

CENTRELINE

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine



KHAZAR FARHADOV

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a bond endures**



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Head Office

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E-mail: moving@freelinemovers.com - Website: www.freelinemovers.com

B r a n c h O f f i c e s

Karachi

Room No.14 &15, 3rd Floor, Kahkashan Mall,
Main Tariq Road, 172-1,Block-2, P.E.C.H.S,
Karachi. Tel: (+92-21) 34530626,34310478
Fax: (+92-21) 34531747
E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com

Lahore

F-4, Gulberg Centre,
Main Boulevard, Lahore.
Tel: (+92-42) 35758861, 35761085.
Fax: (+92-42) 35711420
E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com

Peshawar

Office No. C-9, 2nd Floor, Zaheer Plaza,
Latif Abad, Ring Road, Peshawar.
Tel: (+92-91) 2582776
Fax: (+92-91) 2582896
E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com

Kabul

House # 4, Street # 4,
Charahi Ansari Road, Shahr-e-Naw,
Kabul - Afghanistan.
Tel: +93 799021 773, 93 797505 808, 93 778468 268.
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CULTURE COLOR FASHION SHOW-SEASON 5

Niftysphere Institute of Arts and Design proudly presented **Culture Colors Fashion Show – Season 5**, a celebration of creativity, cultural heritage, fashion, and artistic expression.

The event was honored by the presence of **Chief Guest Senator Sana Jamali**, who was presented with an appreciation award by **Mr. Syed Usman Tahir, CEO of Niftysphere Institute of Arts and Design**, recognizing her valuable presence and support.

A special appreciation award was presented to **Ms. Sidratul Muntaha, Head of Department**, whose vision, dedication, and leadership played a pivotal role in developing the theme and successfully organizing and supervising the event. The award was presented by **Mr. Andy Halus, Minister Counselor for Public Diplomacy at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad**, in recognition of her outstanding contribution. We also extend our sincere appreciation to our **Venue Partner, Serena Hotels**, for their valued collaboration and support in making this event a memorable success. **Mr. Rashid Ilyas, Executive Director**, presented an appreciation award to **Mr. Rashiduddin, General Manager of Serena Business Complex**, as a gesture of gratitude for their partnership and support.

A remarkable celebration of culture, fashion, teamwork, and creative excellence — **Culture Colors Season 5** stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and artistic vision.



A beautiful celebration of culture, music, and tradition featuring a mesmerizing Sitar performance by Mr. Wajih Nizami, Founder of Rang School of Music & Arts, accompanied by Irfan, Tabla Nawaz. The evening continued with a soulful Violin performance by Mr. Faizan Sen, Principal of Rang School of Music & Arts, followed by vibrant Balochi Cultural Dance performances by the PNCA team and Virsa. The stage also came alive with a captivating performance by Sultan-ul-Qadriya Qawwal and a dynamic performance by Asfandyar Khattak — making Culture Colors Season 5 a memorable celebration of Pakistan's rich cultural heritage.



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127 C, Industrial Estate
Sialkot-51340, Pakistan
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Editor-in-Chief

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

Executive Editor

Mubashar Ahmad Bhatti

Deputy Editor

Abid Raza

Founding Content Head

Lt. Col Ihsan Piracha (R) (Late)

Advisor

Prof. Dr. Farid A. Khwaja

Legal Advisor

Raja Khurram Shahzad

(Advocate High Court)

M Yahya Farid (Advocate)

Director Marketing

Fiaz Chaudhry

03005538251

Sub Editors

Farrukh Shehzad

M. Shaheen Qureshi

Saifullah Ansar

Bureau Chief Karachi

Nazir Siyal

Chief Correspondent

Ather Javed Sufi

Online/ Web Editor

Mahnoor Ansar

Photo Journalists

Muhammad Shahid

Head Office: #11, Block 18-A

(Awan Plaza) G-8 Markaz,

Islamabad-Pakistan 44000

Tel: 051-2261960, 051-8488394

Cell: 0333-5203232

centrelinemag@gmail.com

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Islamabad's alarming decline



ISLAMABAD, once celebrated as Pakistan's most secure and orderly city, is now grappling with a disturbing convergence of crises: unchecked crime, rampant corruption, and glaring governance failures. The recent fire incident at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) stands as a tragic reminder of how apathy and mismanagement continue to endanger lives in the capital. What should have been a wake-up call for authorities has instead become another fleeting headline, soon forgotten in the cycle of negligence.

The blaze at PIMS exposed not only the vulnerability of public institutions but also the indifference of those tasked with safeguarding them. Patients and staff were left scrambling for safety, while emergency preparedness proved woefully inadequate. Fire alarms and safety protocols were either absent or dysfunctional, underscoring how corruption and poor oversight have hollowed out critical infrastructure. For a few days, outrage filled the airwaves, officials promised inquiries, and some heads rolled. Yet, as history has shown, these dismissals are temporary; many of the same individuals eventually return to prized posts, perpetuating the cycle of impunity.

This pattern is a classic example of bad governance: tragedies spark hype, committees are formed, but systemic reform never materializes. The bigger tragedy is not the fire itself, but the normalization of such disasters. Citizens are conditioned to expect negligence, while institutions remain unaccountable. Parallel to institutional decay, Islamabad faces a rising tide of crime. Once considered a safe haven compared to other cities, the capital now witnesses frequent robberies, street crimes, and brazen acts of violence. In G-11/1, armed dacoits recently targeted a shopkeeper as he closed his store. In the same sector, a senior journalist was robbed at gunpoint, highlighting how even prominent citizens are vulnerable. Despite these incidents, locals complain of no effective police action, leaving communities exposed and fearful. Much of this criminal activity is linked to the Mehrabadi settlement in Sector G-12, which residents describe as a "no-go area" even for law enforcement. Illegal settlements have long plagued Islamabad, with the Capital Development Authority (CDA) failing to assert control. Attempts to demolish encroachments often end in violent clashes, while auctions of land in G-12 have repeatedly failed. Experts warn that even decades from now, the sector may remain undeveloped, a testament to institutional paralysis.

