MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR ASAD M. KHAN

Dear friends,

March was a hectic and active month for us at the Pakistan Embassy. Our engagements covered multiple audiences including the U.S. Administration, Members of U.S. Congress, think-tanks, media and the Pakistani-American community.

The highlight of this month was the celebration of 79th Pakistan Day. We held an elegant flag hoisting ceremony and a special reception to mark our National Day. Ambassador David Hale, U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs was the Chief Guest at the event, which was widely attended by members of Congress, U.S. officials, diplomats, and other friends of Pakistan, including the Pakistani-American diaspora.

We were also privileged to host the visit of Mr. Ali Haider Zaidi, Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs to Washington. He held useful meetings at the US Department of State, and with Mark Buzby, US Maritime Administrator (Department of Transportation) as well as with Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD). He also held a media interaction at the embassy and briefed mediapersons about his visit to the US.

My own meetings with key Senators and Congressional representatives continued throughout the month. I spoke at the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) on the Future of Pakistan-U.S. relations, an event where I was delighted to see an enthusiastic audience representing various walks of life; a clear indication that interest in Pakistan is visibly gaining momentum. I also undertook an official visit to New York where I met Congressman Tom Suozzi and had good meetings with representatives of leading U.S. companies as well as members of the Pakistani-American community.

Dr. Asad M. Khan

Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States

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THE EMBASSY CELEBRATES THE 79TH ANNIVERSARY OF PAKISTAN DAY

Ambassador Asad M. Khan raising the national flag at the Flag Hoisting Ceremony to celebrate the 79th Pakistan National Day at the Embassy of Pakistan, Washington, DC.

Maryland Secretary of State, John Wobensmith presenting Ambassador Asad M. Khan with a special citation on behalf of Larry Hogan, Governor of Maryland.

Ambassador Asad M. Khan addressing at the Pakistan Day Flag Hoisting Ceremony held at the Embassy of Pakistan, Washington, DC.

Ambassador Asad M. Khan delivering opening remarks at the Pakistan Day Reception held at the Embassy of Pakistan, Washington, DC.
A flag hoisting ceremony was held at the Embassy of Pakistan in Washington D.C. to mark the 79th anniversary of Pakistan Day. Commencing the celebrations, Ambassador Asad M. Khan raised the Pakistan flag in the Embassy courtyard on the tunes of the National Anthem. The Ambassador read out messages of President Dr. Arif Alvi and Prime Minister Imran Khan. He congratulated the Pakistani-American diaspora who were celebrating Pakistan Day with traditional fervor.

Maryland Secretary of State, John Wobensmith attended the flag hoisting ceremony as a guest of honour. He read out a special citation of the Governor of Maryland, Larry Hogan congratulating Pakistan on the auspicious occasion. The ceremony was attended by members of the diaspora as well as Embassy officials.

A Pakistan Day Reception was also held at the Embassy. The event was attended by US Government officials, members of Congress, Ambassadors and members of Diplomatic Corps and distinguished guests from various walks of life including the Pakistani-American diaspora. US Under Secretary of State, Ambassador David Hale was the chief guest on the occasion.

Addressing the audience, Ambassador Asad M. Khan underscored Pakistan’s commitment to peace, dialogue and engagement for the resolution of regional issues. He said the new government, under a new and dynamic leadership is determined to deliver on its people-centric and development-focused agenda for a pluralistic, progressive and prosperous Pakistan. On relations with the US, Ambassador Khan said that Pakistan prizes its long-standing relation with the US which go back to the birth of Pakistan. He added that its relationship with the US remains important and consequential to Pakistan. He also lauded the Pakistani-American community for their achievements in both social and political fields.

Chief guest Ambassador David Hale congratulated Pakistan and its people on the occasion of Pakistan Day and offered America’s best wishes on behalf of US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and the American people. He underscored America’s desire to forge even closer ties with Pakistan as it becomes ever more stable and democratic. He said that Americans, like Pakistanis, seek a peaceful, stable and prosperous Pakistan. Appreciating the vibrancy, natural beauty and potential of the Pakistani people and nation, Ambassador Hale opined that Pakistan can be a major player in the world economy if it takes advantage of its considerable resources and entrepreneurial spirit.

Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, US Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia Alice Wells, Ambassador Richard Olson and other senior State Department officials also attended the event.

Video: https://youtu.be/FyuKf9pSHG8
MEETING WITH SENATOR CHRIS VAN HOLLEN (D-MD)

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Ali Haider Zaidi accompanied by Ambassador Asad M. Khan met with Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD). They had a productive discussion on US-Pakistan and agreed that bilateral relations should be strengthened by building economic bridges.

