only within their own community but also their efforts in assisting the less privileged segments of society. This acknowledgment aimed to shed light on the positive impact that Christian lawyers have had on both their community and the broader social fabric. By hosting this welcome lunch,

Creative Minds provided a platform for celebration, gratitude, and connection. It served as a wonderful opportunity for legal professionals to come together, share their experiences, and build networks that can contribute to a more cohesive and supportive legal community in Pakistan. The event demonstrated a commitment to appreciating diversity within the legal profession and promoting unity across different religious and ethnic backgrounds. In summary, the welcome lunch hosted by Creative Minds for Christian lawyers in Pakistan was a fantastic initiative that not only recognized the accomplishments of these legal professionals but also aimed to strengthen connections and promote unity within the legal community. It reflected a commitment to appreciating diversity and acknowledging the positive contributions made by Christian lawyers to both their community and society at large.

# German Christmas Market attracts huge audiences

Visitors flock to the venue to augment German embassy efforts to help those in need

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Islamabad orchestrated a festive extravaganza by hosting an annual Christmas Market at Islamabad Serena Hotel. This enchanting event immersed attendees in the rich traditions of German Christmas celebrations, offering a delightful blend of culinary delights, shopping, and joyous merriment. The market showcased an array of authentic German delicacies that tantalized the taste buds of visitors, including homemade cakes and cookies meticulously crafted to capture the essence of German holiday traditions. Attendees were treated to a sensory journey, experiencing the warmth and flavors synonymous with Christmas in Germany. The air was filled with the spirit of the season as visitors strolled through the market, discovering unique treasures and hand-crafted gifts that reflected the artistry and craftsmanship of German culture. From charming ornaments to exquisite trinkets, the shopping experience transported attendees to a winter wonderland brimming with festive cheer. The ambiance was further heightened by the vibrant atmosphere, resonating with laughter and the joyful sounds of the season. Families and friends came together to partake in the festivities, creating cherished memories against the backdrop of the embassy's beautifully adorned Christmas Market. In organizing this event, the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany aimed to share the magic of German Christmas traditions with the local community, fostering cultural exchange and promoting the universal spirit of joy and togetherness during the holiday season. The Christmas Market served as a testament to the enduring bonds of friendship and goodwill between Germany and Pakistan, as both nations came together to celebrate the most wonderful time of the year in true German style.

The German members of the embassy baked more than 60 kg of cookies and several square meters of delicious German cakes. In Santa's workshop they manufactured wreaths and chocolate as well as other delicacies and toys and Christmas decoration have been imported from Germany only for that occasion. There would be some stalls of Christmas decorative items, seasonal delights and art and craft. The collection from the tickets would go in charity as every year. The German Ambassador to Pakistan, Alfred Grannas, said on this occasion: "With this bazaar we want to welcome the merriest time of the year – especially for all those away from their homes. Christmas is all about sharing



our joy. This is why the proceeds from this event will be donated to families in need." Last year, the German embassy successfully hosted a bazaar at the same venue. The event garnered significant attendance, with diplomats and the gen-

eral public alike participating in large numbers. Their presence reflected a shared commitment to supporting the German embassy's commendable initiative, which aims to provide substantial assistance to those in need.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Italy Andreas Ferrarese leading a cooking class while the Italian chef looks on. – DNA



## Italian ambassador's cooking class draws huge interest

Italian Food Week is a regular feature and we celebrate it regularly, says Ambassador of Italy Andreas Ferrarese

### Centreline Report

ISLAMABAD: Food enthusiasts in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi thronged to the Zigolini restaurant, Islamabad Marriott Hotel to enjoy mouth-watering Italian cuisines. The hallmark of the event was a special cooking session spearheaded by Ambassador of Italy Andreas Ferrarese and his wife Albana Ferrarese. The Italian Ambassador, addressing the gathering, enthusiastically shared insights into the annual Italian Food Week, a cher-