The malaise extends beyond law enforcement. Sector G-14/1, announced in 2004, remains occupied by illegal residents. Many rightful allottees have died waiting for possession, their families left in limbo. This failure reflects how corruption and inefficiency in housing authorities rob citizens of their investments and dreams. Islamabad's urban planning, once a model of order, now mirrors the chaos of other cities where encroachments and land disputes dominate. Citizens increasingly blame political interference for the decline in policing and administration. Police leadership, they argue, is appointed to serve politicians rather than the public. Nepotism and jobbery erode professionalism, leaving the force ill-equipped to tackle crime. The same dynamics play out across departments: health, housing, and municipal services all suffer from corruption and lack of accountability. Rules exist, but their supremacy is undermined by selective enforcement and patronage networks. The fire at PIMS and the crime wave in Islamabad are not isolated events; they are symptoms of a deeper rot. Governance failures allow illegal settlements to thrive, criminals to operate unchecked, and institutions to collapse under pressure. Citizens are left to fend for themselves, while officials issue hollow reassurances.

Without the corrective measures, Islamabad risks losing its identity as a capital city where citizens once felt secure. The normalization of tragedy, whether a hospital fire or a crime wave must be resisted. Otherwise, the city will continue its descent into lawlessness and dysfunction.

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 launched Diplomatic News Agency (DNA) in 2012. In May 2020 he launched Pakistan's First & only Diplomatic Newspaper Daily Islamabad POST.

KHAZAR FARHADOV

Azerbaijan–Pakistan ties reach new heights

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

with Ambassador Khazar Farhadov

concluding his tenure in Pakistan (2021–2026)

Daily Islamabad POST/CENTRELINE/DNA News Agency

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti



Q: Excellency, as you prepare to conclude your assignment in Pakistan, how would you summarize the overall trajectory of Azerbaijan–Pakistan relations during your five-year tenure?

A: It has been an extraordinary journey. When I arrived in Islamabad in 2021, our relations were already strong, rooted in shared history, values, and mutual support. But over the past five years, we elevated this partnership to unprecedented heights.

We witnessed seven mutual visits at the leadership level, including Presidents and Prime Ministers, which provided direct executive directives to both governments. Six parliamentary exchanges further strengthened legislative cooperation, and for the first time, a Pakistani provincial Chief Minister visited Azerbaijan, expanding ties into regional economic hubs. These engagements institutionalized our political dialogue and created a momentum that will continue to shape our future.

Q: Defense and military cooperation has been a defining feature of Azerbaijan–Pakistan ties. What milestones stand out most to you?

A: Defense cooperation has indeed transformed into a strategic partnership. Between 2021 and 2026, we saw a remarkable number of high-level military exchanges, including visits by Defense Ministers, Chiefs of Army Staff, Chiefs of General Staff,

and Air Force and Navy Commanders. Joint exercises were historic: Three Brothers-2021 in Baku marked the first trilateral drills of Azerbaijan, Pakistan, and Türkiye Special Forces. Pakistan hosted Indus Shield in 2023 and 2024, with Azerbaijani contingents actively participating. In 2025, Azerbaijan hosted Indus Shield Alpha for the first time, symbolizing our growing confidence in joint operations.

Our armed forces also participated in each other's national parades. Azerbaijani Commando and Military Band units marched in Pakistan's National Day Parades in 2022, 2024, and 2025, while Pakistani contingents proudly marched in Baku during the 5th anniversary of Azerbaijan's Victory Day in November 2025, accompanied by a live aerial display of Pakistani JF-17 Thunder fighter jets. The induction of JF-17s into Azerbaijan's arsenal was a historic milestone, reflecting trust and shared defense production goals. These steps symbolize not only military cooperation but also strategic brotherhood.

Q: Economically, what breakthroughs were achieved during your tenure?

A: The economic dimension of our relations witnessed a quantum leap. Bilateral trade volume rose from USD 11 million to hundreds of millions, driven largely by defense industry products and strategic commodities such as LNG,



urea, sugar, and defense equipment. In 2024, our President announced a USD 2 billion investment package into commercially viable sectors of Pakistan's economy. SOCAR has since launched active operations, and the groundbreaking ceremony for the White Oil Pipeline will take place soon.

We also established crucial legal frameworks by signing the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) and the Transit Trade Agreement (TTA). Institutional mechanisms were strengthened with the creation of the Azerbaijan–Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Islamabad and the opening of the Azerbaijan Trade House in Lahore. These initiatives ensure that our economic cooperation is not episodic but institutionalized and sustainable.

Q: People-to-people connectivity often defines the strength of relations. How did this evolve during your tenure?

A: People-to-people ties flourished. After nearly three decades, we restored direct air connectivity, with 11 weekly flights operated by AZAL, PIA, and Airblue connecting Baku with Islamabad and Lahore. This facilitated travel, tourism, and business exchanges. Pakistani travelers to Azerbaijan reached approximately 92,000 in 2025, with projections to cross 100,000 by the end of 2026. We also exported our ASAN public service model to Pakistan, with the construction of the ASAN Service Center in Islamabad. Sister-city agreements expanded beyond the historic Ganja–Multan partnership to include Baku–Islamabad and Nakhchivan–Lahore. These initiatives brought our peoples closer, fostering cultural understanding and practical cooperation.

Q: Education and culture have been vibrant areas of cooperation. Could you elaborate on the progress made?

A: Education and culture are the bridges that connect societies. Over the past five years, the number of Pakistani students studying in Azerbaijan surged from 100 to 2,000. We signed operational roadmaps and agreements between leading universities and think tanks, including ADA University, Baku State University, Quaid-i-Azam University, NUST, NUML, GCU Lahore, and IQRA National University. Cultural centers were established to deepen mutual understanding: the Heydar Aliyev Auditorium at NUST, the Azerbaijan Language and Culture Center at NUML, and the joint Azerbaijan–Urdu Science Center at GCU Lahore. We renovated the Azerbaijan Studies Center at the National Library of Pakistan and the Nizami Ganjavi Corner at the National Book Foundation. Language studies also expanded, with Urdu taught at Baku State University and the Pakistan Center inaugurated at the Azerbaijan University of Languages. These initiatives ensure that our youth and scholars remain connected, fostering long-term friendship.

