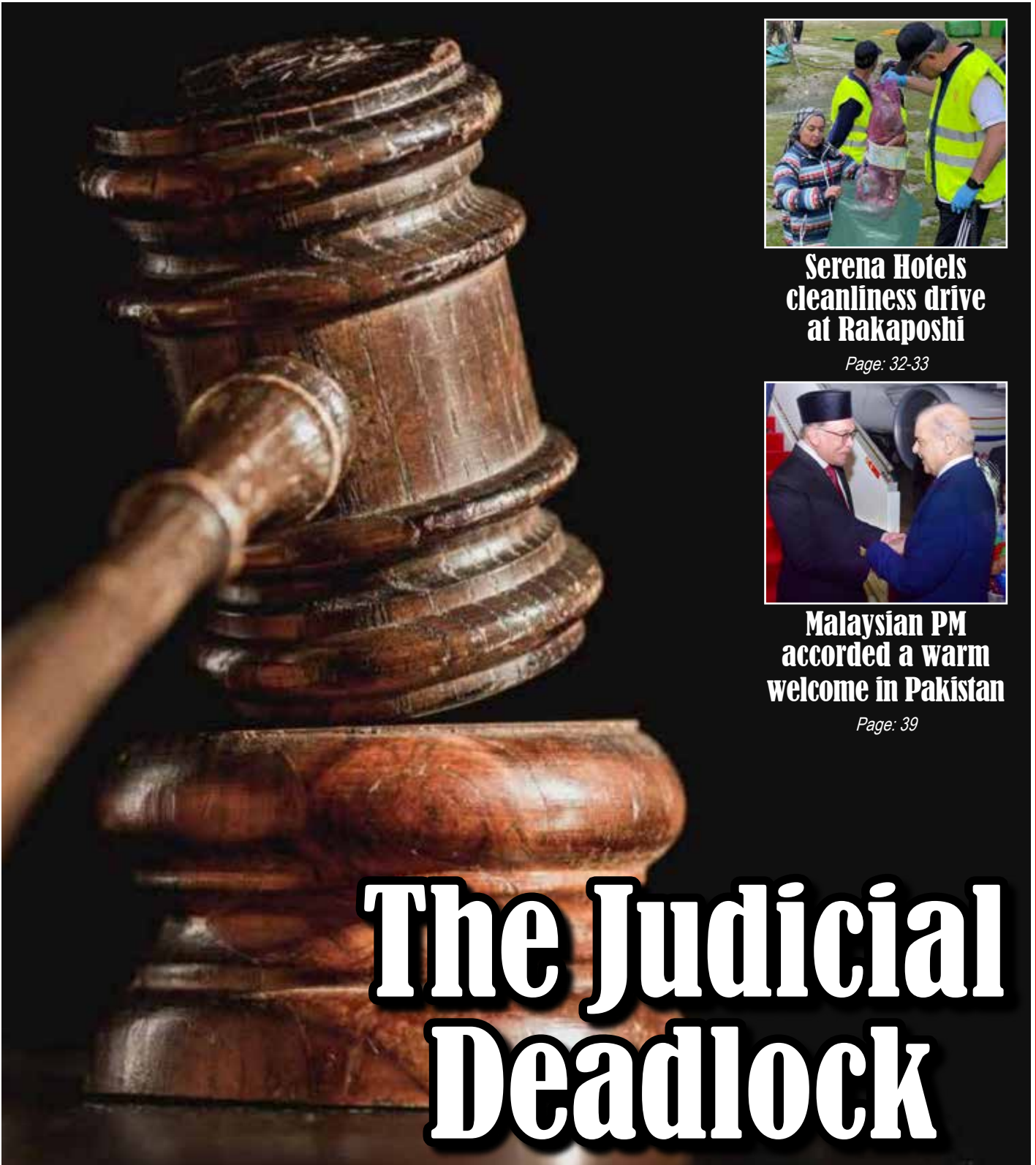


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Serena Hotels cleanliness drive at Rakaposhi

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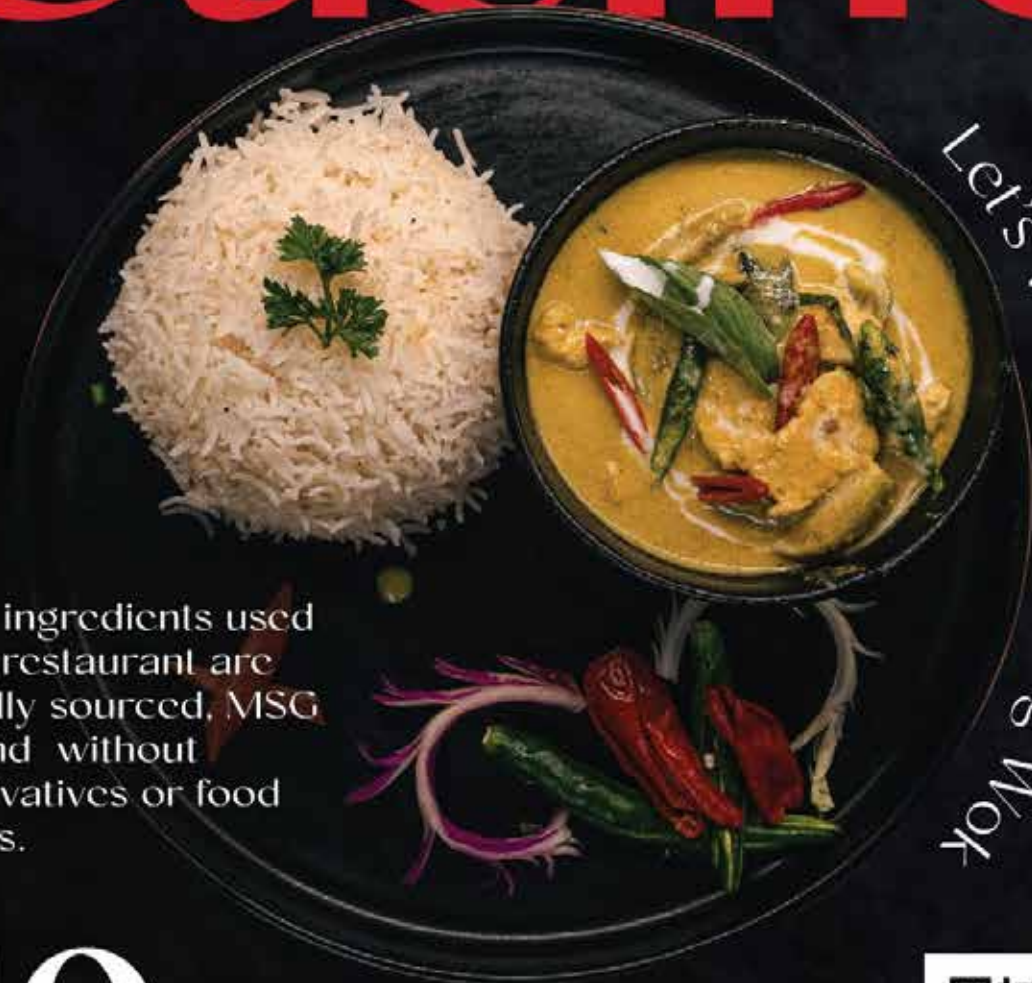


Malaysian PM accorded a warm welcome in Pakistan

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The Judicial Deadlock

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Charter of Parliament: will it work?



ISLAMABAD: The Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, has proposed a "Charter of Parliament" aimed at fostering political consensus among various stakeholders, including the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Bilawal Bhutto, in his speech, emphasized that any effort towards political consensus without PTI's participation would be futile. But the question arises: why did the Speaker suddenly propose this charter, and why did all political parties, except PTI, agree to it? The answer seems obvious. The unprecedented "ransacking" of the Parliament House on September 10, 2024, by masked individuals left everyone shocked. The Speaker, as the custodian of the House, bears responsibility for the safety of its members. The fact that members of Parliament were arrested from within the National Assembly premises was a particularly troubling development. No one expected that those who consider themselves above the law would go so far as to violate the sanctity of the Parliament itself. In an attempt to mitigate the humiliation caused by these events and the arrests of parliamentarians within the House, the Speaker, it appears, proposed the so-called "Charter of Parliament" as a means of diverting attention. In justifying the proposal, Speaker Ayaz Sadiq suggested that if the leaderships are uninterested in such an arrangement, then members should move forward on their own. However, one must question whether Ayaz Sadiq, a long-time ally of Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif, could truly act independently of their influence. Is he capable of disregarding their directives? The answer is likely no, which raises the suspicion that this proposal is merely a political maneuver designed for face-saving purposes rather than a genuine effort toward political unity. If the speaker is genuinely appalled by the events of September 10, he should immediately file an FIR, just as he did in 2014 when Imran Khan and Tahir ul Qadri's protestors attempted to storm Parliament. This is precisely what PTI has demanded of him: if he is truly committed to uniting political parties for the betterment of the country, he must demonstrate courage by taking action and holding the real culprits accountable. The prospects for the success of the Charter of Parliament appear quite bleak. Both the PPP and PML-N have a history of signing similar agreements, such as the Charter of Democracy, but failing to honor their commitments. As a result, the Charter of Democracy never truly materialized. One particularly interesting clause in that charter was a pledge by both parties to never form a government with the help of the Establishment!!