ished tradition that we joyously celebrate each year. With an air of culinary excitement, the Ambassador highlighted a special addition to this year's festivities – the introduction of a unique and exquisite variety of olive oil. In a culinary feat that delighted the senses, the cooking during the event showcased the exceptional qualities of this newly unveiled olive oil. The Ambassador emphasized the pivotal role of this distinctive oil, infusing each dish with the rich and authentic flavors that characterize Italian cuisine. It was a gastronomic

journey that not only celebrated tradition but also introduced a delightful innovation, symbolizing the ever-evolving nature of Italian culinary excellence. He especially thanked his wife and the embassy staff for helping him organize the event in a befitting manner. In his last cooking session on November 26, 2020, the Italian ambassador had cooked pasta, which the guests enjoyed very much. He told the audience he used to cook this dish when he was a student for it was a cheap dish and easy to cook as well.



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# The German embassy in Islamabad celebrates German Unity Day 2023

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Islamabad joyously observed German Unity Day today in a garden reception. This auspicious occasion commemorates the formal reunification of East and West Germany on 3rd October 1990, culminating in the end of 41 years of separation and uniting Germans into one cohesive nation. In his address, His Excellency Alfred Grannas, the German Ambassador, underscored the historical significance of German reunification, highlighting the remarkable achievements and progress made since that pivotal moment.

The event, graciously hosted by the German Embassy, welcomed distinguished guests from Pakistan and the international community. Among the participants were representatives from German businesses, foundations, and organizations operating in Pakistan. Esteemed attendees included dignitaries and high officials from diplomatic, military, political, economic, and humanitarian sectors, reflecting the strong ties between Germany and Pakistan.

The celebration showcased stalls from various German organizations, including economic development partners GIZ, KfW, BGR as well as academic exchange service DAAD, Annemarie-Schimmel-Haus, and political foundations. These

stalls provided a glimpse into Germany's multifaceted engagement in Pakistan, illustrating the diverse contributions of German entities across various sectors.

A notable feature of the reception was the exhibition of two Buddy Bear Sculptures, intricately painted by the internationally renowned artist Ahmer Farooq. These sculptures creatively captured the exquisite designs and fusion of both cultures, adding a touch of artistry and symbolism to the festivities. The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany extends its heartfelt gratitude to all participants for their presence and contributions, which greatly enriched the German Unity Day celebration, making it a memorable experience.







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# Pak greatly values ties with Poland: Info Minister

Embassy of Poland celebrates 105th anniversary of Independence, Armed Forces Day

ISLAMABAD, The caretaker Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi has said the recently inaugurated Bara Kahu bridge is being named after the Air Commodore Wadystaw Turowicz, a leader of the Polish pilots who came to Pakistan to help create the Pakistani air forces, stating, "It has their full support". The minister made this announcement on the occasion of the Independence Day and the Armed Forces Day of Poland. A special musical recital was also organized on the occasion. The Information Minister further said Pakistan greatly valued its relations with Poland adding both countries are committed to take these this relationship to new levels. Ambassador of Poland in Pakistan Maciej Pisarski, on the occasion, said, "This year, we have celebrated the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Poland and Pakistan. We are just about to start the seventh decade of our

operation." Regarding trade ties between the two countries, he said, "We can point to an upward trajectory in the trade between our countries, approaching \$900 million. This growth has a lot to do with Pakistani exporters taking advantage of the European Union's generous GSP plus program." The ambassador highlighted that Orlen/PGNIG – Polish Oil and Gas Company, invested in the exploration of tied gas deposits in Pakistan. He said, "The Polish government fully supports the company's engagement in bringing indigenous Pakistani gas to Pakistani consumers." Expressing interest in cooperation in new fields with Pakistan, he said, "We see opportunities in exploring collaboration in the water sector: water purification and water management technologies. Such projects can address some of the challenges of the adverse effects of climate change."

