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**Malaysian PM visit to Pakistan to reinforce bilateral ties**



**Poetry comes alive at Serena Hotels' Mehfil-e-Sukhan**

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**24th Int'l Psychiatry Conference Islamabad**

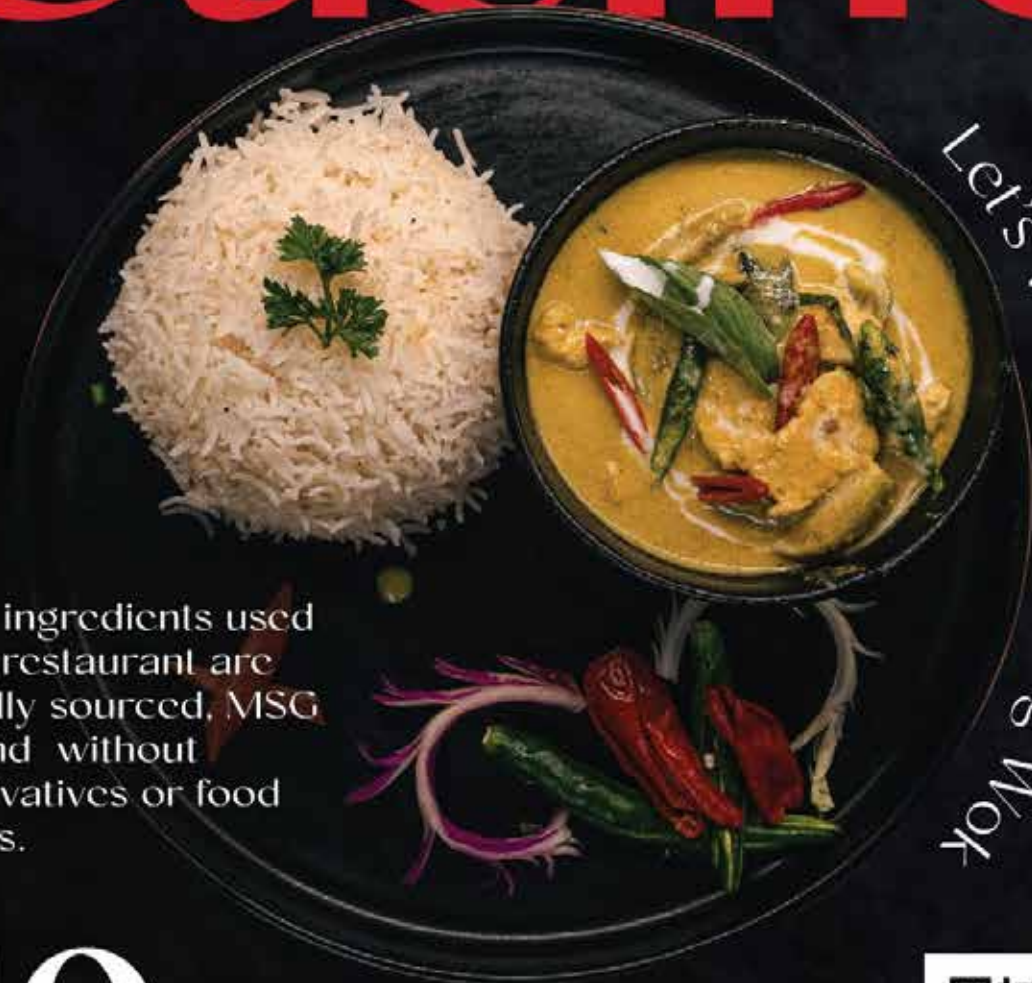
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**Turkish Republic Day Reception**

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\*\*\*\*\*

**Head Office:** #11, Block 18-A

(Awan Plaza) G-8 Markaz,

Islamabad-Pakistan 44000

Tel: 051-2261960, Fax:

051-2280074 Cell: 0333-5203232

[centrelinemag@gmail.com](mailto:centrelinemag@gmail.com)

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## Much ado about the constitutional amendment



**H**AS the dust settled? This is perhaps the most pressing question following the controversial passage of the 26th Constitutional Amendment in Parliament. According to this amendment, the superior judiciary is no longer to function independently in matters such as the appointment of judges and the evaluation of their performance; these powers have been transferred to Parliament. Additionally, the amendment restricts the scope of the apex court's authority by limiting its ability to take suo motu actions. In essence, the government appears to have significantly curtailed the independence of the judiciary, rendering it effectively powerless. It is now an open secret

that the proposed constitutional amendment was not an original idea conceived by Parliament. Instead, both the PPP and PML-N were tasked with pushing it through if they wished to ensure their political survival. For the PPP, the reward dangled was the prime ministership for Bilawal Bhutto, contingent on securing the passage of the initial 60-point amendment package, which would have granted significant powers to the Establishment. However, thanks to Maulana Fazal ur Rehman's outright refusal to support the draft, the original proposal was sidelined. A revised version of the amendment was then presented to Fazal ur Rehman, which he accepted, albeit with some conditions. For PML-N, the stakes were made crystal clear: their hold on power hinged entirely on the passage of this amendment. Moreover, it was unequivocally conveyed to the party leadership that Nawaz Sharif would not be permitted to leave the country until the amendment was approved. As a result, PML-N seemingly had no choice but to comply, even though this move is likely to cost them politically. Their public support had already diminished, and with the passage of this amendment, their popularity is expected to decline even further. "Ostensibly, the idea of controlling the superior judiciary involves multiple facets, both internal and external. Internally, from the Establishment's perspective, it was crucial to maintain a firm grip on the higher judiciary to ensure favorable rulings. The lower judiciary, already under control, remains ever prepared to 'dispense justice' when directed." The Pakistan government has occasionally faced challenging situations when the apex court issued verdicts affecting foreign investors. Two prominent cases stand out. First, in the Reko Diq case, the Supreme Court nullified the entire agreement, forcing the affected party to seek legal recourse. The international court ruled against the Pakistan government, resulting in a hefty penalty that the government had to pay. In another instance, the Supreme Court annulled the agreement with the Turkish power generation company, Karkey. This decision strained relations with the Turkish government. Karkey subsequently filed a claim for millions of dollars in penalties. However, with intervention from both the Pakistani and Turkish governments, the issue was eventually resolved. Then-Prime Minister Imran Khan announced that, with the help of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the dispute was "amicably resolved," saving Pakistan from a \$1.2 billion penalty imposed by the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). The lawyers are expected to initiate a movement opposing these amendments. The PTI has signaled its intention to challenge the matter in the Supreme Court. According to the amendment, all such petitions will now be heard by a Constitutional Bench, appointed by the government. This bench may consist of five or more judges. Bilawal Bhutto, speaking in the National Assembly before the vote on the amendment, referred to the Charter of Democracy (CoD) signed between the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in 2006. He emphasized that this historic agreement laid the foundation for the establishment of the constitutional bench and made it clear that neither party would ever come to power with the assistance of the establishment. His remarks alluded to how both parties had once committed to standing independent of such forces. The international stakeholders, particularly those with vested interests in Pakistan, have been eager to see the judiciary's influence reduced. These foreign countries are concerned about their investments in cases like Karkey and Reko Diq, may have pushed for these judicial constraints to protect their economic interests. This reflects a broader international dimension to Pakistan's internal power struggles, where foreign economic stakes sometimes drive domestic political changes.