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 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.

The Judicial deadlock: the way forward

The Chinese ambassador, in his recent meeting with Nawaz Sharif, highlighted Pakistan's ongoing political turmoil, signaling concern from nations with significant interests in the country. Political stability is essential for achieving economic stability, and any constitutional amendments at this critical juncture would only exacerbate existing challenges, deepening the political divide.

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

I NTERESTINGLY, there has never been a dull moment in Pakistan. Since its inception, the country has faced continual turmoil, which perhaps explains why we lag behind nations that gained independence after Pakistan. From the very beginning, the country's elite embarked on a mission to dominate all spheres. Politicians sought to maintain control over the political domain at any cost, the business elite took over key enterprises, and, above all, the Establishment endeavored to assert control over everything. As a result, the country's affairs have deteriorated, and a true democratic order, along with the rule of law, has struggled to take root in this so-called "land of the pure." The judiciary also sought to expand its influence and authority when the opportunity to seize power arose. Historically, the judiciary has often acted as a facilitator in reinforcing the control of the Establishment, particularly in domestic affairs. Whether it was the hanging of former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the overthrow of Nawaz Sharif's government, or more recently the dislodging of Imran Khan's government, the judiciary has frequently played a pivotal role—most often aligning with the powers that be. Recently, we have observed a

growing sense of 'defiance' within the superior judiciary. This began when six judges of the Islamabad High Court wrote to the Supreme Judicial Council, highlighting interference from the Establishment in judicial matters. Initially, the letter stirred some controversy, but over time, the issue appears to have been quietly set aside. The ongoing tug-of-war among Supreme Court judges has taken center stage, with analysts suggesting that the incumbent Chief Justice is playing the role of a 'facilitator' in the conflict between the judges, the Election Commission, and the government. A recent verdict by eight judges, led by Senior Judge Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, directed the Election Commission to allocate reserved seats to the PTI. In response, the Election Commission and the government have been using delaying tactics, aware that implementing the judgment would position the PTI as the largest party in the National Assembly. This shift would also prevent the ruling coalition from securing the two-thirds majority needed for constitutional amendments. From the public's perspective, this ongoing maneuvering has made the situation intriguing. However, these developments do not bode well for the future of the rule of law or for maintaining a cooperative

relationship among state institutions.

The government attempted to secure a two-thirds majority to amend the Constitution but failed to persuade JUI Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, temporarily halting its plans. Despite this setback, the government remains determined to establish the Constitutional Court as the highest court in Pakistan. However, legal experts and lawyers argue that having two courts with equal authority could lead to confusion and conflict. Many political parties, including those in the ruling coalition, have voiced concerns about these proposed changes. Nevertheless, they feel pressured to comply, as opposing the plan may cost them their positions.

No one can claim with certainty that the new Constitutional Court will be free from error, nor that the judges appointed by the government will be infallible or immune to influence, coercion, manipulation, or pressure. To genuinely reform the judicial system, political parties must start from the grassroots. The lower judiciary, in particular, requires urgent and comprehensive reform. Currently, those seeking justice are forced to navigate a maze of bureaucratic hurdles, often having to resort to bribery to influence those in power. This deeply entrenched corruption allows even individuals guilty of heinous crimes to exploit loopholes and escape accountability. Without addressing these systemic flaws in the lower judiciary, true justice remains inaccessible to many, and any reforms at higher levels will only offer superficial improvements. Hence the idea of the Constitutional Court appears to be an attempt to further strengthen foothold the powers-that-be, particularly on the judiciary because the Judiciary turns out to be a force that can pose a challenge at any time. Therefore, the establishment of the Constitutional Court composed of judges of government choice becomes vital for such powers.

If the government genuinely intends to reform the superior judiciary to reduce case backlogs, establishing this court could occur at any time. Why, then, is it deemed



necessary to launch it in October? This timing raises significant concerns. The government's apparent motivation for an October launch likely stems from two key factors. First, it aims to finalize the court before the SCO summit in the second week of October. Second, reports suggest a desire to appoint CJP Qazi Faez Isa as the first Chief Justice of the Constitutional Court, coinciding with his retirement that same month. However, this second option may have backfired; Justice Faez Isa has become a controversial figure. Appointing someone with existing controversies could taint the new court's reputation before it even begins, jeopardizing the entire initiative. And that may not be a significant issue for the real forces behind this idea, as finding like-minded judges is hardly a challenge. In conclusion, the political and economic landscape is likely to face further turbulence in the coming days and months. The Chinese ambassador, in his recent meeting with Nawaz Sharif, highlighted Pakistan's ongoing political turmoil, signaling concern from nations with significant interests in the country. Political stability is essential for achieving economic stability, and any constitutional amendments at this critical juncture would only exacerbate existing challenges, deepening the political divide.

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Next Peace support Mission for Somalia (AUSSOM) is under prerogative of the Government of Somalia

TERRORISM is the most asymmetric global threat that has no border, nationality, and religion; therefore, the global counterterrorism efforts require a holistic approach to overcoming. Al-Qaida affiliated terrorist group of Al-Shabaab established a secret stronghold bases in Somalia due to absence of capable government and a period of political and security crises in the country, therefore the government of Somalia called for the international community to support reinforcement troops to counter the enemy. African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) have done a brilliant work in countering terrorist groups in Somalia and protection of the main sites of the government. Under their mission the militia has been militarily weakened, stopped from expansion, dislodged many strategic locations controlled by these ruthless militia groups etc. Later, under the security council resolution 2628 the mission's name was relocated into African Union transition mission troops in Somalia (ATMIS), given a clear mandate of to further accelerate the fight against terrorist group Al-Shabaab, and to implement the scheduled components of the Somali Transitional Plan (STP) within the set time frame period. Ethiopia, like other troop contributing member states, did come into Somalia territory with an official mandate of the Government of Somalia to join the fight against the terrorist groups, Al-Shabab and Al-Qaida. Being a proactive member in both AMISOM, ATMIS missions, Ethiopians didn't bring a miracle as terrorists not completely uprooted, due to one way or another, however, Ethiopia's contribution towards counterterrorism mission was valuable and deserves to be upheld. Meanwhile, it is also a quite important to highlighted that the security situation in Somalia, is almost in a right direction as the entire country is quite safe and stable. Government institutions are efficiently transforming, fit to undertake the national security; Federal member states, on their turn, duly control their jurisdictions chasing terrorists' elements in the remote bushy areas. Somali National Army (SNA) is, fully restructured, trained, and alert to confront the country's external and internal enemy. Army embargo that was obstacle to the country's defense mechanism for decades have been lifted. The government is now able to equip its army with sophisticated army. large areas in the south and central of the country liberated from the enemy and returned to under the control of the government, all these milestones is achieved by effort of Somalia National Army with the assistance of the AMISOM troops. The Somali Army is in full recovery, showed resilient and ready to take over the country's security from our brotherly AMISOM troops who contributed much to the security of Somalia.

As for the transitioning from ATMIS of the next peace Support Mission. Somalia, as hosting country has a full right to determine which country troops will join and which not. Somalia, indeed, indebted, to the brotherly African countries whose troops sacrificed in restoring peace and security into Somalia, nevertheless, the composition of the next support troops (AUSSOM) is the sole prerogative of the Federal Government of Somalia, it isn't sharing, nor negotiable matter, and that should be clear to anyone concerned. This support Mission will be based on inline to the national security priorities; thus, in consultation with concerned government partners and allays, the choice will be clear.

As, Ethiopia, I think it fair enough if conditioned to abstain the aggression and immediately revoke the illegal MoU signed with the self-breakaway region of Somalia, which was unacceptable violation and insult to the sovereignty of the country. Soit's a pure logic that you cannot support someone that you are, on the other hand, an enemy to him. Moreover, the recent arise comedy like story called "to where is the way to access to the red sea", that a neigh-

boring country has been spelling out repeatedly, with no legal argument base seemed to be a beginning of an orchestrated new form of proxy crisis aimed to disrupt the delicate peace and security of the Horn of Africa region. A region that has already been staggering with its multiple odd complications on the ground such as, internal conflicts, terrorism, poverty, droughts, contagious diseases, natural disasters, external interference, regional competitions, etc. That someone woke up one day in the morning and start yelling out "the way to the access of the red sea"? threatening to get access to the sea either by peace or by..? was astonishing. However, again, with disregard to every respected law and norms exist either to be international or regional that, Addis Ababa, deliberately chose to sign an illegal MoU, with Somaliland, a secessionist region of Somalia, which allegedly granted 20km of maritime lease base to Addis Ababa in the coast of Somalia, deeply shocked the whole world. This reminds me a Somali idiom word which says "kuqabsoku qadi mayside" meaning, "hold on to it, you won't be deprived" and Ethiopian's intention is that. This illegal MoU triggered the ongoing tension and dispute between the two countries, posing uncertainty to the stability of the region. Mogadishu and Addis Ababa have a lot of other positive avenues to work with and cooperate to each other, rather than choosing hostile and unproductive dark and narrow corridor. The two neighboring countries had had unpleasant history of grudges and enmity, therefore, such a reckless action, can only revitalize and irritate the healed bruises and wounds in the past, and diverts the attention from the joint combat against the common enemy, terrorist groups al-Shabaab, to eliminate from the region.