– DNA



# Pakistan, Azerbaijan relations from cordial to excellent, says Solangi

Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov says 8 November is celebrated as Victory Day in the Republic of Azerbaijan every year





## Ansar M Bhatti / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi has said Pakistan greatly values relations with Azerbaijan adding these relations shall further be cemented in the coming days. He expressed these views while addressing as the chief guest on the occasion of the Victory Day of Azerbaijan. Murtaza Solangi further said both Pakistan and Azerbaijan enjoy excellent relations in all fields. He said people to people between the two countries have also increased. The minister also welcomed start of direct flights from Pakistan to Azerbaijan and hoped these direct air links will further bring two brotherly nations closer. Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov in his speech said, 8 November is celebrated as Victory Day in the Republic of Azerbaijan every year. 3 years ago, Azerbaijan liberated its territories from Armenian occupation and restored its territorial integrity. We honor with deep respect and gratitude our Martyrs who gave their precious lives for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of our country. He said, Armenia kept 20% of Azerbaijani territories under occupation for almost 30 years. Almost Armenia committed war crimes in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Armenia committed the Khojaly Genocide in 1992, killing 613 innocent civilians, including 106 women and 63 children. They carried out ethnic cleansing against the Azerbaijani population in the occupied territories. All Azerbaijanis were forcibly expelled from occupied territories. During the Armenian occupation, Azerbaijani cities and villages were razed to the ground. All cultural and religious monuments were destroyed, mosques were desecrated and looted. Armenians turned mosques into pigsties during the occupation. Hundreds of thousands of mines and booby

traps have been planted across Azerbaijan's territory. But Azerbaijan has never targeted any civilian people and civilian infrastructures during the Patriotic War and local anti-terrorism measures. He said, even after the war, Armenia did not stop its heinous military provocations that caused the loss of civilians and military personnel in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan. In this regard, the Azerbaijan Army launched local anti-terrorist measures to ensure the provisions of the Joint Trilateral Statement signed on November 10, 2020, to prevent large-scale provocations committed in the Karabakh economic region of Azerbaijan, to disarm and withdraw the Armenian armed forces formations from Azerbaijani territories, to neutralize their military infrastructure, to ensure safety of the civilian population returning to the territories liberated from occupation, safety of the civilian workers involved in the reconstruction work, the servicemen and to restore the constitutional order of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Immediately after the war, the Azerbaijani side whose 20% of the territory had been occupied by Armenia for almost 30 years, proposed a peace agreement to Armenia. Raising the right of 300,000 Azerbaijanis to return to their historical homeland in nowadays Armenia, Azerbaijan also set up a special reintegration portal for Armenian residents living in the Karabakh economic region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Ambassador Farhadov said, during the occupation and 44 days of the Patriotic War, brotherly Pakistan has always supported Azerbaijan morally and diplomatically. Using this opportunity, I would like once again to extend my gratitude to the Government and people of Pakistan for their continuous support. It is no coincidence that the Pakistani flag is waved along with the Azerbaijani and Turkish flags in Azerbaijan by the common people in this country as a sign of respect and gratitude to the Pakistani brothers and sisters.

# Pakistan important partner of Romania in South Asia

Charge d Affaires of Romania Eduard Preda says his country greatly valued its relations with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Charge d Affaires of Romania Eduard Preda has said his country greatly valued its relations with Pakistan adding this relationship shall further be cemented. He made these remarks while speaking on the occasion of the National Day of Romania. Prime Minister Advisor on Overseas Pakistani Jawad Sohrab Malik was the chief guest. Besides, government high ranking officials, military personnel, members and of the civil society and media attended the reception in large number. Eduard Preda further said National Day is a moment of remembrance of the historical act of December 1st, 1918, representing a fundamental landmark for all Romanians, at home and abroad, an

opportunity to reaffirm the national consciousness and unity, the vision and fundamental objectives of the Romanian nation. He added, this day is a symbol of our solidarity in the face of all the difficulties we have faced as a nation, which we have overcome and will continue to overcome, with confidence in our own strength, through common efforts and trust in the future we are building together. 'The history of Romania, like that of Europe, is not like a triumphal march and has never been always a luminous succession of happy events. On the contrary, Romania's history has been marked by numerous crises and difficult stages, which have often threatened the very lives of the people, our freedom,

the identity of communities and the very existence of our state. Our forefathers lived through wars, faced natural disasters, endured famine, survived periods of severe social tension and were victims of the darkest political regimes. Their determination, courage, capacity for sacrifice and will to live in freedom and peace made it possible for them to overcome all these difficult trials, despite almost unimaginable challenges.' He said, each year, the anniversary of the Great Union is giving us the opportunity to honour the memory of the sacrifices Romanians made for laying the foundation of the modern Romania, which ultimately placed us in the midst of the great European family. – DNA