*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.



# Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan

## Malaysian PM visit to Pakistan to reinforce bilateral ties

Ambassador Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, the esteemed High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan, kindly granted us an exclusive interview for Centreline, Daily Islamabad Post, and Diplomatic News Agency (DNA). During our conversation, the Ambassador delved into the multifaceted dimensions of the bilateral relationship between Malaysia and Pakistan. Beyond his diplomatic responsibilities, Ambassador Azhar is a passionate hockey enthusiast, regularly attending practice sessions at the Rising Stars Hockey Club in Islamabad. Here is the text of his interview.

**Saifullah Ansar / DNA**

*1. Let us start with the landmark visit of the Malaysian Prime Minister to Pakistan. How do you see this visit in terms of further strengthening of bilateral relations?*

The Honourable Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, Prime Minister of Malaysia undertook an Official Visit to Pakistan from 2 to 4 October 2024, at the invitation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sha-

rif. This was his first visit to Pakistan since becoming Prime Minister of Malaysia in November 2022. The visit marks a new chapter in the deeply-rooted fraternal ties happily enjoyed between Malaysia and Pakistan. In their series of engagements during the visit, it was notable that our two leaders have demonstrated their resolute and steadfast commitment in elevating the Strategic Partnership between our two nations in key sectors crucial to national development, inter-alia, trade and investment, tourism, information technology, semiconductors, renewable energy, food security, and defense collaboration.

Our two leaders agreed to increase the importation of halal beef imports from Pakistan, valued at USD 200 million, and additional 100,000 metric tons of Pakistani Basmati rice to Malaysia. This represents a significant step towards boosting trade and food security collaboration between our two nations.

In addition, our two leaders deliberated on a wide range of strategic issues of importance and common interest namely, the expansion of military collaboration, the potential of increased air connectivity, educational partnership, and new investment in areas such as oil and gas exploration, green energy, semiconductors, and tourism. Regional and global issues of common concern including Palestinian-Israeli conflict and Afghanistan were also discussed. The candid and open discussions followed by their forward-looking commitment clearly reflect the depth of Malaysia-Pakistan relationship covering a whole gamut of multifaceted areas of collaboration aimed at advancing the re-



lationship to a new height.

*2. During the last high-level visit, both sides agreed for partial abolition of visa requirements for Diplomatic and Official Passport holders. If you could share some more details about this and is there any visa relaxation for businessmen and ordinary visitors?*

The partial abolition of visa requirements for holders of Diplomatic and Official Passports is another milestone in our relationship towards facilitating people-to-people contacts between our two nations. While there are currently no plans for general visa relaxation for

other groups, both nations are actively exploring ways to streamline the process for Pakistani business people to visit Malaysia.

*3. Malaysia's experience and expertise in the halal industry is above board. How can Pakistan benefit from Malaysian expertise in this particular field?*

Malaysia's leadership in the global halal industry, with an estimated value of USD 20 billion, serves as a model. More than 1,000 Malaysian companies are certified exporters of halal products, making Malaysia a strategic partner for Pakistan in this high-growth sector.



By collaborating with Malaysia, Pakistan stands to benefit from Malaysia's well-established halal certification expertise and market reach, allowing it to tap into the USD 3 trillion global halal market and enhance its comparative advantage.

*4. The Malaysian case is often quoted as the most successful model when it comes to industrial and infrastructure development; tourism promotion and poverty alleviation. How did you achieve these milestones?*

Malaysia's journey to sustainable development and poverty alleviation is reflected in an average GDP growth of 5% over the past decade, with diversified industries - particularly tourism, which for 2024 is projected to contribute USD23.4 billion. Poverty levels have declined significantly, from over 50% in the 1970s to less than 1% today. This success can be attributed to Malaysia's strategic Industrial Master Plans, long-term development policies, and targeted poverty alleviation initiatives that together have propelled Malaysia towards its developmental agenda.

*5. Malaysian companies are keen to invest in Pakistan's telecom and other sectors. Can you share some details in this regard?*

Malaysian companies are exploring Pakistan's growing telecom and renewable energy sectors with great interest. Pakistan's telecom sector has shown more than 50% broadband penetration as of 2023, with significant room for improvement, drawing in potential Malaysian investors. Additionally, investments in Pakistan's renewable energy market, particularly in solar projects, align with Pakistan's goal to derive 60% of its energy from renewable sources by 2030. This growing demand creates a favorable investment environ-

ment for Malaysian firms aiming to take part in Pakistan's sustainable energy future.

*6. After the start of direct flights between the two countries, it is believed that besides a rise in trade and economic activity, people-to-people contacts have also increased. Do you agree?*

With Pakistan's recent allocation of four additional flight rights to a Malaysian carrier and further expansion possibilities following the privatization of PIA, air connectivity between Malaysia and Pakistan has significantly improved. The large passenger volume—nearly 120,000 travelers in 2023—illustrates this growth. The tourism sector has particularly benefited, with Pakistani arrivals to Malaysia rising by 70% from last year. This direct connectivity is facilitating not only tourism but also trade, business travel, and cultural exchanges, projected to add USD 120 million in economic value to both countries.

*7. Anything you would like to add*

Indeed, it was a proud moment and self-fulfilling for my team at the High Commission and I to have been given the opportunity to witness the visit of my Prime Minister to Pakistan. I personally bore witness to the warm friendship and goodwill between our two leaders during their engagements in Islamabad. On my part, I would remain steadfast and committed to nurturing the Strategic Partnership between our two nations in all spheres - politics, economy and people-to-people contacts aimed at bringing about development and progress to our two nations and peoples. As we herald a new chapter in our relationship following the landmark visit by my Prime Minister to Pakistan, I am optimistic that together we could turn the potential into reality for our mutual benefit.