FEDERAL MINISTER FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS MEETS WITH US DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Henry Ensher called on Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Syed Ali Zaidi to discuss ways in which US companies can be instrumental in helping address Pakistan’s growing energy needs as its economy takes off. Ambassador Asad M. Khan was also present during the meeting.

FEDERAL MINISTER FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS MEETS WITH US MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Haider Zaidi met with US Maritime Administrator Mark Buzby. They had a productive discussion on enhancing cooperation between Pakistan & US in the Maritime sector. Pakistan Ambassador to the US, Dr. Asad M. Khan was also present on the occasion.

FEDERAL MINISTER FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS GIVES AN INTERVIEW TO VOICE OF AMERICA TV, URDU SERVICE

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Haider Zaidi gave a detailed interview to Voice of America TV, Urdu service.

The interview can be viewed at: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=423155178455903

FEDERAL MINISTER FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS BRIEFS PAKISTANI-AMERICAN MEDIA

During his official visit to the US, Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Ali Haider Zaidi gave a detailed briefing to the Pakistani-American media regarding performance of maritime sector in Pakistan.
Ambassador Asad M. Khan called on former presidential candidate and Senator Mitt Romney (R-UT) at Capitol Hill. He briefed him on bilateral relations and Pakistan’s perspective on the regional situation.

Ambassador Asad M. Khan met Republican Senator James M Inhofe (R-OK), Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and briefed him on bilateral relations and regional issues of mutual interest.

The Ambassador met Senator Todd Young (R-IN) and discussed the many ways in which Pakistan and the US can work together in various sectors including textiles, energy and agribusiness for mutual benefit.

Ambassador Khan exchanged views with Congressman Ted Yoho (R-FL), Ranking Member of HFAC Subcommittee on Asia and Pacific about strengthening Pakistan-US ties. They agreed that both sides can do more to harness the enormous potential in areas such as agriculture and trade.

During his visit to New York, Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan met Congressman Tom Suozzi (D-NY) and discussed ways to strengthen bilateral relations between Pakistan and the U.S. Rep. Suozzi praised the noteworthy contributions of Pakistani-Americans of his constituency.

Ambassador Khan met Congressman Ami Bera (D-CA), member House Foreign Affairs Committee and briefed him on Pakistan’s perspective on bilateral ties with the US, the recent escalation with India and Pakistan’s facilitation of ongoing peace efforts in Afghanistan.

In his meeting with Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD), Member House Appropriations Committee, the Ambassador had a useful exchange of views on strengthening ties between Pakistan and the U.S. They also discussed regional peace and security in South Asia.

Ambassador Asad M. Khan met with Congressman Jim Langevin (D-RI) senior member of House Armed Services Committee. They had a useful exchange of views on strengthening Pak-U.S. ties, peace prospects in Afghanistan and security in South Asia.
AMBASSADOR MEETS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONCILIATION AT THE US DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ambassador Asad M. Khan met with Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation at the US Department of State and discussed the Afghan peace process. Ambassador Khan assured Ambassador Khalilzad of Pakistan’s support for success in Afghan peace efforts.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

AMBASSADOR HOSTS PAKISTANI-AMERICAN COMMUNITY LEADERS

Ambassador Asad M. Khan re-connected with Pakistani-American community leaders from the Tri-State area in an event held at the Embassy of Pakistan. Ambassador briefed them on Pakistan's firm but mature response to the recent aggression by India. Ambassador Khan further stated that there was wide appreciation of our leadership’s decision to choose peace over belligerence.

AMBASSADOR INTERACTS WITH PAKISTANI-AMERICAN COMMUNITY AT THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF PAKISTAN IN NEW YORK

Pakistan Consulate General, New York hosted an event in honour of Ambassador Asad M. Khan during which he interacted with the Pakistan-American community.

AMBASSADOR ATTENDS PAKISTAN DAY EVENT IN BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Ambassador Asad M. Khan attended Pakistan Day event hosted by Pakistani American community of Maryland in Baltimore. While speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Khan paid rich tribute to the founding fathers of Pakistan who struggled for seeking separate homeland for the Muslims of the Subcontinent. While commenting on Pakistan-US bilateral relations, Ambassador said that Pakistan's relations with the US are as old as Pakistan itself. Our generations have invested a lot of good effort in this relationship and therefore, it is very important for both America and Pakistan to take it further for mutual benefit. Ambassador Khan also shared the current Government's human and economic development priorities as well as trade and investment promotion initiatives.
AMBASSADOR SPEAKS ON ‘PAKISTAN'S PRIORITIES’ AT THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE (USIP)

Ambassador Asad M. Khan addressed at the United States Institute for Peace (USIP). Speaking on the importance of the Pakistan-US relations, Ambassador Khan said that Pakistan’s relationship with the United States remains a ‘consequential and significant one’. He added that both countries have achieved remarkable success in pursuing common goals inspired by shared ideals and common objectives. He also highlighted the new government’s resolve to pursue a people-friendly, development-driven and peace-centric agenda which is not possible without a regional peace. He said that Pakistan wants to see an Afghanistan that is at peace with itself and with its neighbors.