Q: Trilateral cooperation with Türkiye has been a recurring theme. How do you assess its impact?

A: Azerbaijan, Pakistan, and Türkiye share a unique bond, often described as a “strategic brotherhood.” During my tenure, trilateral



cooperation was elevated to the highest level. Leaders of the three countries held three trilateral summits in Astana, Lachin, and Baku. Parliament speakers also conducted three trilateral meetings. Joint military parades and exercises further cemented this partnership. This trilateral format is not only symbolic but also practical, creating a framework for regional stability and collective security.

Q: Nearly 40 agreements were signed during your tenure. What does this signify for the future of bilateral relations?

A: The signing of nearly 40 agreements across diverse sectors—economy, trade, investment, defense, culture, education, tourism, sister cities, law, justice, and public services—represents the institutionalization of our cooperation. These agreements ensure that our partnership is governed by clear legal frameworks, making it resilient and future-oriented. They provide a roadmap for continuity, regardless of political changes, and reflect the seriousness with which both nations approach their relationship.

Q: Finally, what legacy do you believe you leave behind as Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan?

A: I believe the legacy is one of institutionalized cooperation, strategic trust, and people-to-people bridges. During my tenure, we elevated relations to a historic level, creating frameworks that will endure. Azerbaijan and Pakistan are now closer than ever, not only as partners but as brothers. I am confident that this partnership will continue to flourish, guided by mutual respect, shared values, and a vision for collective prosperity.



National Day of Vietnam

ISLAMABAD: Chief guest MNA Nasir Shah, Ambassador of Vietnam to Pakistan Pham An Tuan, Heads of Missions of the ASEAN countries attended the National Day of Vietnam.

Vietnam embassy and Pakistan academy host prison diary launch

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, in collaboration with the Pakistan Academy of Letters, hosted an official book launch ceremony for President Ho Chi Minh's renowned literary work, "Prison Diary" (Nhật ký trong tù), at the Sheikh Ayyaz Conference Hall in Islamabad. The event, which brought together prominent literary figures, intellectuals, diplomats, and distinguished guests from Pakistan and abroad to celebrate the timeless relevance of the historic collection of poems. Written during President Ho Chi Minh's imprisonment by the Kuomintang government in China between 1942 and 1943, "Prison Diary" comprises over 130 poems composed in classical Chinese. The work is widely regarded for its profound literary, philosophical, and humanistic values, expressed through simple yet vivid language, rich imagery, and a remark-

ably witty and insightful perspective on suffering, resilience, and the indomitable human spirit. In his address, His Excellency Mr. Pham Anh Tuan, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to Pakistan, underscored the significance of the work, stating: "President Ho Chi Minh's 'Prison Diary' is not only a national treasure of Viet Nam but also a profound piece of world literature that transcends borders. We are honored to co-host this launch with the Pakistan Academy of Letters, and we believe this work will deeply resonate with Pakistani readers, scholars, and poets who cherish the values of freedom, dignity, and humanity."

Dr. Yousuf Khushk, Chairman of the Pakistan Academy of Letters, also shared his enthusiasm for the collaboration, describing the diary as "a testament to the power of words to sustain hope and inspire change, even in the darkest of times." He noted that the book offers a

unique window into the mind of a great revolutionary and poet.

The ceremony featured readings from the diary, critical analyses by literary experts, and a panel discussion exploring the intersection of literature, politics, and morality in Ho Chi Minh's poetry. A special exhibition of rare photographs and manuscripts related to the diary was also on display, offering attendees a deeper insight into the historical and cultural context of the work. Heads of mission from ASEAN countries and the Ambassador of Cuba were also in attendance, highlighting the event's significance in fostering cultural and intellectual exchange between Viet Nam and Pakistan. The Embassy of Vietnam and the Pakistan Academy of Letters expressed their appreciation to all attendees for making the occasion a memorable literary afternoon, reinforcing the shared values of freedom, dignity, and humanity through the enduring power of literature.





Centaurus bids farewell to envoys of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan

Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan who is also Prime Minister Coordinator on Tourism, lauded the efforts of Ambassador Farhadov and Ambassador Kistafin, highlighting their pivotal role in strengthening bilateral relations between Pakistan and their respective countries

A.M. Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: The Centaurus, under the leadership of its CEO Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan and President Sardar Rashid Ilyas Khan, hosted a distinguished farewell dinner in honor of the outgoing ambassadors of Azerbaijan, Khazar Farhadov, and Kazakhstan, Yerzhan Kistafin. Federal Minister for Railways Hanif Abbasi, along with a large number of diplomats, as well as prominent members of the civil society and business fraternity, attended

the farewell dinner, adding prestige and significance to the occasion. In his remarks, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan who is also Prime Minister Coordinator on Tourism, lauded the efforts of Ambassador Farhadov and Ambassador Kistafin, highlighting their pivotal role in strengthening bilateral relations between Pakistan and their respective countries. He noted that over the past five years, both ambassadors had worked tirelessly to enhance cooperation in trade, culture, and diplomacy, leaving behind a legacy of friendship and collaboration. Ambassador Khazar Farhadov, in his fare

well speech, expressed deep gratitude to the Sardar family and the people of Pakistan. He reflected on his years in Islamabad, recalling the warmth and hospitality he experienced, and emphasized the progress made in expanding Azerbaijan-Pakistan ties. Similarly, Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin thanked the Centaurus leadership for their support and recounted memorable moments of his diplomatic journey in Pakistan. He underscored Kazakhstan's achievements in building stronger partnerships with Pakistan, particularly in economic and cultural exchanges.

Centaurus bids farewell to envoys of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan



Centaurus bids farewell to envoys of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan





Melodies of Friendship and Brotherhood **Uzbek cultural troupe presents** **a spell-binding performance**

The Culture minister noted that both countries share deep cultural and historical connections, pointing to similarities in language, cuisine, traditions, and religious heritage; Uzbek ambassador describes Pakistan and Uzbekistan as “brotherly nations” with many similarities

Saifullah Ansar / DNA

ISLAMABAD: A vibrant performance by an Uzbek cultural troupe in Islamabad drew praise from dignitaries and highlighted the growing cultural ties between Pakistan and Uzbekistan.