**Professor Dr Asad Tamizuddin Nizami**

# **24th International Psychiatry Conference Islamabad November 2024**

**“Mental Health to Global Mental Health”**

**Prof. Asad Nizami, a distinguished leader in Pakistan's mental health field, recently granted an exclusive interview to Centreline and Daily Islamabad POST. Prof. Nizami holds several key positions: he is the Dean of the Faculty of Psychiatry at the College of Physicians & Surgeons Pakistan, Professor and Chairman at the Institute of Psychiatry at Rawalpindi Medical University, Former Vice President of the Pakistan Psychiatric Society, and a Member of the Federal Mental Health Authority in Islamabad. Below is the complete text of his interview.**

**Ansar Mahmood Bhatti**

*1: What inspired you to become a psychiatrist, and what motivate you to continue in this field?*

My journey into psychiatry began back in medical college at Rawalpindi Medical College - now Rawalpindi Medical University. Over those five years, I found myself deeply fascinated by the human brain above all one organs. While studying the human body and its various organs, the brain stood out to me as uniquely complex and enigmatic. This brain was unlike any other, holding layers of mystery and the incredible capacity to shape thoughts, emotions, and behavior. My fascination only grew stronger after graduation during my year long house job, where my interest in neurology solidified. I owe a great deal to my mentor and teacher, Professor Malik Hussain Mubasher, the founder of the Institute of Psychiatry, which he established in 1973. His guidance and the foundation he laid for the field of psychiatry has left an enduring legacy, now completed its 51 years of excellence. Inspired by Professor Mubasher, I realized that psychiatry offered a distinct approach to understand the brain and human behavior.

What drew me to psychiatry was the diversity and complexity of the challenges that the human mind presented. Each person brought a new kind of problem, and each required a unique solution. This challenge has kept me engaged and motivated in my



specialty; My fascination with the human mind and the constant learning in mental health have become a lifelong commitment.

*2: Can you tell us about your educational background and any specific training that has influenced your approach to mental health?*

If we go back in time, I still have fond memories of my time at St. Mary's School, a place that has seen many notable alumni. After my college, I received my medical education at Rawalpindi Medical College and my career since then, has been centered around the Institute of Psychiatry, where I began working in 1999.

In 2003, I completed my Fellowship in Psychiatry from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, one of the highest qualifications in Pakistan. Alongside this, I pursued additional fellowships, including one in Health Systems Research from the Nuffield Institute for Health, affiliated with the University of Leeds in the UK. I also earned a fellowship in Elderly Mental Health from the University of Manchester, UK. My passion for teaching and training has always been a constant, and I hold a membership in medical education, which is my second specialty. People often ask me, given my 25 -30 years in psychiatry, if I ever get tired or overwhelmed by the constant exposure to patients' problems. I share with them a question my great teacher,



“In 2003, I completed my Fellowship in Psychiatry from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, one of the highest qualifications in Pakistan. Alongside this, I pursued additional fellowships, including one in Health Systems Research from the Nuffield Institute for Health, affiliated with the University of Leeds in the UK. I also earned a fellowship in Elderly Mental Health from the University of Manchester, UK”

Professor Malik Hussain, once asked me when I began in psychiatry. He asked, "Are you prepared to become the dustbin of society?" I didn't understand at first, so I asked him what he meant. He explained, "People will come to you after trying all other avenues, unloading all their burdens, and pouring their troubles into you like a dustbin. Do you have the patience and resilience to handle that?" To this day, people ask if I feel burnt out or exhausted hearing similar issues repeatedly, and my answer is always NO. Why? Because every time I help someone find a solution, every time I see a life transformed and a household uplifted, it feels deeply rewarding. This work allows me to make a tangible difference not just for one person but for an entire family. In mental health, we do more than treat an individual - we influence lives. Of course, it is challenging. People come to me seeking the "right"

solution, which may not always exist. I may not have the perfect answer, but I strive to provide the closest solution, that I can. The greatest reward is when patients return after days, weeks, or even months and say, "Our lives have changed; we had lost hope."

3: *What aspects of psychiatry do you find most rewarding and which do you find most challenging?*

Historically, decades ago, people often believed they understood the causes of all kinds of illnesses. If someone had a fever or tuberculosis, there was usually a tangible explanation. However, when someone exhibited unusual behaviors - waking up shouting, being abusive, or acting erratically - people attributed it to a supernatural influence. Mental health has long been stigmatized. Over time, though, we've progressed from viewing it solely through the lens of psychiatry to a broader understanding of mental well-being. For example, it

wasn't until 2001 that the WHO released its first comprehensive report on mental health. Before that, there was limited understanding of how to support people with mental health issues on a global scale. While the stigma around mental health persists, it has lessened considerably.

In Pakistan, the mental health field still faces significant challenges. There are only about 900 psychiatrists in a country with a population exceeding 220 million - far fewer than required. With the rising prevalence of mental health issues, this is a very low ratio. One of the main reasons for this shortage is the career preferences of medical students. Many aspire to become surgeons, medical specialists, or gynecologists rather than choosing psychiatry.

4: *What are your primary objectives for organizing the International Psychiatry Conference 2024 Islamabad?*

The Pakistan Psychiatric Society's International Conference occurs biennially, rotating through each of the six regional chapters. This year, from November 22nd to 24th, the Institute of Psychiatry at Rawalpindi Medical University is honored to host this prestigious gathering. One key question we





always face is: what are the tangible outcomes of these conferences? Are we producing results that drive meaningful change? This time, we aim to achieve that. The theme I proposed over a year ago, "From Mental Health to Global Mental Health," focuses on building connections and collaboration across sectors. Mental health cannot function in isolation - it requires integrated efforts with Governmental, the World Health Organization, Health and Education sectors, NGOs, and other related organizations.

What makes this year's conference unique is its outcome-oriented approach. Each session will culminate in a policy document. For instance, a session on public mental health will not just end with discussions but it will generate recommendations and actionable policies. Each session chair will draft these documents with support from the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, with the goal of embedding these ideas into Governmental Policy. Our sessions will cover diverse topics, from creative and innovative mental health strategies to addressing controversies. We'll explore pressing issues related to legal frameworks, such as sentencing and care for individuals with

mental illnesses. Hot-button topics like the impact of mental health on issues of sexual identity, and difficulties faced by marginalized communities, will also be on the table.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of mental health outreach, and we now understand that remote support is vital. This conference seeks to capitalize on these insights, uniting experts to discuss sustainable, effective mental health solutions. We aim for actionable outcomes that the Government can champion and incorporate into long-term Policies.

