

LOOK NEPAL

TOURISM, CULTURE & ENVIRONMENT MAGAZINE



A Special Edition on Nepal-Pakistan Relations





"We have undoubtedly achieved Pakistan, and that too without bloody war, practically peacefully, by moral and intellectual force, and with the power of the pen, which is no less mighty than that of the sword and so our righteous cause has triumphed. Are we now going to besmear and tarnish this greatest achievement for which there is no parallel in the history of the world? Pakistan is now a fait accompli and it can never be undone, besides, it was the only just, honourable, and practical solution of the most complex constitutional problem of this great subcontinent. Let us now plan to build and reconstruct and regenerate our great nation..."

Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah
Founder of Pakistan

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Cover Design :

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Layout : Chandra Maharjan

Printed : Dreamworks Printers

Kathmandu, Nepal

Tel : 9851005177, 01-5329619

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Govt. Reg. No. 88/053/54

Our Page

Pakistan: A Good Friend of Nepal

The friendship existing between Nepal and Pakistan is deepening every year particularly after the establishment of diplomatic relations on 20th March 1960. **Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Nepal and Pakistan, both the countries are enjoying best relations based on deep friendship, mutual understanding and active cooperation.** There are so many elements which play in strengthening relationship between these two countries of South Asia. Pakistan is more developed and advanced than Nepal in the field of technology, science and development. Pakistan has made economic and technical advancement to promote the welfare of its people.

People of Pakistan are the great lovers and supporters of world peace and nonviolence and are deeply committed to the ideals and purposes embodied in the charter of United Nations. Pakistan is rendering great service to the people of the world upholding the lofty cause of world peace and economic development. **Pakistan has shown every gesture of being one of the best friends of Nepal** through several activities and contributions and cooperation extended to Nepal in its efforts of building a new Nepal without hunger, disease and poverty. These two nations cooperate with each other at many international forums on issues of international importance. The role that Pakistan has been playing in the promotion of world peace, international understanding and friendship with all the nations of the world is quite appreciative and exemplary one. Both Nepal and Pakistan are the founding members of SAARC and share their common interest for the promotion of South Asia and its people.

Trade and tourism between Nepal and Pakistan constitute the basic factors contributory to strengthening the bilateral relations existing between these two countries of South Asia since decades. The commercial relation expanding every year has been providing boost to many businessmen and traders of these two nations. Different kinds of Pakistani commercial items and goods are available in Nepalese markets. Another factor which has been contributory to fostering Nepal Pakistan relation is the exchange of the visit between the leaders, high ranking government officials, businessmen and other dignitaries.

We in Nepal have deep respect for Pakistani people and express our hearty greetings to them for their progress and unity. The Ambassador of Pakistan to Nepal H.E. **Mr. Abrar H. Hashmi**, deserves our hearty thanks and sincere appreciation for his role in promoting Nepal Pakistan friendship and cooperation in the publication of this magazine.

Long live Nepal-Pakistan Friendship

Mohan Bir Thapa

Editor-in-Chief





*Message from
Hon'ble Mr. Narayan Kaji Shrestha,
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister for Foreign Affairs*

I am delighted to learn that 'Look Nepal' magazine is bringing out its special edition on Nepal-Pakistan relations on the happy occasion of the National Day of Pakistan. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and express my best wishes to the Government and people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Nepal and Pakistan have been enjoying warm and cordial friendship ever since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1960. Goodwill, cooperation and close people-to-people contacts have been important features of our relationship. Our relations cover many areas such as trade, investment, tourism, education and culture. The two countries have also been engaged at regional and multilateral forums on matters of mutual interest.

I am confident that the friendly relations existing so happily between our two countries will continue to consolidate and expand in the days ahead for mutual benefit.

I wish the special edition of 'Look Nepal' all success.

Narayan Kaji Shrestha
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister for Foreign Affairs



*Message from
H.E. Mr. Muhammad Ishaq Dar,
Minister for Foreign Affairs*



It is a pleasure to note that "Look Nepal" is publishing a special supplement titled "**Nepal-Pakistan Relations: The Way Forward**" in connection with the National Day of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, observed annually on 23 March.

