WEBCAST SERIES

Discover the Splendors of Pakistan: A Virtual Tour

#PakWinsHRC

“Historic Victory of Pakistan at UN Human Rights Council with an overwhelming majority of 169 votes.”

27 October

BLACK DAY
KASHMIR
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INSPIRED BY MINIATURE PAINTINGS, SHAHZIA SIKANDER GOES BIG
Dear Friends,

This month Prime Minister Imran Khan reached out to the world to raise his voice against Islamophobia. He wrote a letter to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg calling on him to deny social media space to such hate-mongering voices.

Pakistan continued its efforts to bring lasting peace in Afghanistan. Islamabad hosted Mr. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of Hezb-e-Islami for a visit. In addition, the UN Secretary General’s Special Representative on Afghanistan, Ms. Deborah Lyons also visited Pakistan this month. UNAMA has played a vital role in Afghanistan’s socio-economic development.

Pakistan and the United States are now official partners under the Hague Convention on Child Abduction. This step will prevent the forced abduction of children and their movement between the two countries. Both Pakistan and the U.S. continued cooperation against COVID-19 as well. Meanwhile, Pakistan’s successful handling, thus far, of the COVID-19 crisis drew praise and acclaim from U.S. experts as well as from global forums.

In the multilateral arena, Pakistan was re-elected to the United Nations Human Rights Council with an overwhelming 169 votes in favor. This success bears testament to Pakistan’s unwavering commitment to the cause of human rights around the world. This month, the United Nations also celebrated its 75 years, having been established in 1945.

On the economic front, the IMF/World Bank Fall meetings were convened in virtual format this month. Pakistan’s delegation participated under the leadership of Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance Dr. Abdul Hafeez Sheikh. Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Makhdom Khusro Bakhtyar, Governor State Bank of Pakistan Dr. Reza Baqir and other senior officials of the Finance and Economic Affairs ministries also attended the various meetings. Meetings with the leadership of IMF and World Bank were held which took stock of Pakistan’s economic situation, particularly in the wake of COVID-19. Both institutions praised the Government of Pakistan for its prudent and timely economic measures to support the economic recovery and protect the most vulnerable segments of the population. The World Bank and Pakistan also signed hydel projects worth US$ 1.15 billion this month.

I spoke at the World Affairs Council of Rhode Island and I also interacted with the Pakistani origin staff members of the World Bank and IMF. This was in addition to my engagements with the U.S. corporate sector. The U.S. Pakistan Business Council hosted a webinar on Energy sector opportunities in Pakistan which was attended by Federal Minister for Energy Umer Ayub Khan and Special Assistant to the PM on Petroleum Mr. Nadeem Baber.

We also continued our official interactions with the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Defense as well as other official U.S. agencies. I can say with satisfaction that our bilateral relations are in good shape and we are poised to strengthen and deepen our ties in the coming months.
PRIME MINISTER IMRAN KHAN CALLS ON MARK ZUCKERBERG TO BAN ISLAMOPHOBIA ON FACEBOOK

Dear Mr. Zuckerberg,

I am writing to draw your attention to the growing Islamophobia that is encouraging hate, extremism and violence across the world and especially through the use of social media platforms including Facebook. I appreciate your taking the step to rightly ban any posting that criticizes or questions the Holocaust, which was the culmination of the Nazi pogrom of the Jews in Germany and across Europe as Nazis spread across Europe.

However, today we are seeing a similar pogrom against Muslims in different parts of the world. Unfortunately, in some states, Muslims are being denied their citizenship rights and their democratic personal choices from dress to worship. In India, anti-Muslim laws and measures such as CAA and NRC as well as targeted killings of Muslims and blaming Muslims for Corona virus are reflective of the abominable phenomenon of Islamophobia. In France, Islam has been associated with terrorism and publication of blasphemous cartoons targeting Islam and our Holy Prophet (PBUH) has been allowed. This will lead to further polarization and marginalization of Muslims in France. How will the French distinguish between radical extremist Muslim citizens and the mainstream Muslim citizenry of Islam? We have seen how marginalization inevitably leads to extremism – something the world does not need.

Given the rampant abuse and vilification of Muslims on social media platforms, I would ask you to place a similar ban on Islamophobia and hate against Islam for Facebook that you have put in place for the Holocaust. The message of hate must be banned in total – one cannot send a message that while hate messages against some are unacceptable, these are acceptable against others. Nor should the world have to wait for a pogrom against Muslims, which is ongoing in countries like India and in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, to be completed before Islamophobia is banned. This in itself is reflective of prejudice and bias that will encourage further radicalization.