## Italian ambassador Andreas Ferrarese hosts farewell dinner for the Indonesian Ambassador Adam Tugio





# First Lady Mrs Samina Alvi attends demo workshop by Asma Ansari



# National Unity Day and Armed Forces Day



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## SZIA Hope Film Festival inspires youth creativity

The Principal, Mrs. Wafaa Abdul Ghaffar, in her insightful speech, highlighted vital role of cultural events like the Hope Film Festival in nurturing young minds and fostering a deeper appreciation for diverse perspectives

**Mahnoor Ansar**

ISLAMABAD: The Hope Film Festival, a beacon of inspiration and creativity, made headlines as it welcomed distinguished diplomats, the senior manager of IB World Schools, and unveiled a groundbreaking Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) playbook to foster global awareness and change on November 6, 2023. H.E Rashid Abdel Rehman Al Ali, from the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, Mr. Florian Baciu, Senior Manager of IB World Schools, and Lt. General Sajjad Retd, Charirman Water and Power development Authority graced the occasion with their presence, commending the festival's commitment to education and the arts. The Principal, Mrs. Wafaa Abdul Ghaffar, in her insightful speech, highlighted the vital role of cultural events like the Hope Film Festival in nurturing young minds and fostering a deeper appreciation for diverse perspectives.

The festival commenced with a mesmerizing display of cultural dances from different corners of the globe. Performers adorned in vibrant costumes swayed and twirled to the rhythm of traditional music, offering a sensory feast of diverse cultural experiences.

The festival dedicated a special segment to young, aspiring filmmakers from nation-wide schools, offering them an opportunity to showcase their talent and creativity. The competition served as a stepping stone for these budding artists to have their work recognized and appreciated by a wider audience. The short films presented by students covered a wide range of themes, from societal issues to personal stories and imaginative tales. Each film offered a unique perspective, revealing the depth of creativity and thoughtfulness of the young filmmakers. An esteemed panel of judges, comprised of film industry professionals, educators and consultants,

assessed the short films and awarded trophies to the most outstanding entries. This recognition not only celebrated the winners but also encouraged all participants to continue pursuing their passion for filmmaking. A highlight of the festival was the eco-conscious Trashion Show titled, 'Rags to Riches' where students showcased their innovative creations made from recycled and upcycled materials. The runway featured stunning outfits and accessories crafted from discarded items, sending a powerful message about sustainability and environmental responsibility. The audience was left in awe of the fashion-forward and environmentally friendly designs on display. One of the festival's most significant moments was the launch of a groundbreaking SDG book, which aims to educate and inspire people of all ages about the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. The book, a collaborative effort by SZIA Administration, teachers and students promises to serve as a valuable resource for individuals and institutions dedicated to creating a better, more sustainable world.

The 'Hope Film Festival' also catered to the taste buds of attendees with an array of delicious, international cuisines. Food stalls dotted the festival grounds, offering delectable dishes from various culinary traditions. From sizzling street food to gourmet delights, the festival served as a gastronomic journey that left visitors craving for more. The Hope Film Festival continues to be a testament to the power of art, culture, and education in driving positive change in society. With the presence of diplomats, the support of an IB World School manager, and the launch of a pioneering SDG Playbook, this year's festival has elevated its mission of hope, unity, and education to new heights. It not only celebrates the magic of cinema but also serves as a platform for global cooperation and enlightenment, promising a brighter and more sustainable future for all.