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eos_vk6yWPO

MEDIA OUTREACH

AMBASSADOR MEETS THE WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL BOARD

Ambassador Asad M. Khan with senior members of the Washington Post editorial board.

AMBASSADOR GIVES AN INTERVIEW TO DEUTSCHE WELLE (DW)

Ambassador Asad M. Khan was interviewed by Mona Kazim Shah, Senior Correspondent of Deutsche Welle, German Radio regarding Pak-US relations and valuable contributions by the Pakistani-American community.

AMBASSADOR WELCOMES PAKISTANI-AMERICAN PRESS ASSOCIATION (PAPA) MEMBERS

Ambassador Asad M. Khan welcomed the newly elected panel of Pakistani-American Press Association (PAPA) to the Embassy. Ambassador congratulated them on their election and wished them success in future endeavors.

AMBASSADOR HOSTS A GROUP OF PAKISTAN JOURNALISTS

A delegation of Pakistani journalists sponsored by Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs (ECA), US State Department in collaboration with University of Oklahoma called upon Ambassador Asad M. Khan. Ambassador briefed them about the current state of bilateral relations between Pakistan & the US and also apprised about the growing economic interest of US enterprises in Pakistan after improved security situation in the country.
MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER MAHATHIR MOHAMAD VISITS PAKISTAN

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad visited Pakistan on a three-day official trip where his high-powered delegation finalised investment deals worth nearly $900 million. The Proton joint venture, first agreed last year, was the centerpiece of a series of agreements signed during the visit. Unveiling a series of business accords between the two countries, officials said that a joint venture between Malaysia’s Proton Motors and Pakistan’s Al-Haj group will begin producing cars from June. Telecommunications sector is another key area of cooperation between the two governments. Malaysia’s Edotco Group (IPO-EDOT.KL) signed agreements with three of the country’s major Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), Jazz, Telenor and Zong 4G. These agreements are aimed at boosting connectivity capabilities in the country via shared telecommunication towers, and more efficient operations and energy management.


NEW VISA POLICY TO FACILITATE TOURISM INCLUDES E-VISA FOR NATIONALS OF 175 COUNTRIES

Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry announced the government is introducing a "new revolutionary visa policy" to encourage tourism in the country. The government has decided to provide the e-visa facility to 175 countries and visa on arrival to 50 countries. Visa on arrival will also be provided to Indian-origin British and American citizens holding United States or United Kingdom passports. Read more at https://www.dawn.com/news/1471984

NOC REQUIREMENTS FOR FOREIGNERS VISITING PAKISTAN ABOLISHED

Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry announced that various parts of the country that were earlier out of bounds to foreigners and required No-Objection Certificates (NOC) to visit are now open to them. The step will be instrumental in realising Prime Minister Imran Khan’s vision to make Pakistan a heaven for tourists. Information Minister shared an Interior Ministry notification on Twitter which said that "Free movement of foreigners shall be allowed in Open Cantonments except prohibited and restricted areas with visible signboards. The border crossings will be open and non-restricted.” Read more at https://www.dawn.com/news/1471984
BEYOND THE HEADLINES

LAHORE, PAKISTAN'S MUGHAL TREASURE TROVE

The Pakistani city of Lahore is one of the Indian subcontinent's most brilliant gems, yet it remains relatively obscure outside the country -- an unexpected pleasure for travelers. With Pakistan enjoying improved security, visitors are starting to rediscover the city's treasures. CNN's Isambard Wilkinson gives a guide to Lahore's top five sites:


INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF PANCAKES (IHOP) TO OPEN 19 RESTAURANTS IN PAKISTAN

IHOP plans to open its first location in Pakistan by the end of the year, part of the American pancake restaurant's efforts to seek new revenue abroad. Dine Brands Chief Executive Officer Steve Joyce cited Pakistan's rapidly growing economy as part of the reason to open there. More at:


CRICKET SLOWLY RETURNING TO PAKISTAN AND BRINGING HAPPINESS FOR MILLIONS OF FANS

Pakistan is seeing an uptick in momentum for cricket in Pakistan fueled by an improved security situation in the country. PCB chairman, Ehsan Mani emphasizes his goal for the PSL entirely being based in Pakistan. With a television viewership of 150 million and huge crowds for the matches in Karachi, the PSL is stamping itself as the second most popular Twenty20 domestic league in the world behind the Indian Premier League. More at:


Photo: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gaddafi_Stadium_at_Night.jpg

Compiled, edited and published by The Information Wing, Embassy of Pakistan, Washington, DC
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