Sincerely,

(Imran Khan)
THE UNITED STATES AND PAKISTAN PARTNER UNDER THE HAGUE ABDUCTION CONVENTION

The United States Embassy in Islamabad welcomed Pakistan as a new partner under the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. The Convention will put in place an internationally recognized legal framework to resolve cases of parental child abduction between the two countries.

Pakistan will now be able to use the Hague Convention as a vital tool to deter international abduction and secure the return of abducted children between the United States and Pakistan.

Read here.
PAKISTAN & THE U.S. PARTNERS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

As part of the on-going partnership with Pakistan’s National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the United States Government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), in cooperation with the Punjab Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Department, has delivered 46 new ventilators to 13 hospitals in Punjab to support Pakistan’s fight against COVID-19.

This equipment is part of the 200 ventilators contributed to Pakistan by the United States. Deliveries of these ventilators were made through a partnership with the NDMA and Chemonics.

Read here.
U.S. Secretary of State, Michael R. Pompeo and Secretary of Health and Human Services, Alex M. Azar co-hosted the virtual signing ceremony of the Geneva Consensus Declaration. The Declaration which aims to “protect women’s health, defend the unborn, and reiterates the vital importance of the family as the foundation of society,” was co-sponsored by the governments of Brazil, Egypt, Hungary, Indonesia, and Uganda. In addition to Pakistan, 30 other countries co-signed the declaration.

SONIA RASHEED OF PAKISTAN SELECTED FOR FORTUNE - U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE GLOBAL WOMEN’S MENTORING PARTNERSHIP
AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES PAKISTAN-U.S. RELATIONS AT WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF RHODE ISLAND

Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan presented a short history and current overview of U.S.-Pakistani relations in the context of South Asia. Ambassador discussed the geo-political, economic and cultural aspects of these important countries and their impact on the world prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

AMBASSADOR INTERACTS WITH MEMBERS OF PAKISTAN WORLD BANK FUND STAFF ASSOCIATION (PBFSA)

AMBASSADOR GIVES AN INTERVIEW TO FORBES

Neil Edwards of Forbes Magazine interviewed Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan.
DISCOVER THE SPLENDORS OF PAKISTAN:  
EMBASSY HOSTS A VIRTUAL TOUR OF PAKISTAN

In its endeavour to highlight the potential of tourism in Pakistan in the US tourism industry, the Embassy initiated the first of its kind Webcast Series consisting of virtual tours through Pakistan.

A webinar titled ‘Discover the Splendors of Pakistan’ was held on October 29, 2020. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistani and Human Resource Development, Sayed Zulfiqar Abbas Bukhari in his keynote address highlighted the drastic transformative shift viz-a-viz the tourism sector in Pakistan, as Prime Minister Imran Khan’s government embarks on a forward-looking and fully inclusive approach to encourage tourism.

In his remarks, Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan emphasized the unspoilt beauty of Pakistan, its rich heritage, its ancient civilization and encouraged viewers to visit Pakistan.

Emmy Award winning American television personality and journalist, Beth Troutman shared her documentary along with mesmerizing travel stories of Pakistan. A German Vlogger, Christian Betzmann shared his experiences on the sights and sounds of Pakistan. Fatima Ali, a cuisine expert from ‘Pots n Curries’ who has been actively promoting Pakistan traditional cuisines in the US and abroad introduced Pakistani cuisine to the audience. Important stakeholders from the U.S. tourism industry participated in the event.
Emmy Award winner Beth Troutman, famous TV and Travel personality from the U.S. takes us through her heart touching travel experiences in Pakistan.

OWEN CLARKE INTERVIEWS SPECIAL ADVISOR TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON OVERSEAS PAKISTANI & HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Owen Clarke, outdoor and travel journalist, and columnist interviewed Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistani & Human Resource Development, Sayed Zulfiqar Abbas Bukhari. The interview focused on tourism in Pakistan.
EMBASSY HOSTS AN EVENT IN OBSERVANCE OF KASHMIR BLACK DAY

The Embassy organised a special event to observe ‘Kashmir Black Day’ on October 27, 2020.

In his remarks, Ambassador reaffirmed Pakistan's position to seek peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute and reiterated the strong resolve of the government and people of Pakistan to continue extending moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiri brethren.