To foster a comprehensive perspective, we've invited Ambassadors from various Embassies in Pakistan, offering them insight into mental health challenges both globally and within our region. With support from the planning division, we aim to implement a 10-year National Mental Health Policy to promote sustained improvements in mental healthcare nationwide.

*5: What distinguishes this year's conference from previous years or other similar events?*

The Pakistan Psychiatry Society organizes a National Psychiatry Conference every two years, alternating with an International Conference. This year's

conference is unique in that it is outcome-focused. Rather than a traditional conference format, it is designed to bring people together to think collaboratively and offer solutions to current challenges in mental health.

This isn't a conference where people simply present their papers or take the stage for visibility. Instead, we are encouraging early career researchers and mental health professionals to showcase the impactful work they are doing in the field and invite others to join or support their efforts. This approach allows attendees to see concrete examples of progress in mental health and understand ways to contribute.

Pakistan Psychiatric Society is part of a broader network of institutions providing mental health care across the country. The Pakistan Psychiatric Society is also affiliated with the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) - the global body overseeing psychiatric societies worldwide. Recently, Pakistan achieved a significant milestone when a Prof Afzal Javed, a mental health professional with Pakistani origin became the first person from Pakistan to be elected as President of the WPA. This accomplishment is a proud moment for the mental health community in Pakistan, highlighting the nation's growing contributions to global psychiatry.

# Envoys present credentials to the President

DNA

Islamabad: The envoys of the Kyrgyz Republic, the State of Palestine, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Uzbekistan, Kenya and the Republic of Turkiye presented their diplomatic credentials to President Asif Ali Zardari, during a credential ceremony, held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The President received credentials from the Ambassador-designate of Kyrgyz Republic, Mr Avazbek Atakhanov, the Ambassador-designate of State of Palestine, Dr Zuhair Mohammad Hamdallah Zaid, Ambassador-designate of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mr Choe Chang

Man, the Ambassador-designate of Uzbekistan, Mr Alisher Tukhtaey, the High Commissioner-designate of Kenya, Lt Gen (Retd) Peter Mbogo Njiru and the Ambassador-designate of Turkiye, Mr Irfan Neziroglu who also held separate meetings with the President. Welcoming the envoys, the President felicitated them on their appointment and expressed the hope that they would play their role in further improving mutually beneficial bilateral relations with Pakistan, in the areas of trade, economy and culture. Earlier, the envoys were presented with a guard of honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Armed Forces upon their arrival at Aiwan-e-Sadr.







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# *Daily* Islamabad POST

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# Romania, Pakistan enjoy excellent defence cooperation, says Envoy

Eduard Preda says Romania will participate in IDEAS 2024, the most important defence exhibition and conference held in Karachi, and in the multinational naval exercise AMAN 2025. These activities will help participants to exchange their knowledge and experience in both the defence industry and maritime domains



## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Charge d'Affaires of the Romanian Embassy Eduard Preda has said there existed excellent cooperation between Romanian and Pakistan Armed Forces which has developed over the years into a true and mutual partnership. Since there is not enough time to elaborate on the multifaceted and complex character of the cooperation, I will only mention that the Pakistan Navy will soon receive their fourth patrol vessel built at Damen Shipyards Galati, Romania'. Eduard Preda made these remarks while speaking on the occasion of the Romanian Armed Forces Day. Maj. General Kashif Zafar of the Pakistan Army was the chief guest. A large number of guests hailing from various walks of life attended the reception. Mr. Preda further said, these vessels will provide the Pakistan Navy with highly effective search and rescue capabilities that will allow it to play an important role in safeguarding international trade routes from piracy and other threats like drugs and human trafficking or terrorism. He said, Romania will participate in IDEAS 2024, the most important defence exhibition and conference held in Karachi, and

in the multinational naval exercise AMAN 2025. These activities will help participants to exchange their knowledge and experience in both the defence industry and maritime domains. He also acknowledged exceptional professionalism of the Pakistan Armed Forces, the deep patriotism of its men and women in uniform, the sacrifices they made in fighting terrorism, and their extended presence in multiple international coalitions involved in peace keeping operations and humanitarian assistance, meant to ease the sufferings of the people in different regions of the world. While talking about the significance of the day he said, historically, the 25th of October symbolized the day in which the entire Romanian territory was liberated by the Romanian Army during the Second World War. 'Today, the Romanian Armed Forces, completely reformed and modernized up to the NATO standards, are assigned to foreign missions, contributing alongside with the allied and partner armies to the common effort of keeping peace and stability worldwide'. As a reliable NATO member state, Romania's main objective has always been related to building trust and good relationships

with other states. He said, Romania stands ready to continue to be a responsible partner and ally to strengthen security in the Black Sea area and fulfil all its responsibilities as a reliable member of the international community. We now stand ready to commit once more to the process of creating a safe, stable, and prosperous world for all of us. 'As you all know, the security situation in Romania's region is complex and continuously changing, marked by geopolitical and military challenges. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has fundamentally and long-term altered the security paradigm in Europe'. The challenges we have to deal with every day, along with the war going on at NATO, EU and Romanian borders, prove that we need, more than ever, to be ready to defend our common values and freedoms and grant security and stability in the region. Ukraine's security means European and Euro-Atlantic security and Romania stands in full solidarity with the people and government of Ukraine in their heroic defence of their country, helping Ukraine to uphold its fundamental right to self-defence as a response to the Russian Federation's full-scale, unprovoked and unlawful invasion of Ukraine.



# French ambassador fetes Pakistani athletes Arshad Nadeem and Haider Ali

Ambassador Galey said, Arshad and Haider, definitely won their medals, and magnificently. But all of you, Pakistani athletes, you took part, you competed, you went to the end of your strength to do the best you could. For that, you all deserve our respect and our admiration, and that of your country