Federal Minister for Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi spoke on the occasion, commending the troupe’s performance and stressing the importance of strengthening bilateral relations. He said Pakistan values its ties with Uzbekistan and looks forward to diversifying them further. The minister noted that both countries share deep cultural and historical connections, pointing to similarities in language, cuisine, traditions, and religious heritage. “Our peoples are bound together by shared words, flavors, and faith. These commonalities make our relationship unique and enduring,” he remarked. Ambassador of Uzbekistan Alisher Tukhtaev also addressed the gathering, expressing his country’s keen interest in making Uzbek culture better understood in Pakistan. He described Pakistan and

Uzbekistan as “brotherly nations” with many similarities, and emphasized that cooperation between the two countries is expanding with each passing day. The ambassador highlighted areas of collaboration including culture, religious tourism, people-to-people contact, business, and trade. The event showcased traditional Uzbek music, dance, and costumes, offering the audience a glimpse into the rich heritage of Central Asia. Cultural experts present at the ceremony noted that such exchanges not only strengthen diplomatic ties but also foster mutual understanding among ordinary citizens. Talking to this correspondent, officials from the Ministry of Culture underscored that Pakistan is committed to expanding cultural diplomacy as a means of enhancing regional cooperation. They pointed out that initiatives like joint performances, exhibitions, and tourism projects can serve as bridges between nations. The performance was attended by government officials, diplomats, artists, and members of the public, all of whom lauded the troupe’s artistry and the spirit of friendship it represented.

Independence Day of Uzbekistan



ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Uzbekistan in Islamabad hosted a grand reception this evening to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the Republic of Uzbekistan's independence. The event, attended by senior government officials, diplomats, parliamentarians, and business leaders, highlighted the robust and expanding strategic ties between Uzbekistan and Pakistan. Geographic Reference. Federal Minister for Energy, Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. In his welcome address, Uzbekistan's Ambassador extended heartfelt gratitude to Minister Leghari, describing his presence as a "clear sign of the friendship, respect, and strong partnership between Uzbekistan and Pakistan." – DNA



Sardar Yasir for simplified visa regimes to boost tourism

Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, Alisher Tukhtayev, in his keynote speech, underscored the historical depth and future promise of Uzbekistan as a hub where tradition meets modernity



Ansar M Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: Tourism and connectivity emerged as the central themes during a vibrant road show highlighting Uzbekistan's immense potential as a destination for cultural exchange, investment, and regional integration. The event, held in Islamabad brought together key stakeholders from both

countries to explore new routes, better packages, and stronger business-to-business (B2B) and people-to-people (P2P) links. Sardar Yasir, Prime Minister's Coordinator on Tourism, emphasized the need to simplify visa regimes to make travel easier and more accessible. He noted that the Government of Pakistan is keen to take concrete steps to remove bar-

riers and encourage greater tourism flows, thereby strengthening cultural and economic bonds.

Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, Alisher Tukhtayev, in his keynote speech, underscored the historical depth and future promise of Uzbekistan as a hub where tradition meets modernity. He emphasized that new technologies, fresh opportunities, and innovative avenues are reshaping Uzbekistan's tourism landscape, making it a magnet for travelers and investors alike.

"Tourism can become the main pillar of our strategic partnership," he remarked, noting the huge number of Pakistani delegations that have already visited Uzbekistan and the potential to further increase this figure. Managing Director of the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), Aftab ur Rehman Rana, also addressed the gathering. He assured that PTDC would extend full support to promote tourism ties between the two countries, highlighting the importance of structured packages and facilitation measures to attract more visitors. Rana stressed that Pakistan sees Uzbekistan not only as a tourism partner but also as a gateway to Central Asia's broader connectivity ambitions.

Adil Mirza of Centrum Air Uzbekistan, also spoke. He highlighted the role of aviation in enhancing connectivity and underscored the importance of direct routes between Pakistan and Uzbekistan to facilitate tourism and trade. Karimov stressed that better travel packages and simplified processes would encourage more visitors to explore Uzbekistan's cultural and economic offerings.

The road show highlighted the Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan Railway as a transformative project that could redefine regional connectivity. By linking Central Asia to Pakistan's seaports, the railway promises to open new corridors for trade, tourism, and investment, turning geographical proximity into tangible prosperity. The event also celebrated the contributions of the private sector.

Travel agents and tour operators were recognized with awards for their role in promoting tourism between Pakistan and Uzbekistan.

Indonesian embassy hosts festivities ahead of 81st Independence Day

Alongside the Indonesian diplomats and their families, there were Indonesian students, pilots, journalists, staff members at several international organizations based in Pakistan, and housewives married to Pakistanis

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Islamabad organized a vibrant lead-up event featuring traditional games, popular sport competition, Archipelagic cuisine, and community gathering, as part of a series of events ahead of Indonesia's 81st Independence Anniversary.

The program was started by community gym program at Garuda Lawn, inside the Embassy's premises. Hundreds of Indonesian nationals and their families gathered following the gymnastic movements demonstrated by Rama Fauzan, Indonesian student at the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) along with his Pakistani counterpart, Maryam.

The event was graced by Chandra W. Sukotjo, Ambassador of Indonesia to Pakistan, accompanied by his spouse, Tamara Y. Sukotjo. The occasion was also attended by Indonesian nationals living in various cities in Pakistan from different backgrounds. Alongside the Indonesian diplomats and their families, there were Indonesian students, pilots, journalists, staff members at several international organizations based in Pakistan, and housewives married to Pakistanis. Among the participants was Herwening Wiji Kalpiko of Bio Farma who has been in Pakistan to closely work with the Pakistani counterparts for potential joint-vaccine production.

In his welcoming remarks, Ambassador Chandra W. Sukotjo expressed his pleasure at seeing Indonesian and Pakistani friends gathered together.