Shirwa Abdullahi Ibrahim

Aligning to the strategic significance and the geopolitical and geoeconomics dynamic of the region, the intertwined geopolitical competition and challenges, sensitivity within the region or beyond, Ethiopia's unwarranted act, seems to be as a foreign agenda. Obviously, Its beyond regional agenda, aimed to destabilize the region and Addis Ababa, acts as an agent implementing this unlawful project in the region. "If the way to sea can be found and reached out to such that simple, "just I want" it won't have remained there for that good centuries long. In that case, our brothers should know that "the road to the access the red sea is blocked and barriered", and there no way to that side, that it must be returned. The sea belongs to the people of Somalia and can only be accessed with the permission of the Federal Government of Somalia, based on the international laws, bilateral and through the UN convention on the law of sea (UNCLOS). So, anything less than that could be waste of time and only increase an avoidable enmity and destruction to the region. Addis Ababa, has a handful of its own internal problems, that needs to be addressed, instead of meddling internal issues of a sovereign nation. The two counties share a common destiny, therefore the problem of one side effects the other, and, in that case, our prayer and best wishes is to Ethiopia, to maintain peace, harmony, and better future. In conclusion, I wish to emphasize, there is number of friendly countries who are agitated Ethiopia's blatant aggression is trying to find a solution for this conflict with peace, non of them requested by the government of Somalia, however, the ongoing negotiation process led by the Government of Turkey is a huge opportunity. Somalia joined to the negotiation table, while it has every right not show up, therefore, we look forward, Addis Ababa will double think and come to that table with an open-minded agenda to move forward towards resolution of the conflict.

*– Mr. Shirwa Abdullahi Ibrahim is the (Ambassador).
The Charge de' Affairs of the Embassy of
the Federal Republic in Islamabad.*



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Pakistan's Integration into the China-Russia Axis



Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer

THE involvement of the United States in Ukraine the South China Sea exemplifies its longstanding rivalry with China Russia. This rivalry has led to the formation of new alliances that could potentially support territorial disputes, with these groups pitted against one another while simultaneously coordinating economic security cooperation. Consequently, the Pakistan-China-Russia alignment is largely shaped by their shared interests. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) plays a significant role in this alignment as it has the potential to bring Pakistan closer to Pan-Eurasian integration. As the flagship project of the Belt Road Initiative (BRI), CPEC could link Pakistan with the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), Iran, SAARC, China. Although CPEC does not directly run through Russia, there is a possibility of branch routes connecting through Xinjiang to the Central Asian Republics (CARs) potentially extending to Russia. The Altai Republic, which borders Xinjiang, could also be linked to CPEC through a northern branch route. This could give Russia access to energy-rich regions global markets, which it could leverage to develop its Siberian region. Russia's grand strategic vision of becoming a dominant force in the Eurasian supercontinent has inspired its leadership to revisit relations with Pakistan. This has led to a game-changing inclusive partnership with Pakistan to address common challenges, such as the threat posed by ISIS in Afghanistan, to collaborate on the CPEC initiative. The emerging defense relationship between Russia Pakistan serves as the backbone of their evolving rapprochement reflects new strategic thinking by both countries toward South Asia. Furthermore, defense exports from Russia could enhance Pakistan's capacity to counter terrorism lay the foundation for expanded military cooperation, potentially including the acquisition of jets, tanks, other munitions if conditions are favorable. In recent years, India has diversified its defense partnerships with countries like the United States, Japan, Israel, France, which have eroded Russia's dominance in India's defense market. As a result, Russia is seeking new arms markets in the region to expand its defense relationships. The joint military drill between Russia Pakistan, known as Druzhba, in 2016 marked a fast-track trajectory in developing these ties amid the changing geopolitics of South Asia. The most promising area of cooperation between Russia Pakistan in the near future is Afghanistan. Moscow has hosted several peace conferences in recent years, Pakistan's

participation in these talks demonstrates the growing alignment between Russia Pakistan regarding the future role of the Taliban as an anti-terrorist force. This shift in Russia's strategic calculus, away from its Cold War stance, is driven by concerns about ISIS infiltrating the CARs, which could destabilize the region. Instead of relying on military might, Russia has turned to diplomatic solutions, using regional actors like Pakistan to achieve results in the fight against terrorism. Given Pakistan's long border with Afghanistan its historical relations with both Kabul the Taliban, strategic coordination between Islamabad Moscow could open new avenues of cooperation in the future. The convergence of interests between Russia Pakistan, particularly regarding ISIS, the recognition of the Taliban as a legitimate actor, the stability of Afghanistan, is bringing the two states closer at a rapid pace. Additionally, the energy sector offers another area for deepening relations between the two countries. Pakistan Russia have already initiated cooperation with the construction of the North-South gas pipeline. Pakistan, which needs alternative energy resources to meet its growing demand, can benefit from Russia's expertise in this field. The evolving cooperation between Islamabad Moscow signals to the world that both states are working within a traditional framework of cooperation. Pakistan could potentially benefit from Siberian resources by utilizing the Xinjiang-CPEC route for energy imports. If the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline project faces political obstacles, the Altai-Xinjiang pipeline could be an ideal alternative for Pakistan. The strong leg of the China-Russia-Pakistan triangle is the China-Pakistan link. Pakistan China have been traditional allies, supporting each other historically in areas such as military equipment diplomacy. China has assisted Pakistan in building nuclear reactors, Pakistan, in collaboration with China, has developed the JF-17 fighter jet. Pakistan is one of the largest importers of Chinese defense equipment is set to acquire eight Chinese S20 or Yuan-class submarines. China has also invested in the Karakoram Corridor Gwadar Port. The growing strategic partnership between India the United States in areas of shared defense interests is a source of concern for Pakistan. The relationship between Pakistan the United States has been turbulent, it reached a low point with the Trump administration's policy on Afghanistan. The alignment of interests between Russia, China, Pakistan largely stems from their

shared opposition to the United States. For Russia China, the United States is seen as a hegemonic force that threatens their security. Pakistan, due to its longstanding conflict with India, is willing to be part of an Asian security architecture designed by China. Russia, meanwhile, sees an opportunity to establish a strategic relationship with Pakistan as India diversifies its list of military suppliers to include the United States Israel. Regarding technology energy supplies, Russia offers an alternative source for the region. Russia could gain access to new markets for its defense equipment may continue to supply arms to both India Pakistan. Russia's decision to arm Pakistan is significant because it indicates that Moscow is no longer giving preferential treatment to its old strategic partner, India. While India remains an important economic partner for Russia, the divergence of interests between Moscow New Delhi is becoming more apparent as Russia grows closer to China. China, with its strong economy substantial foreign reserves, is looking to invest secure energy supplies. Pakistan, with its large youthful population, needs energy resources defense equipment. The new alignment will give Pakistan access to Russian technology, which is often the source of many Chinese products. The mutual interests driving the Moscow-Islamabad partnership are contributing to a shift in international relations. In Europe, Russia is involved in a confrontation with the West over Ukraine is under Western sanctions due to its actions in Crimea. In the Asia-Pacific, tensions have escalated between China neighboring countries due to China's actions in the South China Sea. These developments have pushed China Russia to seek new allies, which explains the growing rapport between the two powers. However, the question remains whether this partnership can evolve into a formal alliance given the historical distrust between the countries. The old adage "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" seems to apply here, as the shared perception of the United States as a common adversary is the most important factor driving this alignment, superseding other considerations. China needs new allies to reshape the global order, this process begins in Asia.