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of France to Pakistan Nicolas Galey congratulated gold medallist Arshad Nadeem and Bronze medalist Haider Ali, Olympic and Paralympic athletes, adding two months ago, on July 8, he was happy and honored, with the entire French embassy team and all our guests, to receive many of you at the embassy, as the Pakistani teams were preparing to fly to Paris for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The ambassador expressed these views during a reception he hosted for Arshad and Haider Ali, at his residence. He further said, Pakistan's Olympic and Paralympic delegations in Paris were not the largest ones – especially the Paralympic delegation! But what a success with few participants! A gold medal in the javelin throw – Pakistan's first individual medal in the history of the Olympic Games. And a bronze medal in the discus throw. "In July, before you left, I recalled the well-known formula of Pierre de Coubertin, who had this very modern idea of resurrecting the Olympic Games: "The most important thing in the Olympic Games, he said, is not to win but to take part.". He added, Arshad and Haider, definitely won their medals, and magnificently. But all of you, Pakistani athletes, you took part, you competed, you went to the end of your strength to do the best you could. For that, you all deserve our respect and our admiration, and that of your country. "It represents years of effort, often in solitude and without support or encouragement other than that of your families, friends and coaches, to participate in this unique event for any athlete: the Olympic and Paralympic Games". The ambassador said, for two weeks, in August and September, you had this unique experience for athletes: living with other athletes from all over the world, interacting with competitors from the other side of the planet, sharing together the Olympic and Paralympic passion. "And I would like to highlight the specific impact of the Paralympic Games. Paralympians are athletes, like any other - and many do not like to be considered heroes. But they are certainly less well-known than others, and the Paralympic competitions showed the world, including the Pakistani public, that accidents of genetics or life do not prevent anyone from achieving incredible feats". He also saluted the eight young Pakistanis who travelled



to France with the Right to Play association, which the Embassy was pleased to support and accompany for this great project which allowed them, among many other activities, to attend the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games. " A big thank you to Mr. Ali Khayam and the Right to Play team for your dedication to promoting sport as a tool for social integration, particularly for young girls. In this regard, the Embassy is proud to work with you for the organization of a women's basketball tournament next month".

# Will there be an end to political uncertainty?

The proposition of mid-term elections might appeal to PTI supporters by giving them a pathway back to power through democratic means, while allowing the government to defuse ongoing tensions. If the PTI leadership settles for anything less than mid-term elections, it risks alienating its core supporters, who may view such a concession as a sign of weakness or a betrayal of their cause

## ANALYSIS

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti



THE failed attempts to privatize Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) highlight the dismal state of the nation's political and economic landscape, which continues to weigh heavily on the population. People who voted in the 2024 elections had hoped the new government would bring prosperity and relief, yet they now face mounting hardships. Disillusionment is growing as the government has taken a path that increasingly pits it against the judiciary. Through the 26th amendment, the judiciary's powers have been significantly weakened, with further efforts underway to deepen divisions within its ranks, effectively transforming it into a subdued institution. The failed attempt to privatize PIA highlights a significant lapse in government planning, revealing a lack of adequate preparation before offering the national airline for sale. The bid of Rs 10 billion, compared to the government's expected Rs 85 billion, was a substantial embarrassment for decision-makers. Furthermore, the bidder clarified that their effective offer was Rs 210 billion, as they anticipated covering the airline's substantial liabilities of approximately Rs 200 billion. This disparity underscores the need for more thorough financial analysis and transparent communication in handling such high-stakes privatization efforts. The current political turmoil in Pakistan, particularly the government's preoccupation with controlling the judiciary,

has led to a series of administrative oversights that seem likely to persist. Recently, Pakistan had the opportunity to bolster its international reputation by hosting the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Heads of Government Conference—a notable diplomatic event that could have significantly enhanced its global image. Unfortunately, the event's potential impact was undercut by the government's divided attention and domestic priorities. While hosting this important conference, which brought together high-ranking officials and dignitaries from various member states, the government's attention was still largely focused on the contentious 26th Amendment. The amendment, intended to reshape judicial power, has sparked considerable debate and political maneuvering, with government officials prioritizing its passage over the smooth conduct of the conference. In a stark display of this prioritization, Prime Minister left Islamabad shortly after the conference's conclusion to attend a political meeting in Lahore aimed at securing support for the amendment. This abrupt departure surprised foreign delegates, who found themselves largely overlooked in Islamabad without the presence of top government officials. This inattentive handling of the conference left an unfavorable impression on the foreign representatives, who had expected a display of Pakistan's commitment to fostering stronger international ties. Instead, the experience underscored the government's internal preoccupations and raised questions about its diplomatic priorities. The missed opportunity cost Pakistan potential goodwill as the nation's leadership appeared more focused on domestic power struggles than on nurturing critical regional partnerships. The government seems determined to keep PTI founder Imran Khan behind bars and his party on the defensive. It has taken extensive measures to limit PTI's political influence, deploying significant resources to weaken its organizational structure and prevent it from fully engaging in the political landscape. From legal battles and administrative actions to stringent crackdowns on party supporters, the government has left no avenue unexplored in its effort to stifle PTI's momentum. Ironically, if the government had devoted even half of these efforts to addressing

public issues and enhancing social welfare, it could have substantially improved the lives of ordinary citizens during its time in power. Instead of focusing primarily on sidelining a political rival, the same energy could have been channeled into policies that tackle pressing issues such as economic hardship, healthcare, and education. By concentrating so heavily on limiting PTI, the government has missed an opportunity to make meaningful changes that could have won it more public support through positive, impactful governance. At present, it appears the government has successfully managed to exert control over the judiciary and contain the PTI. However, this control may prove short-lived, as the government's actions lack the support and confidence of the public. In contrast, both the judiciary and the PTI seem to enjoy stronger public backing, which could influence outcomes in the coming days. One likes it or not, PTI is a reality and it has to deal with in that perspective. Without taking it on board country's road to political and economic stability would remain elusive. Efforts are already on to woo Imran Khan. He has been offered to release provided he allows the incumbent set up to complete its term – a proposal the founder PTI seems to have outright rejected. The current political climate in the country is tense, with an evident divide between the ruling establishment and the opposition, particularly the PTI. If those in power are genuinely committed to steering the country out of its present state of chaos, they must seek a solution that is practical and appealing to all major stakeholders. Mid-term elections could serve as a viable compromise, potentially enticing the PTI and its leadership to abandon their confrontational approach in favor of a structured democratic process. The proposition of mid-term elections might appeal to PTI supporters by giving them a pathway back to power through democratic means, while allowing the government to defuse ongoing tensions. If the PTI leadership settles for anything less than mid-term elections, it risks alienating its core supporters, who may view such a concession as a sign of weakness or a betrayal of their cause. Consequently, this could lead to a loss of public support, as the PTI's base is largely driven by demands for political accountability and systemic change.