"Your presence reflects the enduring friendship and strong people-to-people bonds between the two brotherly countries, as we celebrate together the Indonesia's Independence Day with the motto, 'Indonesia Berdaulat, Adil dan Makmur' (Indonesia Sovereign, Just, and Prosperous)," said Ambassador welcoming all Indonesian nationals at the Embassy as their home.

Keeping warm and welcoming spirit of the occasion, guests were presented with red and white shirts featuring a Batik pattern from Kalimantan, showcasing Indonesia's rich cultural heritage and national pride. Ambassador Chandra described the shirts as "a gift from the Indonesian taxpayers", allowing all to share in the warmth, pride, and togetherness associated with Indonesia's Independence celebration.

One of the highlights was the Indonesian food bazaar, featuring popular foods such as Nasi Padang (Padang-style rice), Siomay Ikan (steamed fish dumplings), Bakso Kuah (meatball soup), Es Cendol (sweet iced dessert), Peyek/Rempeyek (crispy peanut crackers), Mendoan (fried tempe), and Kacang Telur (seasoned egg-coated peanuts), offering the participants a delightful taste of

Indonesia's rich culinary heritage. "It is wonderful to enjoy authentic Indonesian food. Although we live far from one another, this occasion brings us together as one family as Indonesians and gives us a beautiful sense of home and belonging," said Desi Mediawati, an Indonesian national married to a Pakistani from Faisalabad.

The festive atmosphere continued with traditional Indonesian games for children and adults, including the popular Balap Karung (Sack Race), Tarik Tambang (Tug of War) and Joget Tomat (Tomato Dance), creating laughter, excitement and friendly competition among participants of all ages.

The occasion also carried special significance for Indonesian students living in Pakistan. "Although we are far from our homeland, this celebration makes us feel at home," expressed Muhsin Nasir, Head of the Indonesian Student Association in Pakistan.

The sport competition featured badminton, table tennis, volleyball, and futsal tournaments, promoting teamwork, healthy competition, and camaraderie among the Indonesian community, Embassy officials, students, and all diaspora. The Embassy of Indonesia expressed its sincere appreciation to the committee, volunteers, participants, and sponsors for their valuable contribution to the success of the event.





Dr Abrar ul Hasnain hosts dinner for Dr. Azra Fazal

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Renowned dentist Dr. Abrar ul Hasnain hosted a distinguished dinner reception at his residence to honor Sindh Health Minister Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho, sister of President Asif Ali Zardari. The event drew a large gathering of diplomats, senior officials, and prominent members of society, making it a memorable evening of cultural exchange and celebration. Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho, widely respected for her contributions to healthcare

reforms in Sindh, expressed heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Abrar for organizing the reception in her honor. She highlighted the importance of such gatherings in strengthening professional and diplomatic ties, while also appreciating the warm hospitality extended by the host. Guests were treated to an array of traditional Pakistani cuisines, showcasing the rich culinary heritage of the country. The menu reflected the diverse flavors of Pakistan, leaving the attendees delighted. Diplomats and dignitaries praised the cultural richness of the evening, noting that such events fos-

ter goodwill and mutual understanding. The dinner also provided an opportunity for informal discussions on healthcare initiatives, community welfare, and the role of medical professionals in advancing public health. Dr. Abrar ul Hasnain, known for his dedication to dentistry and social causes, emphasized the importance of collaboration between healthcare leaders and policymakers to improve services for the people. The reception not only celebrated Dr. Azra's achievements but also underscored the value of cultural diplomacy in building stronger relationships across communities.







27th Enthronement Anniversary Reception of H.M. King Mohammed VI

H.E. Mohamed Karmoune, Ambassador of Morocco to Pakistan & Hon. Consul General Ishtiaq Baig hosted a reception to mark the 27th Enthronement Anniversary of H.M. King Mohammed VI at the Hon. Consul General's residence in Karachi. The reception was attended by Governor Sindh Nehal Hashmi, Consuls General of various countries, provincial ministers, parliamentarians, senior govt officials, prominent businessmen, and members of Moroccan community. The ceremony commenced with the national anthems of Pakistan and Morocco, followed by addresses by Governor of Sindh, Ambassador of Morocco, and Hon. Consul General. A beautifully decorated cake featuring the Moroccan flag was cut on the occasion. Guests were also treated to a sumptuous selection of Moroccan and Pakistani cuisine.







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Ambassador of Uzbekistan H.E. Alisher Tukhtaev and Chief Editor Daily Islamabad POST/DNA Ansar Mahmood Bhatti exchanged documents.

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NORWEGIAN AMBASSADOR HOSTS FAREWELL DINNER



Japan provides grant assistance to the Moawin Foundation



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan, under its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) Program, has decided to provide grant assistance of USD 53,419 (equivalent to PKR 14.8 million) to the Moawin Foundation for the project to establish a women's vocational training institute in District Chakwal, Punjab. The grant contract was signed between His Excellency Mr. AKAMATSU Shuichi, Ambassador of Japan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and a representative of Moawin Foundation at the Embassy of Japan in Islamabad on August 27, 2026. The project, titled "the Project for the

Construction of Women's Vocational Training Institute in Village Dulmial, District Chakwal," aims to strengthen the capacity of regional skill development to empower vulnerable women and secure their economic independence.

Moawin Foundation has long been engaged in addressing the needs of underserved communities across Pakistan. Its vocational programs have steadily expanded their reach and impact over the years, reflecting the trust the Foundation has earned among local communities.

In rural areas in Pakistan, many families face economic and environmental challenges, while employment opportunities remain limited. Access to vocational training and opportunities to earn a sta-

ble income are particularly important for women, who often have fewer opportunities to acquire practical skills and achieve greater economic independence. Through this grant, Moawin Foundation will construct a dedicated training facility on land generously donated by the local community of Village Dulmial. This new Institute will offer structured courses in dressmaking, stitching, and fashion design to women from surrounding areas who require stable sources of alternative income throughout the year.

The project is expected to provide high-quality vocational training to 240 women annually, equipping them with practical skills that can help them earn their own income and build more secure livelihoods.