Challenges in Transitioning from ATMIS to a New Peace Support Mission: The Ethiopian Perspectives

THE changing patterns of contemporary Horn of Africa politics cannot be understood without knowing Addis Ababa's unwavering commitment to peace and stability in the region. The Ethiopian government's determination to ensure peace and stability in East Africa has convinced leading Addis Ababa-based state authorities to play a valuable role in introducing and supporting various peacekeeping efforts and the inter-state level proposal for conflict resolutions. This support mainly focused on the emerging interconnectedness of regional and international efforts to address the question of violent non-state actors in the Horn of Africa. The presence of Al-Shabaab and Daesh violent non-state actors and clandestine terrorist entities in Somalia causes great danger to Horn of Africa states particularly peacekeeping contributing countries. The widespread terrorist activities of the Al-Shabaab group have been internationally considered a serious threat to the entire East African regional security, and the Somalia-based origin of this non-state element dragged the attention of the entire region towards Somalia. The cross-border terrorist activities of this Somali-based extremist group have challenged the legitimate state structure of the country parallel to expanding its activities to the territorially adjoining nations. The covertly designed violent activities of this non-state actor have jeopardized the position of East African nations in their home region by disturbing everyday life, increasing the number of displaced people, and preventing the chances of foreign investment and economic development. Thus, the transnational violent activities of Al-Shabaab mainly target the countries supporting the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISON) and the states advocating the operations of peacekeeping forces in the Horn of Africa. In this regard, Ethiopia plays a prominent role in establishing and advancing the functions of AMISON and the reasons for its creation in the region to help to rebuild, restore peace and stability and development in Somalia. The Ethiopian government's direct and indirect military operations under a greater terror-combating national plan made Addis Ababa relevant to the regional responses to Somalia's question of peace, mainly through AMISON. Under different political administrations, the Ethiopian government has always remained highly committed to investing its diplomatic, political, and military potential in controlling terrorism in Somalia. In this way, Addis Ababa became the frontline state in investing its multifaceted national potential in combating the rise of terrorist groups in the East African region. This factor has made Ethiopia a significant contributor to AMISON, which later became the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) in 2022, according to the Peace and Security Council (PSC). The PSC's decision to convert AMISON into ATMIS originated from its 1068th meeting of PSC, and highlighted the issue of peace and stability in the region generally, and the Somali Peninsula specifically. Addis Ababa's vision for launching direct and indirect military campaigns against terrorist outfits in Somalia was inherited with the objective of preventing the presence of Al-Shabaab significantly beyond Somalia's territorial jurisdictions. For the achievement of regional peace and stability, Addis Ababa's military support to the Somali government remained vibrant in preventing the strongholds of Al-Shabaab and its growing transnational violent attacks. Aligning with the multidimensional Addis Ababa's efforts for providing essential training, mentoring, and logistical support to the leading law enforcement agencies of Somalia, such as the Somali National Army, Police and intelligence to ensure, defeat, and sustain peace and stability clearly depicts Addis Ababa commitment to Somali cause. No one can undermine and deny the sacrifices Ethiopia paid for restoring, rebuilding and sustaining Somalia's peace and development. Indeed, Ethiopian foreign policy after the reformist government gave great importance and priorities to the neighboring countries as a result it strives to ensure regional integration and cooperation. Ethiopia re-



Ambassador Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula

mained an anchor state in the Horn of Africa that advance regional integration through policy harmonization and mutual benefits and respect. To this end, Ethiopia's peace and stability cannot alienated from the peace and security of its neighbors. Hence, Ethiopia will not tolerate any external forces that tried to destabilize and create hostile environment and erode the trust between or among the region that has a ramification on the success gained on the terrorist entities. In this perspectives, Ethiopia communicated to the regional and international communities the serious concerns of Addis Ababa regarding the transition of ATMIS into a new peace-supporting mission with the support of the United Nations and the African Union. The statement recalled the sacrifices of Ethiopian defence forces in preventing the overwhelming role of non-state violent entities in Somalia and rationalizing Addis Ababa's mission for ensuring peace and security in the region. Several international and regional reports and various formal government statements from different countries have acknowledged the critical role of Addis Ababa in the support of Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) in the Somali Peninsula in fighting against the anti-peace elements. So, it can be maintained that the Ethiopian role must be connected to the greater multilateral efforts for installing durable peace and sustainable development in Somalia. The contribution of Addis Ababa to the greater cause of peace will enable the region to benefit from the Ethiopian vision of development in which Prime Minister Abiy Ahmad has already introduced its energy diplomacy with the completion of a mega hydropower project and coupled with infrastructure connectivity, and port diversification that enhance regional integration and collective prosperity. Given the serious threat of cross-border terrorism, it is crucial for the countries committed to maintaining peace in the Horn of Africa to develop and enhance their existing counterterror measures. The formal decision-makers of Ethiopia advocate for more comprehensive and coordinated regional counterterror approaches, with the support of the international community, to establish East Africa as a prominent terror-free area. Ethiopia's significant contribution to multilevel counter-radicalization efforts has earned the nation high ranks and demonstrated its deep commitment to keeping the Horn of Africa safe from the threats of non-state actors. A comprehensive overview of Ethiopian foreign relations suggests that the country has become a hub of regional counterterror campaigns, and the formulation of new or upgraded anti-terror alliances can only be effective with the active involvement of Ethiopia. Ethiopia's active participation in the Somalia-centric counterterror efforts could enable the participating countries to achieve the desired objectives from their multilateral anti-terror collaboration. In the light of these, leaders of the region should unite their policies, resources, capacities, and actions to fight and eliminate the terrorist groups from Somalia peninsula and ensure peace and stabilities in the region.

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The Supreme Court Judgement: A Legal Storm

OPINION

The Supreme Court's judgment emphasized that an election petition is not just a dispute between candidates but a matter of public interest, where all citizens have a vested stake in ensuring elections are fair, free, and untainted by corrupt practices

IN its landmark 70-page detailed judgment, the Supreme Court upheld the supremacy of the people's will in the election process, dismissing the government's narrative that PTI received undue relief despite not being a party to the dispute. The Court made a clear distinction between election petitions and civil cases, emphasizing that an election petition represents the collective will of the constituency and the public interest, unlike a civil suit, which involves only two parties. Citing *Morris J. 's 1875 Tipperary Election Case* and *Grove J. in Aldridge*, the Court highlighted that election petitions are fundamentally about ensuring the rights and interests of the electorate and the purity of the election process. The Supreme Court's judgment emphasized that an election petition is not just a dispute between candidates but a matter of public interest, where all citizens have a vested stake in ensuring elections are fair, free, and untainted by corrupt practices. The Court underscored its obligation to protect the electorate's right to fair representation, ensuring that only candidates who have genuinely won through legitimate means assume office. It stressed that courts must remain impartial and focus solely on legal and evidential matters to maintain electoral integrity. The judgment rejected the Election Commission and government's attempts to undermine the election process by highlighting procedural errors, instead basing its decision on a correct legal interpretation that reinforced the people's mandate and strengthened democratic governance by ensuring the accurate and fair representation of the electorate's will. The judgment criticized the legal representatives of all parties involved in the case for failing to highlight the correct legal position regarding the nature of election disputes and for not presenting strong arguments. As a result, the Court took it upon itself to bring out the relevant facts and legal points, granting the eventual relief through a broader and more comprehensive judicial inquiry into the election dispute at hand. While addressing the core issue of depriving PTI of its election symbol and its fundamental right to contest elections as a political party, the judgment criticized the Election

Commission's order dated 22 December 2023, which was upheld by the Supreme Court in its order dated 13 January 2024. The Court held both the Election Commission and the Supreme Court responsible for creating confusion regarding the status of PTI candidates and PTI's entitlement to reserved seats. It observed that if the Supreme Court had clearly clarified its intentions in its earlier order, the question of the allocation of reserved seats would not have arisen. The judgment took the Election Commission to task and charged it by framing the Rule 94 which provides the procedure for the calculation, allocation and notification of the share of proportional representation of political parties in the seats reserved for women and non-Muslims in contravention to the specific provision of the article 51(6)(d) & (e) and 106(3)(c) of the Constitution. The judgment held the Commission responsible for violating the constitution by defining a political party as a party to which a symbol has been allocated by the Commission.' By defining a political party in this manner, the Explanation excludes a political party that has not been allotted a symbol by the Commission from being allocated a share of proportional representation in the reserved seats. This interpretation according to the judgment was self serving and extra constitutional as termed it infringement of the constitutional right of a political party, conferred by Articles 51(6)(d) & (e) and 106(3)(c) of the Constitution, to have its due share of proportional representation in the seats reserved for women and non-Muslims on the basis of general seats secured by such a political party. The judgment declared that notwithstanding that a political party has been declared ineligible to obtain an election symbol, its nominated candidates cannot be mentioned as independent candidates in the list of contesting candidates (Form 33), despite allotment of different election symbols to them under Section 67(3) of the Elections Act, nor can they be notified as independent returned candidates in the Section-98 Notification. The judgment emphasized that even if a political party fails to comply with the provisions of Section 209 of the Elections Act, which relates to intra-party elections, it remains an enlisted and fully functional politi-



Qamar Bashir

cal party. This means it retains its core purpose of 'propagating or influencing political opinion and participating in elections for any elective public office or for membership of a legislative body, including an Assembly, the Senate, or local government.' The judgment declared the Election Commission's order dated 2 February 2024 and the Returning Officers' action of labeling PTI candidates as independent candidates in Form-33 as unconstitutional and unlawful. It also criticized the Commission for its incorrect reliance on the Supreme Court order and for misinterpreting and misapplying observations that pertained to Section 215(5) of the Elections Act, rather than Sections 66 and 67. The judgment unequivocally declared that PTI and its voters were deprived of their vested rights granted by the Constitution due to the unlawful actions and omissions of the Returning Officers and the Election Commission. It recognized that PTI, along with its candidates and electorate, suffered the loss of certain constitutional and statutory rights, particularly their right to proportional representation in the reserved seats. The judgment acknowledged the coercion, intimidation, and pressure exerted on PTI, one of the largest political parties, by the combined force of the Commission and the Returning Officers. It highlighted that PTI was compelled, under significant duress and through the use of both kinetic and legal force, to forgo its election symbol and brand name and was forced into a situation where it had to merge with or join other political parties that were either parties in name only or had minimal public support. In the parting para the judgment, took note of the tone and observations made by the two dissenting judges, Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan and Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan, in their judgment dated 3 August 2024 and observed that these two judges went beyond the limits of judicial propriety by warning the returned candidates and suggesting that the Election Commission should not comply with the majority decision of the thirteen-member Full Court Bench.