# Saying Goodbye to Indonesian Ambassador

ISLAMABAD: Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman REIT hosted a dinner for the outgoing Ambassador of Indonesia Adam Tugio. Among others, Ambassadors of Malaysia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan also attended the dinner. – DNA





## TRNC envoy thanks Pakistan for support

ISLAMABAD: Representative of TRNC Dilsad Senol has thanked Pakistan for its wholehearted support on the issue of Cyprus. She expressed these views on the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the proclamation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Chairman Senate Defence Committee Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Senator Shahzad Waseem, Maulana Tahir Ashrafi, Ambassador of Turkiye Mehmet Plicaci, Director General Ministry of Foreign Affairs Imran Haider, Representative of TRNC Dilsad Senol and others attended the reception. Dislad Senol further hoped relations between TRNC and Pakistan would grow further even in the days to come. She also thanked motherland Turkiye for its support. She gave a historical perspective of the Cyprus issue and the way the international community acted partially in support of the Greek side. – DNA



# Dr Abrarul Hasnain hosts farewell dinner for the Indonesian ambassador







# Diwali celebrations at the Indian High Commission



# Italian embassy hosts grand fashion show in Islamabad

## Ambassador of Italy Andreas Ferrarese says trade volume between Italy and Pakistan has improved significantly

**Abid Raza**

ISLAMABAD: The Italian embassy in Islamabad recently organized a grand Fashion Show within the premises of its under-construction new embassy. This event was notable not only for its celebration of fashion but also for the unique setting of being hosted at a location still undergoing construction. The new embassy is expected to be completed in April 2024, showcasing a modern and elegant facility that will serve as Italy's diplomatic hub in Pakistan. However, the current Ambassador of Italy Andreas Ferrarese announced during the event that he would not be present for the formal inauguration of the new

embassy. His departure from Pakistan is scheduled for January 15, 2024. The decision to hold a Fashion Show at an embassy construction site could be seen as a creative and unconventional choice, blending the worlds of diplomacy and fashion. Such events often serve as cultural exchanges, promoting cross-cultural understanding and collaboration between nations. It's possible that the embassy aimed to create a memorable and distinctive experience for attendees, highlighting the fusion of Italian style and Pakistani hospitality. The event drew an impressive crowd, with seemingly the entire city of Islamabad converging on the venue to partake in the spectacle of exquisite dresses me-

ticulously crafted by renowned Pakistani designers. The ambassador said that the trade volume between Italy and Pakistan has touched two billion euros mark first time in the history of bilateral relations and hoped this figure shall further be improved in the days to come. There is a significant Pakistani community residing in Italy, estimated to be around 200,000 individuals. This emphasizes the community's active participation in contributing to the development of Italy. This involvement implies that members of the Pakistani community are engaged in various aspects of Italian society, such as the workforce, economy, and potentially other spheres like culture and education.





# Serena Hotels sponsors music festival 'Mystic Melodies'

The event featured live performances by renowned artists Hadiqa Kiyani, Irfan Ali Taj, talented students of Lief Larsen Music Center and students from the School of Disabled Children showcasing the country's musical heritage, allowing attendees to connect with the heart and soul of Pakistan

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels under its Cultural Diplomacy initiative joined hands with the Aga Khan Cultural Service Pakistan, UNESCO, the Aga Khan Foundation and KOICA to host a musical evening 'Mystic Melodies' to promote the rich cultural heritage of Pakistan through folk music. This event aimed to showcase the cultural expression via creative industries to develop understanding of the folk music traditions of Pakistan. A substantial turnout of guests graced the event, including distinguished dignitaries, diplomats, the Austrian Ambassador, the Egyptian Ambassador, Federal and Provincial Ministers, Government Officials representatives from the corporate sector, members of the business community, and media professionals. The attendees enjoyed the vibrant traditions, melodious tunes, and captivating performances that reflect the

essence of Pakistan's cultural identity. The event featured live performances by renowned artists Hadiqa Kiyani, Irfan Ali Taj, talented students of Lief Larsen Music Center and students from the School of Disabled Children showcasing the country's musical heritage, allowing attendees to connect with the heart and soul of Pakistan. The Leif Larsen Music Centre was founded in April 2011 at the Altit Fort which provides facilities for traditional musicians and performers of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral to train youth in different traditions and genres of mountain music. The Minister of National Heritage and Culture, Mr. Jamal Shah, was the chief guest at the event. In his speech he delved into the significance and impact of these programs, shedding light on their collective contribution to cultural preservation, architectural excellence, and the promotion of music as integral components of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture's