# ICE, ASITA sign MoU; expect direct flights to Pakistan soon

Atta Ul Karim Witnessed by the Indonesian Embassy in Islamabad Signs MoU with ASITA



## DNA

ISLAMABAD: The International Creatives Exchange (ICE) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the oldest tourism association in Indonesia, ASITA (Association of the Indonesian Tours and Travel Agencies) at the Al Barakat Palace, South Jakarta, on Saturday, (5/10). The MoU consists of 11 points which aims to increase tourism for the two friendly countries, Indonesia and Pakistan. Atta Ul Karim as the Chairman of ICE expressed his appreciation on the mutual cooperation, since him self was born in Pakistan and grew up in Indonesia. He unquestionably wishes to do something impactful for the benefits of both countries. "I was born in Pakistan, but grew up and successful in Indonesia. So, I have to thank to the two countries," Atta said, who was wearing golden brown batik at that time. "One of the best way for it is by continuously trying in all possible ways to improve tourism in the two brotherly countries," he added. Atta looks at ASITA as the right partner in realizing his wishes, since the association has been well-known as the leading association in tourism industry in Indonesia since 1971. Mrs. Rusmiati, President of

ASITA was proud and happy on the MoU, as Pakistan is one of the countries that has not been touched well in the tourism world, even though its potential is extraordinary. In addition, there are many halal tourism destinations in Indonesia, so there are huge similarities between Pakistan and Indonesia. "Many countries have collaborated with ASITA, but Pakistan has not had any. In fact, its natural beauty is beyond imagination, even if it is compared to Switzerland or New Zealand," Rusmiati explained while was wearing black Pashmina. "Pakistan also has similarities with Indonesia as the two largest Muslim countries in the world, so it's really a very good package to sell," she continued optimistically. According to the data, ASITA has 89 branches with seven thousand travel agencies as its underbow spread throughout the Indonesian archipelago. On this occasion, Mrs. Siti Nur Azizah, Daughter of Indonesian Vice President and Mr. Rahmat Hindiarda Kusuma, Chargé d'Affaires of the Indonesian Embassy in Islamabad, were present to witness the MoU signing ceremony. Mrs. Siti Nur Azizah, who had just attended the 79th Anniversary of the Indonesian National Armed Forces deeply wished that the cooperation will be beneficial for tourism industries between the

two nations. "I wish it could be an access to build further levels of the long-standing friendly bilateral relations", she said referring to the commemoration of 75th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Indonesia and Pakistan, next year. In line with Siti Nur Azizah, Rahmat Hindiarda Kusuma, the Chargé d'Affaires of the Indonesian Embassy in Islamabad, who had just arrived from Pakistan also fully supported the MoU. "As an Indonesian living in Pakistan, I really enjoy wonderful natural landscapes in Pakistan. The culture is also very unique. The people are very friendly, especially when they know we are from Indonesia. Hopefully this can be an open door for direct flights between Indonesia and Pakistan. There will be many multiple positive impacts," the senior Diplomat said. During his one-year term in Pakistan, he has visited various regions in the country of Muhammad Ali Jinnah. As it is well-known, currently there are no direct flights serving the two countries. That is one of the challenges in boosting tourist numbers from Pakistan to Indonesia or vice versa. "With the MoU between ICE and ASITA, we want to see the increased numbers of tourists in the two countries. Subsequently, the airlines further open the direct flights," Rahmat concluded.

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# Indian HC celebrates Diwali

ISLAMABAD: The Diwali celebrations at the Indian High Commission in Islamabad were marked by a gathering that featured a blend of cultural diplomacy and festive spirit. US Ambassador Donald Blome, Dutch Ambassador Henny de Vries, Italian Ambassador Marilina Armellin, and Charge d'Affaires Geetika Srivastava of the Indian High Commission led the festivities by lighting candles, symbolizing the traditional Diwali ritual of dispelling darkness with light. The event attracted a diverse array of guests from diplomatic circles, Pakistani officials, expatriates, and local community members, reflecting Diwali's universal appeal as a festival that celebrates unity, peace, and joy. The attendees were treated to Indian cultural elements, including traditional music and festive decorations, showcasing India's rich cultural heritage. Diwali celebrations like these are a recurring part of the Indian High Commission's outreach, promoting cross-cultural understanding and fostering positive relations between India, Pakistan, and the international community. The annual Diwali event is one among various cultural programs organized by the High Commission, underlining the role of cultural diplomacy in bringing communities together and creating a shared space for celebration across borders. – DNA







# The German embassy in Islamabad celebrates German Unity Day 2024

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, high officials and representatives from diplomatic, military, political, economic, humanitarian and media sectors, reflecting the strong ties between Germany and Pakistan. 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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# Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Attends Turkish Republic Day Reception

DNA

PAKISTAN'S Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister attended Türkiye's Republic Day reception in Islamabad as the Chief Guest, celebrating the 101st anniversary of the Turkish Republic. Extending heartfelt

congratulations to Türkiye's leadership and people, he expressed solidarity following the recent terrorist attack in Ankara, reaffirming Pakistan's support for Türkiye against terrorism. Highlighting the deep-rooted friendship between Pakistan and Türkiye, he reflected on Türkiye's progress since 1923

under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and noted Türkiye's unwavering support for Pakistan in times of crisis. Addressing global challenges, he condemned Israel's actions in Palestinian territories and emphasized Pakistan and Türkiye's shared commitment to supporting Palestinian self-determination.





# Speakers call for adequate awareness about breast cancer

## Serena hotels hosts breast cancer Session

**Mahnoor Ansar**

ISLAMABAD: In observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Serena Hotels organized a dedicated awareness session for its employees, aimed at empowering them with knowledge about early detection, diagnosis, and treatment options for breast cancer. Event tickets The session featured esteemed medical professionals, Dr. Ayesha Isani Majeed and Dr. Saeeda Yasmin, both are renowned and leading practitioners for breast cancer treatment and diagnosis. Both the doctors highlighted the importance of early detection and shared details about the state-of-the-art facilities available for mammography, ultrasound, and biopsies. They have also shared

important insights into breast cancer detection and treatment, emphasizing the life-saving importance of regular screening and self-examinations. The session also included a practical demonstration on how to perform self-examinations, a key method in early detection. Employees had the opportunity to engage in testing and consultations with the doctors, further enhancing the session's impact. Serena Hotels emphasized the organization's commitment to promoting the well-being of its employees and supporting initiatives that empower them through health awareness. Breast cancer awareness is a vital part of not only women's but men's health, and Serena Hotels is proud to provide this platform where our employees can learn from leading medical professionals.



## 40 years of Australia- Pakistan agri cooperation

# Bus art depicting ways to save water and improve food security launched

In launching the project, High Commissioner Hawkins said: “For 40 years, Australia has stood beside Pakistan, working to tackle some of the most pressing challenges in agriculture and water management. This bus art initiative captures the essence of that collaboration—using creativity to inspire action and connect people in rural and urban Punjab

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Marking 40 years of Pakistan-Australia agricultural collaboration, Australian High Commissioner, Neil Hawkins and Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) CEO, Professor Wendy Umberger launched bus art depicting ways to save water and improve food security. Public buses will carry cartoons created by Australian alumnus and renowned cartoonist Nigar Nazar, which convey messages to raise community awareness of simple practices to achieve sustainable agriculture and address the impacts of climate change including water scarcity.