A photographic exhibition was also held, in which photographs depicting the plight of Kashmiris who are under Indian military siege were put on display. The photographs exhibited highlighted the destruction and injuries suffered by civilians because of Indian shelling and ceasefire violations across the Line of Control.

A webinar titled “Kashmir: A Human Rights Catastrophe” was held earlier in the day. Speakers at the Webinar included Sardar Masood Khan, President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir; Ambassador Dr. Asad Majeed Khan; Mike Glenn, Journalist, Colonel Wes Marten, US Army (Retd.); Professor Intiaz Khan, George Washington University and Mowahid Hussain Shah, Attorney-at-Law. The speakers called out the Indian extremist government for denying the people of Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir their basic human rights.

Read here.
INTERNATIONAL POLICY DIGEST: THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE UNITED STATES ARE PART OF THE KASHMIR PROBLEM

The UN failed to solve the issue of the illegal invasion. To this day, the people of Kashmir have been subjected to India’s rule despite the overwhelming will of the population.

The only efficiency the UN has proven to possess concerning Kashmir is the passage of resolutions that have no enforcement. The Line of Control between Pakistan and India regional sectors was not a solution. It was an unjust compromise.

Read here.
PAKISTAN RE-ELECTED TO THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Pakistan has been re-elected to the UN Human Rights Council with an overwhelming majority, securing 169 votes in the 193 member UN General Assembly. Since HRC’s establishment in 2006, this is the fifth time Pakistan has been elected to the premier UN body on Human Rights.

Imran Khan

I am pleased with Pakistan's re-election to UN Human Rights Council for another 3-yr term. We remain committed to upholding human rights for all, prioritizing advancement of tolerance & constructive engagement. We stand resolute against Islamophobia & in support of mutual respect

Shah Mahmood Qureshi

Pakistan re-elected to the UN Human Rights Council with an overwhelming majority today, securing 169 votes in the 193 member UN General Assembly. Since HRC's establishment in 2006, this is the fifth time Pakistan has been elected to the premier UN body on Human Rights
FOREIGN MINISTER ENGAGES WITH LEADING PAKISTAN ENVOYS REGARDING ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY AGENDA

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi held a constructive series of virtual sessions with leading Pakistani envoys across the world. The sessions were aimed at increasing Pakistan’s economic diplomacy footprint. Foreign Minister appreciated efforts made by all foreign missions towards pioneering new frontiers for Pakistan’s economic diplomacy agenda.

ADVISER TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON FINANCE HOLDS A VIRTUAL MEETING WITH MD & VP SOUTH ASIA REGION, WORLD BANK

Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh held a virtual meeting with Mr. Axel Van Trotsenburg, Managing Director, World Bank and Mr. Hartwing Schafer, Vice President SAR, World Bank as part of virtual annual meetings of the IMF and World Bank 2020.

Adviser Finance appreciated the role of the World Bank in extending assistance to Pakistan to provide much-needed fiscal space to fight COVID-19 pandemic effectively.

The World Bank appreciated the reform agenda of the present Government and reiterated commitment to support Pakistan through IDA 2020 during COVID-19 crisis.

Read here.

WORLD BANK TO PROVIDE MORE THAN $1BN FOR PAKISTAN HYDROPOWER SCHEMES

The World Bank has agreed to provide $1.15bn to fund two power projects in Pakistan. The agreement was signed by Noor Ahmed, secretary of the Pakistan government’s Economic Affairs Division, and Najy Benhassine, the bank’s country director for Pakistan.

The signing ceremony was witnessed by Imran Khan, Pakistan’s prime minister, who commented: “This environment-friendly power generation will not only support our efforts for clean and green Pakistan but also diminish the impacts of global warming.” Read here.

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ADVISER TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON FINANCE HAS A VIDEO MEETING WITH MANAGING DIRECTOR, IMF

Adviser to PM on Finance Dr. Abdul Hafeez Sheikh held a video meeting with Ms. Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director, IMF. Dr. Abdul Hafeez Sheikh apprised the IMF leadership of Pakistan’s commitment to the successful implementation of current IMF program and updated her on the Government’s macroeconomic reform agenda.

FEDERAL MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS HOLDS A VIDEO CONFERENCE WITH VICE PRESIDENT FOR SOUTH ASIA, WORLD BANK.

Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Makhdum Khusro Bakhtiar had a video conference with Mr. Hartwig Schafer, Vice President for South Asia, World Bank. They discussed progress on Pakistan’s engagement with the World Bank. Cooperation on COVID, infrastructure, energy and capacity building related projects was also discussed. In a separate video meeting with Mr. Alfonso Garcia, Regional Vice President for South Asia, IFC, the Minister discussed the launch of Pak denominated bonds as well as provision of financial guarantees to Pakistani banks.

U.S.-PAKISTAN BUSINESS COUNCIL (USPBC) HOLDS A VIDEO CONFERENCE WITH FEDERAL MINISTER FOR ENERGY & SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRIME MINISTER ON PETROLEUM

U.S.-Pakistan Business Council (USPBC) held a video conference with Federal Minister for Energy Mr. Omer Ayub Khan and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Petroleum Mr. Nadeem Baber. The Ministers briefed U.S. companies about efforts of the Government to facilitate energy sector investment and reforms.
AMBASSADOR HOLDS A VIDEO CONFERENCE WITH BAYER, U.S.

Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan held a video conference senior officials of Bayer, U.S., Mr. Matthias Berninger, Senior Vice President and Head of Public Affairs and Sustainability and Mr. Max Mueller, Head of Corporate Public Affairs. Ambassador discussed cooperation prospects with Bayer, particularly in the context of pharmaceuticals (existing drug manufacturing and distribution as well as potential vaccine development). He also discussed Bayer’s acquisition of Monsanto and how it could work with the Govt. of Pakistan for seed development for higher yield, weather-resistant crops, and genomics.

IPO DROUGHT ENDS IN PAKISTAN WITH RECORD YEAR AHEAD

Pakistan’s benchmark stock index has jumped 52% since March, beating runners-up Vietnam and India, and gaining twice as much as China. Yet, it remains one the world’s cheapest markets with forward price-earnings multiple of 7.4 times. The appeal of momentum and valuation is luring companies to tap public funds.

Read [here](#).

3RD ANNUAL GEORGIA INTERNATIONAL TRADE & COMMERCE SUMMIT 2020

Pakistan Consulate General in Houston participated in the 3rd Annual Georgia International Trade & Commerce Summit 2020 on 15th October. State Representative Carl Gilliard (D-Garden City) hosted the virtual event.

The Consul General presented Pakistan’s trade and investment potential and discussed the impact of COVID-19 on international trade, logistics and services. Georgia Port Authority, Savannah World Trade Center, Savannah Chamber of Commerce, Pooler Chamber of Commerce, Consuls General and local Mayors and businesses were part of the Zoom meeting.
PAKISTAN CITIZENS PORTAL CROSSES 3 MILLION MARK

Former US treasury secretary and renowned economist Lawrence 'Larry' Summers is of the opinion that had America handled the coronavirus pandemic as well as Pakistan, it could have saved in trillions of dollars.

He made these comments while talking to CNN's Fareed Zakaria on Sunday. "America’s failure on Covid-19 is almost unimaginable," he said. "Heck, if the US had handled the pandemic as well as Pakistan, we would have saved in neighbourhood of $10 trillion."

Read here.
PAKISTANI FOOTBALLER MAKES IT TO FORBES 30 UNDER 30

Karishma Ali of Chitral, Pakistan made it to Forbes’ 30 under 30 list. She is the founder of the Chitral Women’s Sports Club and the first girl from her hometown to have played football at a national and international level.

Read here.

PAKISTANI MARTIAL ARTS EXPERT WORKING TOWARDS 100 RECORD TITLES

Serial record breaker and black belt holder, Muhammad Rashid from Karachi, Pakistan, holds over 30 records. The martial arts expert from has a target of setting 100 goals. As well as just using his fists and elbows as smashing instruments, he also holds many records using nunchaku and a Bo staff – both traditional martial arts weapons.

Read here.

INSPIRED BY MINIATURE PAINTINGS, SHAHZIA SIKANDER GOES BIG

Pakistani-American artist Shahzia Sikander is featured in two exhibits this fall.

“The Scroll,” which received national acclaim in Pakistan is one of two works by Ms. Sikander going on view at the Asia Society Triennial in New York opening Oct. 27.

The show, “Extraordinary Realities,” will also travel to the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, where Ms. Sikander completed the CORE program at the Glassell School of Art, and the Morgan Library and Museum in New York.

Read here.