Japan provides grant aid human resource scholarships

Saifullah Ansar / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Japan has extended grant aid worth 350 million Japanese Yen for the implementation of the Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS) FY 2026 Program in Pakistan. A formal signing ceremony was held in Islamabad, where Notes Verbale were signed and exchanged between His Excellency Mr. AKAMATSU Shuichi, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, and Mr. Muhammad Humair Karim Kidwai, Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Government of Pakistan. Additionally, a Grant Agreement outlining the implementation details of the project for Fiscal Year 2026 was signed between Mr. SHINOZAKI Yusuke, Chief Representative of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Pakistan Office, and Mr. Miran Mohiyuddin Soomro, Senior Joint Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs. The JDS Program, which is launched in 2018, is part of Japan's commitment to strengthen the administrative capacities of the Government of Pakistan. The program offers highly capable Paki-

stani government officers the opportunity to pursue Master's and Ph.D. degrees at leading Japanese universities. These officers are selected from those involved in planning and implementing social and economic development policies. The JDS Program also seeks to promote mutual understanding and further strengthen the long-standing friendship and cooperative relationship between Japan and Pakistan by fostering future leaders who will serve as bridges between the two countries. Through the JDS Program, JICA has so far dispatched more than 100 government officers to Japan. To date more than 80 scholars have successfully completed their studies and returned to Pakistan, contributing their enhanced knowledge and skills to the country's development. On this occasion, H.E. Mr. AKAMATSU Shuichi, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, stated: "At its core, this program is built on a simple but powerful belief – that investing in people is the most sustainable investment a nation can make. When we support a young civil servant to pursue a Master's or doctoral degree at a leading Japanese university, we are not simply funding an academic qualification.

Embassies of Belgium and the Netherlands welcome Pakistan Hockey Team



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Belgium and the Embassy of the Netherlands in Islamabad hosted a reception to celebrate the upcoming FIH Hockey World Cup 2026, co-hosted by Belgium and the Netherlands, and to welcome the Pakistan National Field Hockey Team. The event brought together representatives from the diplomatic community, sports stakeholders, and guests to celebrate the shared passion for hockey and the

strong connections between Pakistan, Belgium, and the Netherlands.

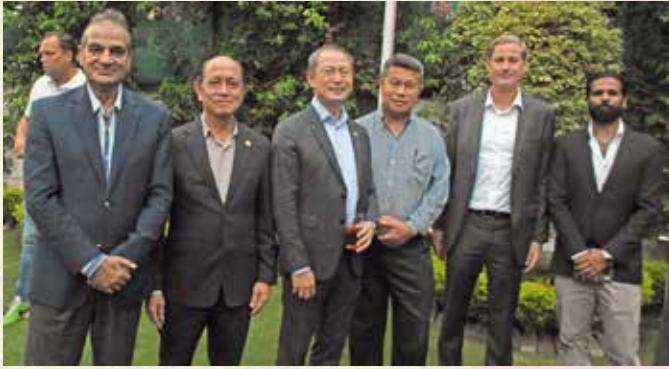
The reception was hosted by Hajo Provo Kluit, Chargé d'Affaires of the Netherlands, alongside Idesbald van der Gracht Ambassdor from the Embassy of Belgium. During the event, guests celebrated Pakistan's rich hockey tradition and wished the national team success as they prepare for the tournament.

A special highlight of the evening was the handover of hockey sticks by members of the Pakistan National Team to young

hockey players, symbolising the importance of inspiring the next generation and promoting the spirit of sport.

The event also featured speeches, a penalty shoot-out activity, and an opportunity for guests to engage with the players ahead of the team's journey to the Netherlands.

The FIH Hockey World Cup 2026 will be co-hosted by Belgium and the Netherlands, bringing together the world's top hockey teams for an international celebration of one of the world's most popular sports





ISLAMABAD: Mr. Wolfgang Oliver Kutschera Ambassador of AUSTRIA, Global CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani and others inaugurate an exhibition held under the aegis of the Satrang Art Gallery, at the Islamabad Serena Hotel. – DNA

Chairman UBG Zafar Bakhtawri hosts farewell dinner to Tunisian envoy





ASEAN DAY CELEBRATED IN STYLE

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The ASEAN Committee in Islamabad (ACI), comprising the diplomatic missions of Brunei Darussalam, the Republic of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Kingdom of Thailand, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, celebrated the 59th Anniversary of the founding of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) with an evening reception at the Islamabad Marriott Hotel, bringing together members of the Government of Pakistan, the diplomatic corps, international organizations, the private sector, civil society, and friends of ASEAN in Pakistan. The celebration marked nearly six decades of ASEAN's journey since its establishment on 8 August 1967, and highlighted the Association's enduring commitment to cooperation, friendship, peace and shared prosperity among its Member States and with partners around the world.

The reception was hosted under the ASEAN 2026 Chairship theme "Navigating Our Future, Together." The theme reflects ASEAN's continuing spirit of working collectively in addressing shared challenges and pursuing new opportunities in a rapidly changing and interconnected world. In his welcome remarks, H.E. Dr. Emmanuel R. Fernandez, Ambassador of the Republic of the Philippines and

Chair of the ACI, highlighted ASEAN's enduring strengths as a community that has built a strong tradition of peace, dialogue and cooperation despite its rich diversity of cultures, languages, religions and political systems. He also underscored the region's growing economic dynamism and openness to partnerships, as well as the considerable potential of its young, educated, creative and digitally connected population. Together, these strengths continue to define ASEAN's distinctive character and provide a strong foundation for deeper regional engagement, cooperation and partnership. The evening's celebration was honored by the presence of Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, H.E. Aurangzeb Khan Khichi, who conveyed the warm felicitations of the Government and people of Pakistan to the governments and peoples of ASEAN Member States. In his remarks, Minister Khichi recognized ASEAN's remarkable transformation over nearly six decades into a dynamic and increasingly integrated regional community of more than 700 million people, with a combined economy approaching US\$4 trillion. He also highlighted the longstanding engagement between Pakistan and ASEAN and the opportunities for further interaction and cooperation in areas of mutual interest. A particularly vibrant feature of the evening was the ASEAN cultural showcase, which transformed the reception into a colorful celebration of South-

east Asian heritage and everyday life. All ASEAN Missions based in Islamabad presented beautifully curated country booths, each designed to offer guests a glimpse into the distinctive traditions, crafts, products and cultural expressions of their respective countries. The displays brought together traditional objects, visual elements, national motifs and other cultural features, creating a lively showcase of the diversity that makes ASEAN unique.