The messages reflect Australian and Pakistani efforts to improve Pakistan’s agricultural sector over the last four decades. In launching the project, High Commissioner Hawkins said: “For 40 years, Australia has stood beside Pakistan, working to tackle some of the most pressing challenges in agriculture and water management. This bus art initiative captures the essence of that collaboration—using creativity to inspire action and connect people in rural and urban Punjab.” ACIAR CEO, Prof Wendy Umberger said: “We are honoured to celebrate this milestone through such a creative and impactful initiative that reaches beyond the fields and into the daily lives of Pa-

kistanis. ACIAR has worked closely with Pakistani farmers, scientists, and policymakers over the past 40 years to develop sustainable agricultural practices, improve food security, and enhance livelihoods, particularly in Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan.” The initiative will involve five public buses which travel around Punjab’s agricultural heartlands, reaching thousands of commuters and passersby. The cartoons aim to encourage those that see them to conserve water and support sustainable farming practices. Cartoonist Nigar Nazar attended a professional course from the University of Canberra. She was awarded the Tamgha-i-Imtiaz honour from Pakistan’s President in 2023.



# Hungary, Pakistan cooperation in various fields strengthened: envoy

In early November 1956, two news items dominated the front pages of every leading newspaper around the world: the Soviet aggression against a small freedom loving neighbor, and the Middle-east crisis. Well, sometimes it seems as if time has stopped

**Mahnoor Ansar**

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Hungary to Pakistan Bela Fazekas has said the frequent political contacts, regular visits and meetings between our two countries provide a solid political basis for the enhancement of our multi-level cooperation. This year we have continued our bilateral political consultation and we are looking forward to other ministerial level visits in the coming months. The ambassador made these remarks on the occasion of the National Day of Hungary. Riaz Hussein Pirzada, Minister for Housing and Works, Senators, Members of Parliament attended the reception. The Hungarian performers stole the show by their mesmerizing cultural performances. The ambassador further said, trade has doubled in the last four years. There are more and more Pakistani-Hungarian joint ventures in the field of agriculture and water management.

'The flagship of the Hungarian companies active in Pakistan is the MOL, which has 25 years of presence in this country. MOL is one of the largest foreign investors in the oil and gas industry and the second largest producer of oil in Pakistan'. But there is something else which makes MOL Pakistan unique among foreign investors. The activity of the company is not only complying with environmental regulations but going much beyond to protect local biodiversity through its nature loving expats, he added. 'Let me tell to my Urdu speaking friends that I deliberately used the word Magyaristan instead of "Hungry" which sounds a bit unfortunate. If your national poet Muhammad Iqbal could use the Persian form when he wrote about Hungary, I cannot see any problem to use this version'.

He said, on 23 October 1956 University students took to the streets in Hungary to say no to the oppression and dictatorship. The demonstrations became an armed uprising due to hostile reaction of the communist regime which led to the death of dozens of demonstrators. Within a week the new Hungarian government denounced the Warsaw Pact soviet military alliance and called the United Nations General Assembly to recognize the country's neutrality. Two weeks later the Soviet military aggression crushed the heroic struggle of the freedom fighters. In early



November 1956, two news items dominated the front pages of every leading newspaper around the world: the Soviet aggression against a small freedom loving neighbor, and the Middle-east crisis. Well, sometimes it seems as if time has stopped. 33 years later, in 1989 Hungary regained its independence and peacefully transitioned into a democratic parliamentary republic. The main message of the 1956 revolution and freedom fight was that the Hungarian people would never bow to totalitarian rule nor accept permanent isolation from their fellow Europeans with whom they share the same values.

'The ambassador further said, next year we will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between our two countries. A few weeks ago one of my fellow Ambassadors asked me what was my greatest achievement during my two terms as Ambassador in this country. There might be a few, but one is certainly among them. This is the discovery that our relations with this part of the world are much older than our diplomatic relations. My research in different archives led to the discovery of those longtime forgotten intellectual footprints what Hungarians- artists,

professors, doctors, orientalists among them left behind in the 19th and early 20th century while living and working in this part of the sub-continent'. The ambassador said, a few years back we had proposed to our Pakistani friends to share our rich experiences by signing a cooperation agreement in the field of sport. 'Without hinting on any direct link, let me tell you that there were times when Hungary won gold medal in javelin throw in the Olympics. This year in Paris it was Pakistan. I congratulate to Arshad Nadeem from all my heart'. Another area is education where Hungary and Pakistan share a strong bond of cooperation. Ten years ago, nobody in this country was even considering to study in Hungary. Today Hungary is among the top 10 destinations for Pakistani students wanting to study abroad, Ambassador Fazekas added. He said, Hungary provides 400 Fully Funded Undergraduate and Graduate Scholarships for Pakistani Students every year. And you have to add to this number 6-7 hundred more who are on self-funding basis. Today the Pakistani diaspora in Hungary is the most highly educated in the world regardless how big or small it is, he concluded.







ISLAMABAD: CEO Serena Hotels Global, Aziz Boolani and his spouse posing for a group picture with renowned poets Anwar Masood, Anwar Shaoor and others on the occasion of Mehfil-e- Mushaira hosted by Serena Hotels. – DNA



# Poetry comes alive at Serena Hotels' Mehfil-e-Sukhan

Centreline Report

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels, hosted a Mushaira “Mehfil-e-Sukhan” event, bringing together some of Pakistan’s most esteemed poets. The gathering celebrated under Serena Hotels’ Cultural Diplomacy Initiative was a tribute to the richness of Urdu poetry and to the power of words. The gathering featured wonderful well-known poets, including Anwar Masood, Kishwar Naheed, Iftikhar Arif, Anwar Shaoor, Yasmin Hameed, Javed Saba, Akhtar Usman, Ahmad Ataullah, Zahoor Ahmed, Hamida Shaheen, Umair Najmi, and Farjad Mahdi. Each poet shared

captivating verses that captivated the audience. The poetry shared highlighted how poetry continues to bring people together across different cultures. This Mushaira was more than a recital; it was a celebration of language, tradition, and the timeless art of verse. Serena Hotels not only promote events like “Mehfil-e-Sukhan” but also actively supports renowned literary gatherings such as the Lahore and Quetta Literary Festivals, strengthening its mission to promote the Urdu language and cultural heritage across Pakistan. Through these initiatives, Serena continues to bring poetic voices together, appreciating the beauty and depth of Urdu poetry.