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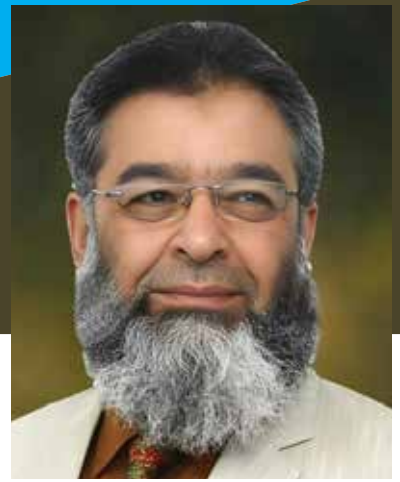
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Forging Ahead: Pakistan-Malaysia bilateral ties and opportunities



Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

THE longstanding relationship between Pakistan and Malaysia is rooted in shared cultural, religious, and political values, reinforced by mutual respect and cooperation across various sectors. Both nations, being Muslim-majority countries, have developed close diplomatic ties, often collaborating in regional and global forums. The upcoming visit of Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim to Pakistan highlights the strength of these ties and presents an opportunity to expand cooperation in key areas like trade, energy, and tourism. Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, accompanied by a high-level delegation, will visit Pakistan from Wednesday to Friday at the invitation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. This visit underscores the importance of Pakistan-Malaysia relations, with discussions set to focus on enhancing cooperation in trade, connectivity, agriculture, the halal industry, and cultural exchanges. The two leaders will also address regional and global developments, reflecting their mutual commitment to progress in the broader Islamic world. Historically, the relationship between Pakistan and Malaysia has been shaped by shared aspirations for development. Diplomatic engagements have emphasized economic cooperation, defense collaboration, and educational exchanges. Since the 1960s, when both nations were newly independent, high-level bilateral visits have played a crucial role in strengthening ties. Notably, Malaysia's long-serving Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad was instrumental in expanding trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. His multiple visits to Pakistan highlighted Malaysia's desire to collaborate on trade, education, and technology. On Pakistan's side, leaders like President General Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Imran Khan have also played significant roles in strengthening the relationship. The signing of the Malaysia-Pakistan Closer Economic Partnership Agreement (MPCEPA) in 2007 was a turning point, as it significantly boosted bilateral trade by reducing tar-

iffs and facilitating market access. As a result, both nations have benefited from expanded trade, with Pakistan exporting textiles, rice, and agricultural products, while Malaysia supplies palm oil, electronic goods, and machinery. Malaysia is currently one of Pakistan's largest trading partners in Southeast Asia, and both nations are now looking to further expand this relationship. Areas of focus during Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's visit will likely include agriculture and the halal industry, as both nations seek to capitalize on the growing global demand for halal products. The halal industry holds significant potential, with both Pakistan and Malaysia being well-positioned to lead global production in sectors ranging from food to pharmaceuticals. Energy cooperation is another area of mutual interest. With Pakistan's growing energy needs and Malaysia's expertise in renewable energy, both countries have an opportunity to collaborate on sustainable energy solutions. Malaysia has made considerable progress in solar and hydropower, and Pakistan could benefit from this expertise as it works to diversify its energy sources and address chronic power shortages. Both nations recognize the importance of energy infrastructure and are likely to explore partnerships that promote innovation and sustainable growth. Education has also played a key role in strengthening ties between the two countries. Over the years, many Pakistani students have pursued higher education in Malaysia, benefiting from the country's high-quality universities. This exchange of knowledge not only enhances individual capacities but also strengthens people-to-people ties. Expanding these academic exchanges would further enhance the intellectual and professional capabilities of both nations, deepening the relationship on a societal level. In defense, Pakistan and Malaysia have collaborated closely over the years, engaging in joint military exercises and sharing expertise in defense technologies. Both countries are committed to maintaining regional stability, and defense cooperation is likely to remain an

important aspect of the relationship. In multilateral forums such as the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Pakistan and Malaysia often align on key issues affecting the Muslim world, including the plight of the Rohingya and the Palestinian cause. A lesser-known but highly significant aspect of Pakistan-Malaysia cooperation lies in the intellectual domain, particularly in the area of economic development. Dr. Mehboob-ul-Haq, a renowned Pakistani economist and architect of the Human Development Index (HDI), played a key role in advising Malaysia on its economic policies during the 1980s. His work was instrumental in shaping Malaysia's development strategies, focusing on human development, poverty reduction, and equitable growth. His contribution is a testament to the intellectual bonds that have tied Pakistan and Malaysia together in their pursuit of economic progress. As Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim's visit approaches, it is evident that both Pakistan and Malaysia are looking to strengthen their historical ties in ways that will benefit both nations in an increasingly interconnected world. The focus on trade, energy, education, and people-to-people contacts will likely drive future cooperation. Both countries recognize the strategic importance of enhancing their partnership in light of regional and global challenges, from climate change to economic instability. In conclusion, the relationship between Pakistan and Malaysia is built on a foundation of shared values and strategic interests. The upcoming visit provides an opportunity to further enhance this relationship in areas that matter most to both nations—economic development, sustainable growth, and regional stability. As both countries look toward the future, this visit is expected to mark another step in deepening their partnership, benefiting Pakistan, Malaysia, and the broader region.

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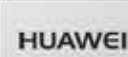
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President for further expanding trade ties with Sweden, Belgium

The envoys of Sweden and Belgium presented their diplomatic credentials during a ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr



Abid Raza

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday stressed the need to further enhancing the bilateral trade and economic ties with Sweden and Belgium. He was talking to the envoys of Sweden and Belgium who presented their diplomatic credentials during a ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr. The president received credentials from the Ambassador-designate of Sweden, Alexandra Berg Von Linde, and the Ambassador-designate of Belgium, Charles-Idesbald Van Der Gracht De Rommerswael, who also held separate meetings with him. President Zardari felicitated the two envoys on their appointment and expressed the hope that they would play their role in further improving mutually

beneficial cooperation with Pakistan. Talking to Ambassador Charles-Idesbald Van Der Gracht De Rommerswael, the president highlighted that Pakistan greatly valued its relations with Belgium. He said that Belgium was an important trading partner and Pakistan wanted to further enhance bilateral trade and economic cooperation with the country. During the meeting with Ambassador Alexandra Berg Von Linde, President Zardari said that Pakistan and Sweden enjoyed friendly and cooperative relations based on mutual respect and understanding. He underlined the need to further strengthen the bilateral relations for the mutual benefit of the two countries. Earlier upon their arrival at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the envoys were presented the guard of honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of the Pakistan Armed Forces.

Marcil Stittner new Marriott GM



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Marcel Stittner has joined as the new General Manager of the Islamabad Marriott Hotel. With over 20 years of management experience in luxury hospitality, Marcel brings knowledge from renowned brands like InterContinental, Hilton, Starwood, and Hyatt Hotels. The management of the Marriott Hotel has welcomed the new General Manager.



Indonesian Embassy in Islamabad celebrates 79th Independence Day

The Indonesian Chargé d'Affaires, diplomats, and their families attired in traditional dresses and colorful ethnic outfits, brought a lively and authentic Indonesian ambiance to the event

Mahnoor Ansar

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Islamabad hosted a majestic and cordial diplomatic reception to celebrate the Anniversary of 79th Indonesia's Independence Day at the Islamabad Marriot Hotel on 26 September 2024.

Federal Minister for Housing and Works, Hon. Mr. Mian Riaz Husain Pirzada was the Chief Guest on the occasion, while State Minister for Finance, Revenue, and Power, Hon. Mr. Ali Pervaiz Malik was also present. Approximately 400 attendees from diverse backgrounds, including members of diplomatic corps, Pakistani government officials, politicians, business leaders, media professionals and others made the celebration vibrant and well-attended. The Indonesian Chargé d'Affaires, diplomats, and their families attired in traditional dresses and colorful ethnic outfits, brought a lively and authentic Indonesian ambiance to the event. The venue itself was beautifully decorated with floral arrangements, Batik fabric, and cultural ornaments, which further enriched by posters of the founding fathers of the respective both countries, President Sukarno of Indonesia and Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah of Pakistan. The decorations seamlessly blended symbolism and aesthetics, celebrating the shared values of the two nations.