The ASEAN Food Station likewise became a mini food festival, featuring an array of traditional and specialty dishes contributed by the ASEAN Missions in Islamabad. Guests were invited to discover the flavors of Southeast Asia—from familiar favorites to distinctive national delicacies—while learning more about the culinary traditions that form an important part of the region's cultural identity.

The cultural program further enlivened the celebration with performances representing different traditions from across Southeast Asia. The ASEAN Missions presented a diverse selection of cultural performances, ranging from traditional dance and martial arts to contemporary and creative presentations. Together, the performances, country booths and food showcase demonstrated that ASEAN's diversity is not merely a defining characteristic of the region, but also a source of connection among its peoples and a bridge for greater understanding with friends and partners beyond Southeast Asia.



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Mauritius envoy engages Capital's travel and business community

During the session, High Commissioner Kurrimbaccus highlighted the immense tourism potential of Mauritius, describing it as an entirely safe country with almost zero crime and strong protections for visitors. He informed participants that the visa regime for Mauritius has been simplified, with processing times already reduced and further improvements underway

Ansar M Bhatti

ISLAMABAD: The High Commissioner of Mauritius to Pakistan, H.E. Munsoo Kurrimbaccus, paid a significant visit to the Emirates office in Islamabad, where he held a productive and result-oriented interactive session with leading travel agents of the capital. The event was facilitated by Rana Tauseef, while Emirates Airlines Sales Manager Jawad Ahmad Qureshi briefed the audience about Emirates' operations connecting Pakistan with Mauritius. Deputy Head of Mission of the Mauritius High Commission, Mr. R.A.L. Sewtohlul, was also present on the occasion. During the session, High Commissioner Kurrimbaccus highlighted the immense tourism potential of Mauritius, describing it as an entirely safe country with almost zero crime and strong protections for visitors. He informed participants that the visa regime for Mauritius has been simplified, with processing times already reduced and further

improvements underway. He extended a warm invitation to Pakistani travel agents to visit Mauritius and explore its opportunities firsthand. Responding to questions, he assured that connectivity between Pakistan and Mauritius is being enhanced to attract more tourists from the region. mbassador Kurrimbaccus described Mauritius as a dynamic economy and a strategic gateway to Africa. He showcased the vast potential available in Mauritius across trade, investment, tourism, and hospitality, encouraging Pakistani entrepreneurs to explore opportunities in these sectors. He emphasized the importance of establishing joint ventures, promoting business-to-business (B2B) linkages, and organizing regular exchange of trade delegations to unlock the immense economic potential between the two countries. He observed that joint ventures between Mauritian and Pakistani businesses would not only strengthen bilateral economic relations but also enable both sides to access wider regional and international markets. He termed

Pakistan a peaceful country blessed with hospitable and welcoming people, expressing confidence that stronger commercial engagement would further cement the longstanding relations between the two nations.

Emphasizing continuity in engagement, the High Commissioner suggested that such interactions between the diplomatic community and the hospitality sector should be held at least twice a year to ensure effective follow-up and implementation of decisions and proposals. His remarks underscored Mauritius' commitment to deepening ties with Pakistan, both in tourism and trade, while opening new doors for collaboration in diverse sectors. The interactive session not only reinforced diplomatic goodwill but also paved the way for deeper collaboration in tourism, trade, and investment, offering promising mutual benefits for both nations. The High Commissioner actively engaged with participants, responding to their questions and providing valuable insights that further enriched the dialogue.



Author reveals 9-year journey behind iconic brands book

Murree Brewery CEO calls for governance reforms

D N A

ISLAMABAD: The launch of Pakistan Iconic Brands by Arshad Awan at the Islamabad Golf Club turned into a vibrant gathering of diplomats, civil society members, and senior officials, including Murtaza Solangi, Spokesperson to the President of Pakistan. Speaking at the event, Isphanyar M. Bhandara,

CEO of Murree Brewery, highlighted the challenges faced by Pakistan's industrialists and businessmen. He stressed that governance systems need to be improved to ensure better production and sustainable growth. He also elaborated on Murree Brewery's CSR initiatives, underscoring that corporate social responsibility remains paramount for the company's vision and operations. The author, Arshad Awan, shared his journey of writ-

ing the book, revealing that it took him nine years to complete the project. He described the work as a celebration of Pakistan's most enduring and influential brands, capturing their role in shaping the country's commercial and cultural identity. The event was attended by a large number of diplomats, members of civil society, and prominent personalities, reflecting the significance of the book in documenting Pakistan's business heritage.



Diplomats attend fashion show in Islamabad



Indonesia's 81st Independence Day celebrated in Islamabad

Adding to the significance of the occasion, the Prime Minister of Pakistan will visit Indonesia on August 19, 2026. Analysts believe this visit will further strengthen bilateral relations, paving the way for enhanced cooperation in trade, culture, and diplomacy

Saifullah Ansar / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Indonesia in Islamabad hosted a flag-hoisting ceremony to mark Indonesia's 81st Independence Day. The event began with the traditional flag hoisting, symbolizing Indonesia's resilience and struggle for freedom. Following the formal proceedings, guests enjoyed cultural and popular performances that highlighted Indonesia's rich heritage and diversity. The ceremony was attended by diplomats, government officials, media representatives, and members of Pakistani civil society. Guests observed formal attire, reflecting the dignity of the occasion. The participation of prominent figures underscored the strong bilateral ties between Pakistan and Indonesia.

Indonesia's Independence Day, celebrated annually on August 17, commemorates the country's declaration of independence in 1945. This year's 81st anniversary was marked with enthusiasm both in Indonesia and across its diplomatic missions worldwide. The Indonesian Embassy in Islamabad has consistently organized cultural programs to strengthen people-to-people connections between the two nations. Such events are seen as opportunities to deepen mutual understanding and cooperation. Observers note that diplomatic gatherings like these not only celebrate national milestones but also reaffirm friendship and open new avenues of collaboration. The presence of senior journalists such as Ansar M Bhatti highlighted the role of media in promoting cultural diplomacy and foster-

ing international goodwill.