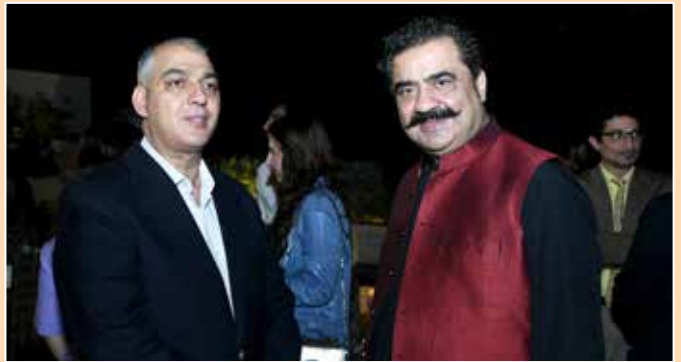


# US Deputy Chief of Mission welcomed



**ISLAMABAD:** CEO and Founder of Monal Group Luqman Ali Afzal hosted dinner for the newly-arrived Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of United States of America Ms. Natalie A. Baker, at his residence. A large number of diplomats, members of the business fraternity and media attended the dinner. Luqman and his spouse welcomed Ms. Natalie to Pakistan and wished her best of luck. Seen in the picture are, among others, hosts Luqman Ali Afzal and his wife Aysha Luqman, Ms. Natalie A. Baker, Ms. Brooke de Montluzin, Economic Counselor US Embassy, MNA Barrister Aqeel Malik and others. DNA





# US Deputy Chief of Mission welcomed



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# Indonesian Armed Forces mark 79th anniversary in Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A ceremonial event was held to mark the 79th anniversary of the Indonesian Armed Forces. Attendees observed a minute of silence to honor lives lost in Palestine. The event, graced by Air Marshal Shaikl Ghazanfar, as chief guest. The acting charge d'affaires of the Indonesian embassy Ferry

J. Murdiansyah emphasized Indonesia's commitment to protecting sovereignty, stability, and contributing to world peace. He also talked about Indonesian-Pakistani ties tracing back to anti-colonial efforts under leaders President Sukarno and Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The event reaffirmed mili-

tary cooperation and brotherly relations between the two nations. Later, Air Marshal Shaikl Ghazafar Deputy Chief of Air Staff Personnel, acting Charge d'Affaires of Ferry J. Murdiansyah, Budi Wiman, Defenece Attache and others cut cake to celebrate the 79th Anniversary of the Indonesian Armed Forces Day.



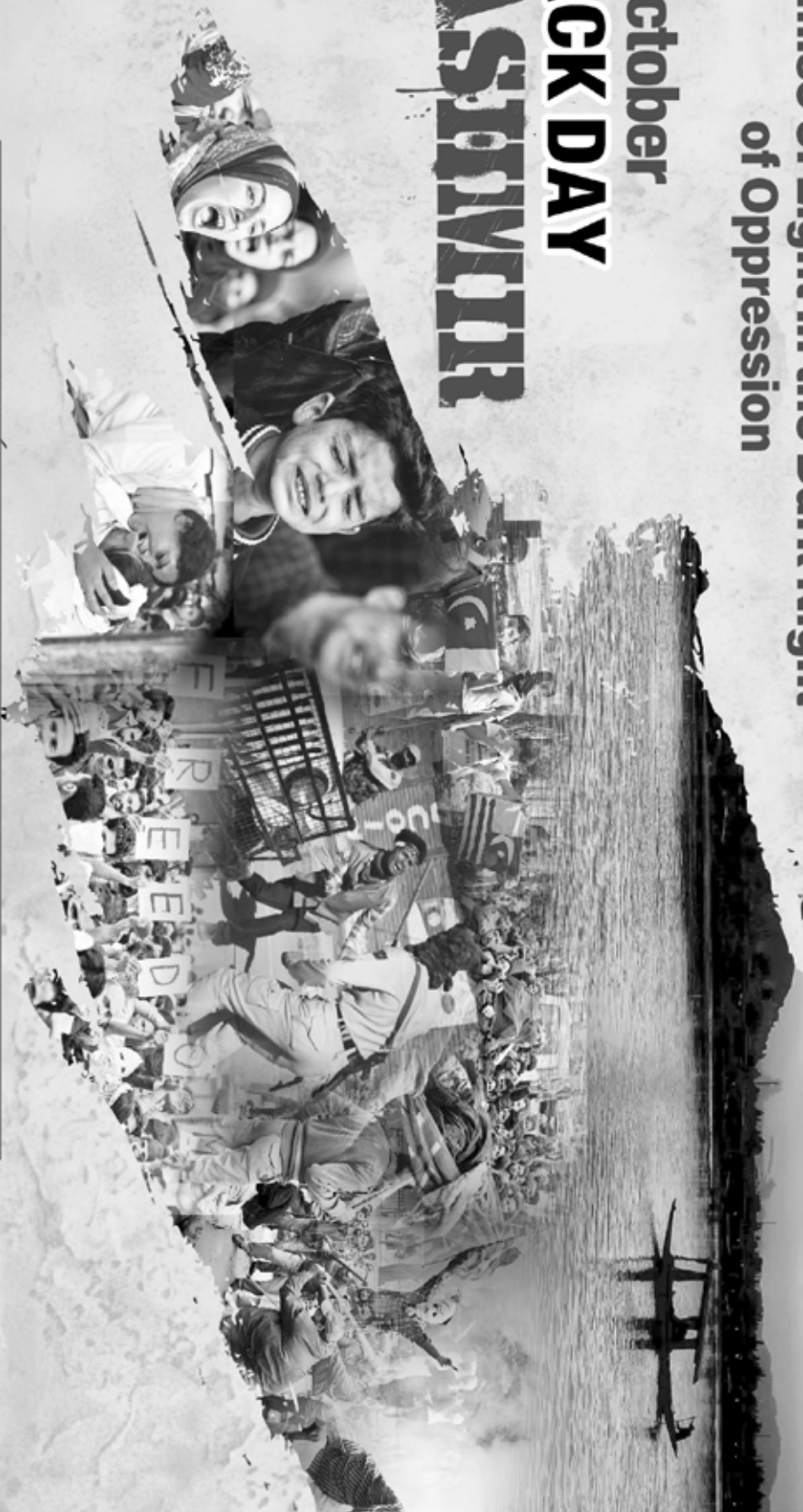




# Kashmir Freedom Movement

## A Promise of Light in the Dark Night of Oppression

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