The theme of the reception was "New Nusantara, Advanced Indonesia", which referred to the current massive development on infrastructure and connectivity across the Indonesian archipelago, including the Indonesian new Capital City of Nusantara (IKN). Indeed, within one decade under incumbent President Joko Widodo, Indonesia has focused on improving the mobility of goods, people, and services through huge investment in infrastructure and connectivity. "Infrastructure projects across Indonesia is critical, as the Government of Indonesia will never let certain parts of the country left behind. Once again, improving connectivity and infrastructure means a lot, not only in strengthening economy but also in bolstering the unity of Indonesia," Chargé d'Affaires (CdA) Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma said in his remarks while he wore the traditional Javanese outfit inspired by the youth movement in the era of struggle for independence. "Indeed, Indonesia is not yet a role model, but I would say that Indonesia is an example for political stability, national unity, and economic prosperity," he added highlighting those issues in his extensive visits to several chambers of commerce and industry, universities, madrasahs, and think

tanks in Pakistan.

Touching upon economic cooperation, CdA Rahmat Hindiarta noted that Indonesia and Pakistan have significant untapped opportunities in trade and investment. He invited the Pakistani business community to attend the Indonesia and South and Central Asia Business Forum (INASCA) on 7 October 2024, as well as the prestigious Trade Expo Indonesia on 9-12 October 2024.

In his turn, the Federal Minister Pirzada said that Indonesia and Pakistan are two brotherly countries that share firm views on regional and international issues as members of Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and other international organizations. It is expected that the bilateral relations, including economic cooperation continue to grow. "On behalf of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, I convey congratulations to Indonesia on its 79th Independence Day," said Minister Pirzada concluded his remarks. The diplomatic reception commenced with moment of silence to remember and honor those had sacrificed their lives in Gaza, occupied territories of Palestine, and surrounding countries in the region. The following programs were Indonesian and Pakistani national anthems, followed by a cake-cutting ceremony, and documentary video on Indonesian new Capital City of Nusantara in Kalimantan island. Another major attraction was the "Saman Dance" from Indonesian Province of Aceh performed with rhythmic precision by dancers seated in a row. The dancers were the Indonesian students in Islamabad. They mesmerized the audience with synchronized hand clapping, chest slapping, and graceful body movements, reflecting Indonesia's vibrant cultural identity. The performance garnered enthusiastic applause, with the audience expressing admiration for Indonesia's artistic and cultural legacy. One of the highlights of the evening was a captivating fashion show, showcasing Indonesia's rich cultural heritage. Traditional costumes with distinct textiles, colors, motifs, and symbolic designs enchanted the audience, offering a vivid glimpse into the country's diverse traditions. The audience was also treated to a sumptuous spread that featured both local and continental cuisine, with Indonesian signature delicacies and drinks stealing the spotlight. "I really enjoy your event. Programs, performances, foods, and everything here are the best and well-organized," praised CEO Centaurus, Mr. Sardar Yasir Ilyas, while in parallel the Gemu Famire dance started. The dance becomes one of the mainstays of Fashmob's Indonesian promotional activities abroad.



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KKAWF, Serena Hotels unite for 8th edition of “Save Tomorrow” Run & Walk

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Karim Khan Afridi Welfare Foundation (KKAWF) and Serena Hotels successfully hosted the 8th edition of the “Save Tomorrow” Run & Walk, highlighting their shared commitment to addressing the issue of drug abuse in society. The event, held at Fatima Jinnah Park (F-9 Park) in Islamabad, drew over 500 participants, representing students, teachers, diplomats, families, differently-abled persons, all eager to highlight the perils of drug overdose, raise awareness about prevention and remember those who have lost their lives to this menace. The event was also supported by the Prime Minister’s Youth Programme, Capital Development Authority, US Educational Foundation Pakistan and FM 89 amongst others.

Divided into four categories—16 and below, 16+, 60+, and Differently-abled Persons—participants showcased their dedication to raising awareness and combating the widespread threat of drug addiction in Pakistan. Save Tomorrow 8 featured a series of activities including walk and run competitions, open mic tributes, and a flash mob. The event began with the Police Band performing the national anthem, followed by speeches that emphasized the importance of community-driven initiatives. Cristina Von Sperling Af-

ridi, Chairperson of KKAWF, spoke passionately about the urgent need to protect Pakistan’s youth from the scourge of drug abuse, highlighting the urgency of Prevention education. With 150 million youth under age 30 in Pakistan, and an estimated 8.9 million people in Pakistan (2015) on drugs, recent successful busts by the Anti-Narcotics Force on drug peddlers supplying to students, the need has become paramount for delivering effective prevention programs, she said. Diplomats, also addressed the gathering, commending the efforts of the organizers and participants for taking a stand against this global issue. Prizes were distributed to winners in each category, honoring their commitment and participation in the cause. The 8th edition of the “Save Tomorrow” Run & Walk highlights the power of collaboration in the fight against drug addiction. Serena Hotels and KKAWF remain dedicated to organizing initiatives that inspire action, foster community engagement, and bring lasting change. Together, we can build a healthier, drug-free society. Previously KKAWF together with Serena Hotels has organized IOAD national team matches of sports including cycling, football, rugby, volleyball, basketball and run and walk in collaboration with Federal Sports Board at Islamabad Sports Complex. It sees Sports as very important to keep youth away from drugs.



The Looming Iran-Israel War: Consequences for Pakistan



Qamar Bashir

The OIC should leverage Islamic solidarity to mediate between Iran and its neighbors, deploy fact-finding missions, and initiate a regional security dialogue to address broader issues

IRAN has fallen into a strategic trap for the second time, and only with capabilities comparable to Israel's military strength and allies as powerful as the USA and the West would Iran have any realistic fighting chance to safeguard its economic, industrial, and military assets. The formidable offensive and defensive military capabilities of Israel, the United States, and their allies collectively represent the most advanced military force in the world, equipped with cutting-edge technology and an extensive range of assets. The US leads with an extensive nuclear arsenal, a powerful air force equipped with F-22s, F-35s, long-range bombers, advanced missile systems like Tomahawk cruise missiles, and a dominant naval fleet with 11 aircraft carriers. Its capabilities are complemented by sophisticated cyber warfare and elite special forces such as Navy SEALs. Israel adds significant strength with its highly advanced air force, Jericho ballistic missiles, and leading drone technology, backed by elite units like Sayeret Matkal. Defensively, Israel's multi-layered missile defense systems, including Iron Dome, David's Sling, and the Arrow series, provide comprehensive protection against various missile threats. NATO allies and key partners like Japan, South Korea, and Gulf States contribute advanced aircraft, naval assets, ground forces, integrated air defense, and cyber defense, ensuring interoperability and global reach. This coalition's technological superiority, combined nuclear deterrence, and seamless joint operational capabilities across land, sea, air, cyber, and space domains create a formidable force, capable of addressing any threat and projecting power worldwide. Iran and its allies possess a formidable combination of offensive and defensive capabilities, relying on a mix of conventional and asymmetric warfare strategies to exert regional influence. Iran itself has a vast ballistic missile arsenal, including the Shahab and Fateh-110 series, long-range cruise missiles like the Soumar, advanced drones such as the Shahed-129, and significant naval power capable of swarming tactics in the Strait of Hormuz. Defensively, Iran has developed air defense systems like the Bavar-373 and maintains underground facilities for missile storage. Its allies, including Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, and various Shiite militias in Iraq and Syria, significantly amplify Iran's reach and strength. Hezbollah has an extensive rocket and missile stockpile, while the Houthis have demonstrated the ability to strike deep into Saudi Arabia and the UAE. These groups, alongside Iranian-

backed forces in Syria, enhance Iran's capacity for proxy warfare. This network enables Iran to conduct operations across multiple theaters, with a strong emphasis on asymmetric tactics, guerrilla warfare, cyber attacks, and missile strikes, making it a significant regional power despite facing technologically superior adversaries. If Iran faces a combined and coordinated attack by Israel, the US, and their allies, it would face severe challenges in safeguarding its military, economic, and human assets. The overwhelming firepower would target Iran's missile sites, command centers, and critical infrastructure, but Iran's extensive underground facilities, advanced air defenses, and asymmetric warfare tactics, including proxy forces like Hezbollah and the Houthis, would allow it to maintain some retaliatory capability. Economically, Iran would struggle as oil infrastructure and exports face disruption, but its experience with sanctions, black market operations, and self-reliance in key sectors would help it endure to some extent. Civilian infrastructure would be heavily impacted, but Iran's civil defense measures and nationalistic mobilization could sustain public morale. Iran's cyber warfare capabilities and proxy forces would likely launch retaliatory strikes, imposing costs on its adversaries. Although Iran would suffer significant losses, its asymmetric strategies, resilience, and capacity for retaliation would make a prolonged conflict costly for its opponents, deterring a swift resolution. The US, Israel, and their allies possess overwhelming war sustainability capabilities, given their advanced military technology, vast economic resources, superior logistics, and access to global supply chains. The US leads with unparalleled firepower, precision weaponry, and a massive defense budget, while Israel has a highly advanced military and robust missile defense systems. These strengths are supported by the financial power and military assets of NATO and Gulf allies, making them capable of sustaining a prolonged conflict. In contrast, Iran's war sustainability relies on asymmetric warfare, underground facilities, and a large but less technologically advanced military. Its resilience is rooted in decades of sanctions, proxy warfare, and nationalistic mobilization, allowing it to endure initial attacks and impose costs on its adversaries. However, Iran's limited access to advanced weaponry, economic vulnerabilities, and dependence on black-market operations would eventually strain its ability to sustain a pro-

longed high-intensity conflict. While the US and its allies have the clear advantage in a long-term war, Iran's ability to prolong the conflict through guerrilla tactics and proxy forces could make it costly and challenging, potentially deterring a drawn-out engagement. A war between Iran and a US-Israel-led coalition would have severe and destabilizing effects on Pakistan, impacting its security, economy, humanitarian situation, and diplomatic relations. The conflict would likely escalate border tensions, risk spillover violence, and inflame sectarian tensions within Pakistan due to its significant Shia population.