Adding to the significance of the occasion, the Prime Minister of Pakistan will visit Indonesia on August 19, 2026. Analysts believe this visit will further strengthen bilateral relations, paving the way for enhanced cooperation in trade, culture, and diplomacy. With Pakistan's government completing three years in office—a period often seen as a natural political cycle—new alliances and partnerships are expected to emerge. In this context, the Pakistan-Indonesia relationship is poised to grow stronger, benefiting both nations. The Independence Day celebrations, coupled with the upcoming high-level visit, signal a renewed chapter in Pakistan-Indonesia ties. Both countries are expected to explore fresh opportunities for collaboration, ensuring that their partnership continues to flourish in the years ahead.



ہمارے شہداء
ہمارا فخر

دفاعِ وطن بقتلِ وطن

وم د فاع وشه داء
DEFENCE & MARTYRS DAY



defence and Martin Day is a shining example of the kind of leadership which reminds us of the sacrifices made for the defence of our freedom, sovereignty and beloved homeland. This day provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the courage, determination and unparalleled sacrifices of those brave souls of the nation who, in 1965, laid down their lives in the defence of our country against the enemy's nefarious designs.

Marka-e-hik is, in essence, a continuation of the enduring spirit, resolve and courage demonstrated on 6 September. Operation Bursatmai marks the beginning of a new era of combat capabilities, non-ionic nuclear and professional competence of the Armed Forces. Our brave officers and soldiers have demonstrated the spirit of defence of the motherland; an impenetrable, because it rests upon the indomitable spirit of the people and the unwavering resolve of its commanders.

The Armed Forces, together with the people of Pakistan, stand united and resolute in defending the motherland against every threat. Our strength lies not only in our military capacity, but also in the unity, solidarity and courage of our people. Our martyrs have entrusted us with a sacred responsibility to safeguard the freedom, dignity and sovereignty of our nation.

This 6 September, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the defence of our homeland, knowing that no sacrifice is ever too great for the preservation of our sacred and inviolable frontiers.

May Allah Almighty bless Pakistan with
enduring peace, unity and progress,
protect our nation from every threat, and
elevate the ranks of our Shehads.

Long Live the Pakistan Army!
Pakistan Paindabad!



September 1965
Khem Karan

Pakistan Army entered enemy
the strategic city of Khem Kara
Green Crescent Flag.

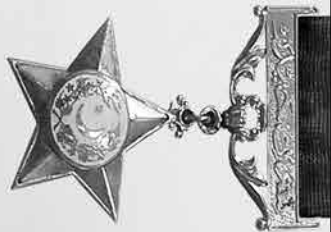
September 1965 Operation Dwarf

May 1999 – Kargil
Two enemy fighter aircraft were
alongside an enemy Mi-17 con-

May 2025
Operation Marka
6 modern enemy fighter jets, 1

more complex.

**Salute to every Shaheed, every Ghazi,
and every defender of the Sacred Land.**



1965
۱۹۶۵ء کا دفاع پاکستان

We salute every brave defender

who stands as an unbreakable shield against all threats to safeguard the peace, pride, and sovereignty of our beloved homeland.



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وہی قرآن، وہی فرقان وہی بے سبیل، وہی ظاہر

“AND WE HAVE SENT YOU (O PROPHET ﷺ)
AS A MERCY TO ALL THE WORLDS.”

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ



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PID(1)1905-D/26

INVITATION TO e-BIDS

FOR 03x SPECIAL MAINTENANCE WORKS ON N-5

1. National Highway Authority (NHA), Invites e-Bids from the Constructors, registered with Income Tax Department and who are on Active Taxpayers List of the Federal Board of Revenue, and registered with Pakistan Engineering Council for the Year 2027. Bid Security amounting to Rupees 2% of Engineer's Estimate in shape of P.O/ CDR in favor of “National Highway Authority (Road Maintenance Fund-Security Deposit)”. Detail of works are as under: -

S#.	DESCRIPTION	CONTRACT NO.	ENGINEER'S ESTIMATE (RS)	PEC CATEGORY
1	STEEL OVERHEAD PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE WITH MOTORCYCLE RAMP AT KM 1234 ~ 1235 (MARAHA), N-5	SM-PN-25-05-06	77,297,115/-	C-4 & Above (CE-01, CE-02 & CE-10)
2	STEEL OVERHEAD PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AT KM 1238 ~ 1239 (CHUNG), N-5	SM-PN-25-05-07	32,491,528/-	C-5 & Above (CE-01, CE-02 & CE-10)
2	STEEL OVERHEAD PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE WITH MOTORCYCLE RAMP AT KM 1244 ~ 1245 (PAKKA MEEL), N-5	SM-PN-25-05-08	86,134,444/-	C-4 & Above (CE-01, CE-02 & CE-10)

- Bidding Documents, containing Method of Procurement (Single Stage Two Envelopes), detailed terms and conditions etc will be available on the website mentioned below for downloading free of cost. Prospective Bidders are also advised to follow the said NHA website for updates of schedule and addendum(s) if any.
- The e-Bids, prepared in accordance with the instructions provided in the Bidding Documents, must reach at the address mentioned below, on or before **September 16, 2026 till 1230 Hours. Technical e-Bids** will be opened on the same day at **1300 Hours** in the presence of all Bidders or their authorized representatives.
- Bidders providing unsubstantiated and/or incorrect information shall be liable to disqualification and/or legal action. Any default firms will not be considered as eligible bidder.
- NHA Reserves the right to reject all the Bids as per PPRA Rules.
- All Firms are advised to get EPADS (PPRA) Registration at www.eprocure.gov.pk immediately, as Manual Bids (Hard Copy) will be eliminated in upcoming procurements.
- This Advertisement is also available on PPRA website at www.ppra.org.pk

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National Highway Authority

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Tel: 042-99232556 & Email: dirmaint-pn@nha.gov.pk

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