overarching vision. His insightful briefing illuminated the audience on the diverse facets of these initiatives and their role in fostering a deeper appreciation for cultural heritage. Over the past two decades, Serena Hotels has played an important role in bringing Pakistani culture into the hearts and minds of the people. Serena has consistently supported cultural diplomacy initiatives led by the Strang Art Gallery, the musical platform Sarangi, and the Craft Bazaars, all of which have significantly contributed to showcasing and nurturing young talent. Serena Hotels is excited and honored to present itself as a platform to celebrate the cultural richness of Pakistan. The aim of these initiatives is to create an atmosphere where attendees can not only enjoy spectacular performances but also gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for the diverse traditions that make Pakistan unique.

# A People That Values Its Privileges above Its Principles soon Loses Both



Zahra Ali

**P**RIVILEGES' are ephemeral aspects of existence; Ever-changing. But 'Principles' have a longer lifespan, which nourish soul, and are applicable to human existence. Pleasure without conscience is a society's social evil. According to Socrates, The only good is knowledge and the only evil is ignorance. This adage—which says that a people who prioritize their privileges over their convictions lose both—has enormous meaning for both the person and society at large in the turbulent times we live in. The result of which has beset the globe by a plethora of issues in contemporary times including mob-lynching, regionalism, abuse of power, free speech and expression, casteism, lack of humanity, poverty, violence against women and children, as well as against minorities and refugees, war, corruption, and colonialism, may all be traced back to an overemphasis on privileges at the expense of principles. Dictators and rulers like Hitler and Stalin have misused their power and committed some of the most horrific atrocities against mankind but in the end, they lost both their positions of authority and moral integrity. We are living in an era of crisis because corruption is present on practically every level. Any nation's development depends on having officials that are honorable and do their jobs with integrity. It is possible that authorities' lack of moral principles is the cause of this widespread corruption. The nation as a whole suffers when people begin to sacrifice fundamental values like integrity, honesty, and hard work in favor of riches and pleasure, which stunts the country's progress. There is much to learn from, for example, In India; misuse of Parliamentary Privileges has once resulted in loss of legitimacy of Parliament and the growing calls for codifying these privileges. Likewise misuse of Office of Governor by central government has resulted in calls for the abolition of office. The applicability of the principle to the media is also evident. By using fake news, sponsored news, and sensationalizing news, today's media has hampered media ethics. Aristotle, Confucius, Buddha have continually taught mankind to choose the middle road since achieving only worldly success this world, will not satisfy our most basic needs; Instead, a balance must be struck between meeting needs and upholding moral convictions so that the hereafter is not decimated. Therefore, citizen and authorities need to prioritize principles over privileges which are essential to the suc-

cess of any nation. The moral dilemma to choose between principles and privileges is faced by everyone, at least once in a life. Humanity has made great strides in the development of technologies that may have improved quality of life and comfort while also curing a number of incurable diseases. However, this has also begun to compromise with moral values, which has led to the worst form of humanitarian crisis that the whole world is witnessing. In international realm, nations need to uphold international law and cooperate for tackling global challenges. If nations like America remain in self-denial mode, they will weaken not only their national prosperity but existence of entire humanity.

The maxim presented above has a lot of truth concealed in it. Individuals who place a higher importance on privileges than morality are conceited, selfish, and shortsighted. Their sole concern is to seize and utilize resources, amenities, and services for their own benefit. They don't consider the needs of others, the repercussions, or other moral and ethical considerations. All they want to do is what makes them happy and keeps them in their comfort zone. These individuals pose a serious threat to society, the country, and the entire globe. Such individuals also pose a risk to themselves. Yet people in their drive to preserve their various privileges – power, wealth, status overlook ethical principles.

They sacrifice principles for gaining short-term happiness. However as the above example shows, they end up losing both their privileges and principles. The quotation is highly relevant for our times when excessive materialism and pursuing "self-interest" at any cost, by any means has become the new normal. Today any man who sticks to his principles over material pleasures is considered fool at best and ridiculed by all at worst. Today, every parent wants to give the best education to their children, which is not just confined to the books but it goes much beyond that. It is pertinent for leaders in Pakistan and across the globe to help students foster a strong sense of right and wrong, promoting qualities such as honesty, integrity, and empathy. These qualities are not only important for personal growth but also for building a harmonious and compassionate society. Value education develops not only a well-balanced individual with a strong character and value but also makes them a socially acceptable individual.

# PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

## Notice of Public Hearing by the Authority to consider SNGPL's petition for Revision of Security Deposit of Domestic (System Gas & RLNG) Consumers

Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) filed the subject petition before the Authority for approval of amendment in the Standard Contract for Supply of Natural Gas/RLNG for domestic consumers. In the instant petition, SNGPL proposed the following mechanism/benchmarks for Domestic System Gas and RLNG consumers:

### I. Security Deposit on System Gas Tariff:

#### a) **New Consumers**

On the basis of winter months average consumption of  $HM^3$  1.67 per month for three months period, minimum Security Deposit should be Rs.4,500/- subject to revision as & when tariff is revised.

#### b) **Existing Consumers:**

If security is maintained below Rs.4,500/-, the shortfall will be recovered over a period of six months in equal installments.

#### c) **Existing Consumers with Higher Consumption:**

For consumers with consumption higher than threshold of Rs.4,500/-, the security deposit will be recovered equivalent to 90 days consumption based on average consumption of last year's winter season i.e. (Dec, Jan & Feb). This security will also serve as minimum benchmark for that consumer.

### II. Security Deposit on RLNG Tariff:

#### a) **New Consumers:**

Rs.50,000/- shall be charged as minimum-Security Deposit which has been calculated by applying the latest RLNG Tariff on benchmark consumption of  $1.67 HM^3$  and then applying applicable taxes multiplying the resultant number with two months, subject to revision after 12 months.

#### b) **Existing Consumers:**

If security is maintained below the recommended level of minimum threshold i.e. Rs.50,000/- the shortfall will be recovered over a period of six months in equal installments.

#### c) **Consumers with Higher Consumption:**

In this case, the additional security will be recovered equivalent to 60 days consumption based on average consumption of last year's winter season i.e. (Dec, Jan & Feb) and will serve as minimum benchmark for that consumer.

In pursuance of the provisions of OGRA Ordinance, 2002 and Natural Gas (Licensing) Rules, 2002, Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority invites all interested/affected persons/parties and general public to furnish their comments, suggestions and intervention requests. All correspondence in this connection may be addressed to Senior Registrar, OGRA and should contain the names and addresses of applicant.

All interveners must indicate the manner in which they are likely to be affected by determination of the Authority in this case. Intervention request should be accompanied by an affidavit verifying the contents of the intervention, intervention fee of Rs.500/- (demand draft in favour of OGRA) and authority letter if representing an organization.

Copy of SNGPL's petition is available on OGRA's official website which can also be obtained on payment of prescribed charges of Rs.2/- per page from the office of Senior Registrar, OGRA, Islamabad.

For any information required from the Petitioner, please contact:

**Mr. Kamran Akram,  
General Manager (RA),**

Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited, 21-Kashmir Road, Lahore.

Phone No.: 042-99201483, Fax: 042-99204424

OGRA has decided to hold Public Hearing in the subject case according to the date, time and venue mentioned below:

Date	:	December 11, 2023 (Monday)
Time	:	11:30 a.m.
Venue	:	Avari Hotel (Mall Road), Lahore

All parties to the proceedings, stakeholders, general public and interested / affected persons are hereby informed of the above proceedings.

**Senior Registrar,  
Oil & Gas Regulatory Authority**

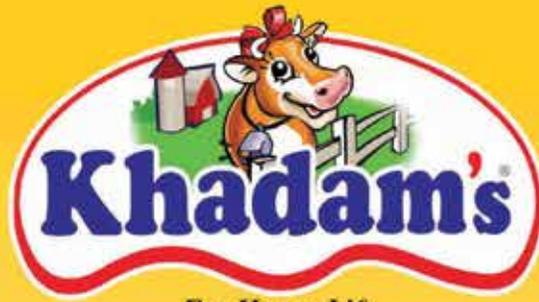
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