Economically, soaring energy prices from disrupted Gulf oil supplies and trade disruptions, especially affecting the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), would exacerbate Pakistan's financial challenges, leading to inflation and power shortages. A potential influx of Iranian refugees would strain Pakistan's already limited resources, while navigating diplomatic pressures to take sides would complicate its relations with Iran, the US, Saudi Arabia, and China. The war would force Pakistan to balance its foreign policy in a volatile regional environment, with the potential to disrupt its internal stability, economic growth, and regional alliances. To prevent an imminent and devastating war between Iran and a US-Israel-led coalition, international bodies like the UN, OIC, and others must take coordinated and proactive measures. The UN should urgently facilitate direct dialogue, appoint a special envoy, and pass resolutions calling for restraint, while offering phased sanctions relief in exchange for Iran's adherence to peace efforts. The OIC should leverage Islamic solidarity to mediate between Iran and its neighbors, deploy fact-finding missions, and initiate a regional security dialogue to address broader issues. Other organizations like the EU and Arab League should engage in multilateral diplomacy, prepare humanitarian assistance, and promote arms control agreements to prevent escalation. By working together, these international bodies can use diplomacy, mediation, and incentives to steer all parties towards peaceful resolution and mitigate the risk of a full-scale conflict.

**— Former Press Secretary to the President
Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France
Former MD, SRBC, CEO, ATV**

Pakistan-Kazakhstan to work together to build Regional Cooperation and Connectivity



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Speaking at the Conference organized by the Institute for Regional Studies (IRS) and the Embassy of Kazakhstan on Pakistan-Kazakhstan economic relations, Federal Minister for Planning & Development emphasized the region's connectivity potential, which would be a key element for a successful regional trade and economic cooperation. He underlined the keen desire of Pakistan and Kazakhstan to further strengthen their cordial ties and build on bilateral cooperation that could catalyze regional trade and connectivity. Minister Ahsan Iqbal underlined the need for greater deliberations on the subject and promised that the recommendations of the moot would be accorded consideration for expeditious implementation. Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President IRS, in his opening address, stressed the important of building multiple regional linkages for common good of almost half of the global population living in the adjoining regions in this part of the

world. He also highlighted the growing economic cooperation between Kazakhstan and Pakistan, bilaterally as well as through regional organizations such as ECO, SCO and CICA. In this regard he delineated potential for expanding bilateral cooperation across multiple sectors, including trade, industry, tourism, infrastructure, energy, and education. Ambassador of Kazakhstan highlighted the key aspects of the Kazakh President's recent Address, where, while emphasizing the political modernization and economic transformation measures being implemented to ensure sustainable development, he underscored the alignment of Kazakhstan's national agenda with its foreign policy, inter alia in the framework of bilateral cooperation with Pakistan. Ambassador Ahmed Warraich, Additional Foreign Secretary for Afghanistan and Central Asia emphasized the importance of further developing institutional frameworks to build on Kazakhstan-Pakistan relations. He noted that regular meetings, both within bilateral cooperation framework and at ma-

major international platforms, demonstrate the commitment of both nations to enhancing bilateral ties. Renowned economist, Dr Nadeem Ul Haque elaborated upon Kazakhstan's successful steps in diversifying its economy and the importance of applying these practices for the development of Pakistan's economy. He also emphasized the importance of enhancing trade, noting that states should strive for interdependence and work to bridge the gap between policy formulation and implementation. Professor Shabbir Ahmad Khan emphasized Kazakhstan's role as a leading partner in Central Asia and outlined the strategic importance of Kazakhstan's reforms for the entire region. In his detailed presentation, he discussed the opportunities for developing transport corridors between Kazakhstan, Pakistan, and the regions of Central and South Asia. The conference was attended by a diverse audience comprising international organizations, ambassadors, diplomats, heads of think tanks, academics, entrepreneurs, opinion makers, media and students in large numbers.

To improve coastal communities' resilience Aga Khan Foundation, Embassy of Denmark sign agreement

Speaking at the occasion, Jakob Linulf, Ambassador of Denmark shared, "The province of Sindh has a diverse and unique climate profile, ranging from drought prone interior districts, desert landscapes, hills, to long coastal areas spreading across 330 kilometres from the borders of India to the borders of Balochistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Aga Khan Foundation, Pakistan and the Embassy of Denmark in Islamabad today signed an agreement to improve coastal communities' resilience to climate change and mitigate climate risks in Pakistan. The project "Sindh Coastal Resilience Integrated Programme (SCRIP)" focusses on tackling climate vulnerability in coastal districts where the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN)'s existing presence on the ground and strong capacity can be leveraged. Through a human-centred approach and partnering closely with government and local civil society actors and knowledge institutions, it will deploy cost-effective and locally relevant solutions to improve resilience to climate change and enhance fragile ecosystems that are critical to people's lives and sustainable development. The project will build on AKF's global Indian Ocean Coastal Regeneration Initiative which has been designed as a response to the converging crises of climate change, deforestation and biodiversity loss that threaten the earth's capacity to recuperate and regenerate. The partnership agreement was signed by H.E. Jakob Linulf, Ambassador of Denmark, and Akhtar Iqbal, CEO, Aga Khan Foundation, Pakistan (AKF(Pakistan)). The signing ceremony was also attended by other senior representatives from the Danish Embassy and the Aga Khan Development Network, Pakistan. Speaking at the occasion, Jakob Linulf, Ambassador of Denmark shared, "The province of Sindh has a diverse and unique climate profile, ranging from drought prone interior districts, desert landscapes, hills, to long coastal areas spreading across 330 kilometres from the borders of India to the borders of Balochistan. With such rich and fragile ecosystems, the impacts of climate change are as varied – from droughts and heatwaves impacting agricultural production to severe flooding leading to fragile socio-economic conditions and livelihoods. The project aims to respond to these challenges, focusing on tackling climate vulnerability in coastal districts along the Arabian Sea coast". Akhtar Iqbal, CEO AKF, Pakistan noted that AKF is



pleased to collaborate with the Embassy of Denmark on a critical component as communities in Pakistan have been experiencing firsthand the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation in Pakistan. Aga Khan Foundation and agencies of the Aga Khan Development Network have been fully committed to doing our part for responsible stewardship of the environment. The Sindh Coastal Resilience Integrated Programme encompass-

es a science-based ecosystem approach and builds on the premise that in order to address climate change and ensure environmental sustainability, it is essential to engage communities and by doing so, improving the overall quality of life and economic opportunities." The project will be implemented by the AKDN agencies including the the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat, Pakistan (AKAHP) and the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP).



Renowned climbers take part in Rakaposhi cleanliness drive

Serena Hotels' Green Impact Mission at Rakaposhi Basecamp, Promotes Sustainable Tourism

Centreline Report

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels successfully concluded the Green Impact Mission: Rakaposhi Basecamp Cleanup Drive. This initiative aimed to address the rising waste issue at one of Gilgit-Baltistan's most popular tourist destinations, Rakaposhi Basecamp, while reinforcing Serena Hotels' commitment to sustainable tourism and environmental preservation. The cleanup drive brought together renowned climbers such as Abdul Joshi, Sultana Naseeb, Mirbaz Ali along with 50 dedicated volunteers and sherpas. The team worked tirelessly to clear litter from the basecamp, ensuring the preservation of its natural beauty. In addition to the waste collection efforts, 10 durable trash cans were installed around the site to promote responsible waste disposal by future visitors. The drive raised awareness about the importance of sustainable tourism by engaging local

communities and volunteers in conservation efforts, Serena Hotels continues to advocate for responsible tourism practices across Gilgit-Baltistan.

The Green Impact Mission at Rakaposhi Basecamp is a testament to Serena Hotels' ongoing environmental stewardship, setting a precedent for similar initiatives across the region. Serena Hotels remains committed to promoting eco-friendly practices that protect Pakistan's natural heritage for future generations. Serena Hotels integrates sustainability into its operations by prioritizing energy conservation, waste reduction, and biodiversity protection, also deeply invested in cultural preservation, supporting local artisans and traditions through various initiatives. Moreover, community engagement lies at the heart of Serena's philosophy, with projects aimed at empowering local communities and encouraging socio-economic development across the areas it operates in.



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Climate Change

Serena Hotels, Canadian High Commission co-host event on indigenous empowerment and climate resilience



Mahnoor Ansar

ISLAMABAD: A high-level strategic dialogue called “Strengthening Indigenous Communities: Empowerment through Climate Action, Inclusion, and Gender Parity” took place today at the Islamabad Serena Hotel. Co-hosted by Serena Hotels and the High Commission of Canada, the event brought together prominent speakers, including H.E. Leslie Scanlon, Canadian High Commissioner to Pakistan; Aziz Boolani, CEO of Serena Hotels and Chairman of the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP); Sardar Ramesh Singh Aroa, Minister for Minorities Affairs, Government of Punjab; and key leaders from civil society organizations working to support socio-economic inclusion and empowerment of local communities and marginalised groups in Pakistan.

Canada, at home and around the world, is working to advance reconciliation and promote engagement with Indigenous Peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, cooperation, and partnership. It involves listening to, learning from, and working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada, as well as with local communities around the

world, to address the unique challenges that these communities face.

Reflecting on the significance of the event, Canadian High Commissioner Scanlon remarked, “On this day of Canada’s National Truth and Reconciliation, the dialogue was an opportunity for us to amplify the voices of Indigenous and marginalized communities, as well as leaders, here in Pakistan. Canada is built on the ancestral lands of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, and as we continue our reconciliation journey we are committed to applying a reconciliation lens across our diplomacy and global advocacy efforts.

Whether it’s promoting socio-economic inclusion, empowering youth, women, and girls in all their diversity, or supporting climate resilience for those on the frontlines of the climate crisis, we are committed to working with Pakistan to help build a sustainable, resilient, and equitable future. Today’s dialogue, with the participation of Pakistani leaders who are working to support local communities, highlighted the importance of collective policies, actions, and partnerships to support local communities’ unique needs.”

Speaking at the event, Mr. Aziz Boolani, CEO of Serena Hotels, empha-

sized, “At Serena Hotels, we believe that sustainability is not just an agenda, but a responsibility. By supporting indigenous communities, we can amplify their voices and experiences in shaping policies and solutions for climate resilience. Today’s dialogue underlines our commitment to advancing inclusive growth and ensuring that the impacts of climate change are addressed with the unique needs of these communities in mind.”

Serena Hotels, through its Public Diplomacy initiative, has long been committed to fostering meaningful dialogues on pressing global issues, with a particular focus on climate action, social inclusion, and the empowerment of marginalized communities. This event was reflective of Serena’s dedication to addressing the profound impact of climate change on indigenous communities, who are often on the frontlines of environmental challenges. By bringing together leaders, policymakers, and civil society, Serena Hotels & the High Commission of Canada aimed to contribute to a broader understanding of the interconnectedness of climate resilience and socio-economic inclusion, ensuring that no community is left behind in the face of global environmental shifts.



ISLAMABAD: Newly-arrived High Commissioner of Maldives Mohamed Thoha1 paid a courtesy call on the Acting High Commissioner of India Ms. Geetika Srivastava. Both sides discuss matter of mutual interest. – DNA

Self-reliance, sustainability foundation of food security in Thai households

Miss Kamolwan Sriposil says the event, titled “From the Embassy’s Garden to the Lunch Table,” represents much more than a cooking demonstration. It is a window into the deep-rooted wisdom of Thai culture-where the garden plays a vital role in daily life

Ansar M Bhatti / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Miss Kamolwan Sriposil, Charge d’Affaires, Royal Thai Embassy has said the concept of self-reliance and sustainability has built a foundation of food security in Thai households. In a world where challenges like food scarcity and climate change are ever-present, these practices remind us of the importance of localized, sustainable solutions that can be applied in our everyday lives. She expressed these views while speaking on the occasion of a cooking show “From the Embassy’s Garden to the Lunch Table: Let’s Cook Thai Food”, held at the Thai embassy. The show was organized in collaboration between Royal Thai Embassy and World Food Program. Miss Coco Ushiyama, WFP Country Director and Representative also attended the event. Miss Kamolwan Sriposil further

said, we are not only celebrating Thai cuisine but also highlighting the importance of food security, sustainability, and cultural exchange. She added the event, titled “From the Embassy’s Garden to the Lunch Table,” represents much more than a cooking demonstration. It is a window into the deep-rooted wisdom of Thai culture-where the garden plays a vital role in daily life. She further said, in Thailand, many families have embraced the simple yet powerful practice of growing their own vegetables, herbs, and fruits. This tradition ensures that fresh, nutritious ingredients are always within reach. It is a sustainable practice that not only feeds families but also allows them to sell surplus produce in local markets, providing an extra source of income and strengthening the community. “Today, we are fortunate to have Chef Haleem with us, who will demonstrate two iconic Thai dishes:

Thai Green Curry with chicken and Stir-fried minced beef with holy basil. These dishes not only highlight the vibrant flavors of Thai cuisine but also showcase the use of fresh ingredients-such as Thai basil and green chilies-sourced directly from the Embassy’s own garden’. She also praised efforts of the World Food Program team, whose dedication and hard work have been instrumental in making today’s event a reality. Together, we share a mission of promoting food security, and I am confident that this event will inspire us all to take small steps toward a more sustainable future. She also highlighted the importance of the Chef’s Manifesto SDG Zero Hunger. This manifesto is a powerful reminder that we all have a role to play in achieving a hunger-free world. Food is not just a necessity-it is a universal language, a source of joy, and, above all, a basic human right.





Thai cultural show organised by the Embassy of Thailand



Malaysian PM accorded a warm welcome in Pakistan

Prime Minister Ibrahim also planted a sapling in the lawn of the PM House

Mahnoor Ansar

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of Malaysia Anwar Ibrahim on Thursday was given the guard of honor here as he arrived at the Prime Minister House to meet his counterpart Shehbaz Sharif and hold the delegation-level talks. As he arrived at the venue of the formal welcome ceremony, Prime Minister Shehbaz warmly welcomed the foreign dignitary who arrived here on a three-day state visit to Pakistan. The national anthems of Pakistan and Malaysia were played as the foreign dignitary stood at the salute dias. The smartly turned-out contingents of the armed forces presented the guard of honor which the Malaysian prime minister reviewed. Both the prime ministers introduced their respective delegations to each other before proceeding

to the bilateral meeting and delegation-level talks. As a tradition, Prime Minister Ibrahim also planted a sapling in the lawn of the PM House. Pakistan and Malaysia agreed to take significant steps towards fostering deeper economic cooperation and exploring new business opportunities that benefit both nations. Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan held a meeting with Datuk Seri Utama Tengku Zafrul Bin Tengku Abdul Aziz, the Malaysian Minister for Investment, Trade and Industry (MITI). This meeting underscored the brotherly relations both countries cherish in all fields, according to a release issued. He encouraged Malaysia may engage more with Pakistan to import rice. A significant focus of the dialogue was on the potential for exporting halal meat from Pakistan to Malaysia.



Exclusive Malaysia Cultural Coffee Morning in Islamabad

The main purpose of the event was to strengthen the bond of friendship and socio-cultural understanding with the diplomatic ladies circle, Pakistani and Malaysian ladies residing in Pakistan. Apart from that, it was also a culmination of the High Commission's Malaysia 67th National Day Celebration and Malaysia Food Festival Week. Guests were treated to a delightful brunch of Malaysian style

DNA

ISLAMABAD: PERWAKILAN Islamabad under the leadership of To' Puan Amelia Amani Abdullah, Chairperson of PERWAKILAN successfully hosted an exclusive coffee morning get-together celebrating Malaysian Culture on Wednesday, 11 September 2024. The event started off with a welcome remarks by H.E. Ambassador Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, followed by the presentation of appreciation certificates to the cultural performers from Kencana Pawana, University Malaysia Pahang (UMP), Al-Sultan Abdullah, Malaysia; Chef Pathma of Islamabad Serena Hotel and Madam Sofia.

The main purpose of the event was to strengthen the bond of friendship and socio-cultural understanding with the diplomatic ladies circle, Pakistani and Malaysian ladies residing in Pakistan. Apart from that, it was also a culmination of the High

Commission's Malaysia 67th National Day Celebration and Malaysia Food Festival Week. Guests were treated to a delightful brunch of Malaysian style fried noodles, spring rolls, dessert (kuih bakar) and variety of pastries and seasonal fruits.

While enjoying the delicious spread, multi media show on PERWAKILAN' activities and Malaysia was presented on the big screen. This was followed by a series of cultural performances, featuring traditional dances by Kencana Pawana, UMP. To their delight, the guests were visibly impressed with the different traditional Malaysia's costumes presented by PERWAKILAN ladies and family during a fashion show. Towards the end of the event, guests were invited to join in the dance - 'joget' one of Malaysia's renowned traditional dances. All present joined in and had a great time! It was really a memorable morning as aptly cited by H.E. Ambassador Dato' in his remarks ...'to know Malaysia is to love Malaysia!' Kudos and Congratulations to all the PERWAKILAN members for their commitment in making this event a success.





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