Pakistan and Nepal share highest peaks in the world, rich Buddhist and Hindu heritage, and numerous cultural similarities. Our two countries enjoy cordial relations, based on mutual respect and commonality of interests.

Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Nepal, which draw strength from friendly sentiments existing between the peoples of our two countries. Pakistan considers Nepal an important regional partner. We also value its role as the seat and current chair of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

It is a matter of great satisfaction that the relations between our two friendly countries are progressing well. Pakistan is fully committed to working with Nepal to further enhance bilateral cooperation. I am confident that our relations will grow from strength to strength in the years ahead.

I thank "Look Nepal" magazine for bringing out this special edition on Pakistan's National Day, and appreciate its support for strengthening relations between Pakistan and Nepal

"Pakistan-Nepal Dosti Zindabad"

Muhammad Ishaq Dar
Minister for Foreign Affairs



*Message from
H.E. Mr. Abrar H Hashmi,
Ambassador of Pakistan to Nepal*

I am very pleased that "Look Nepal" is publishing a special Edition on "Pakistan-Nepal Relations: Way Forward" on the occasion of 84th National Day of Pakistan – 2024.

Pakistan National Day is marked in remembrance of adoption of Pakistan Resolution at Lahore on 23 March 1940. On this auspicious occasion, I extend my warm greetings to Pakistanis, inside and abroad, and friends of Pakistan in Nepal. On this day, we also reflect and pay tribute to our forefathers for their heroic struggle to achieve Pakistan.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Nepal in 1960; our bilateral relations have remained very cordial and are based on mutual respect, trust and understanding. Our two countries are cooperating closely in a number of sectors of mutual interest. Pakistan and Nepal have also worked together at regional and multilateral fora including at UN and SAARC. We are glad to collaborate with Nepal on education, defence, banking, health and other technical sectors. Pakistan is committed for continued support to strengthen this cooperation in the future.

Pakistan and Nepal share a unique tapestry from geography to religious and civilizational linkages. Our two countries host the highest peaks in the world and hence have stakes in protecting delicate ecology of the Himalayas (Karakoram and Hindu Kush). Rich heritage of Buddhism, Hinduism (and other religions) and cultural similarities have bound two peoples together. Warm people-to-people contacts naturally transcend into increased trade and travel as well as cultural and sports exchanges.

Both countries entered into a number of Mechanisms such as Joint Economic Commission (JEC), Joint Business Council (JBC), Bilateral Political Consultations (BPC) and Joint Working Groups (JWGs) on Tourism, Agriculture, Renewable and Alternative Energy etc., which provide foundation for regular and gainful exchanges. While current trade is below par, it has potential to grow manifold. Trade in services, especially IT, IT enabled services and tourism are promising areas. Business-to-business MoUs and interactions is key to fostering commerce.

I convey my heartiest greetings to the Government and people of Nepal, especially youth. My gratitude to Look Nepal for its special edition on Pakistan Day.

Long Live Pakistan-Nepal Friendship

Abrar H. Hashmi

Ambassador
Embassy of Pakistan, Nepal

Message from Dr. Manju Ratna Sakya, Chairman of Nepal-Pakistan Friendship and Cultural Association



It gives me an immense pleasure to learn that Look Nepal Magazine is bringing out Special Supplement on the occasion of the 76th National Day of The Islamic Republic of Pakistan. I believe that the special pullout on Pakistan's diplomatic, political, economic and cultural aspects as well as various dimensions related to Nepal-Pakistan bilateral relations will further enhance bond between the two nations.

I would like to congratulate the Pakistani government and people for holding the general election in free, fair and fearless environment recently. I heartily congratulate Mr Shehbaz Sharif upon being appointed as new Prime Minister of Pakistan. I strongly believe that Pakistan will achieve all-round development and inclusive prosperity under the able and dynamic leadership of Sharif.

Nepal-Pakistan relations have been cordial, friendly and warm since the two nations established their diplomatic ties in 1960. Their bilateral bonhomie is guided by mutual trust, high level understanding, cooperation and harmony. As a proverb goes, 'a friend in need is a friend indeed,' Pakistan has always supported Nepal in the time of crisis. At this moment, I would like to remember that Pakistan donated medicines and other assistance to Nepal during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nepal-Pakistan relations cover the areas of education, technology, culture and trade. It has been providing ambulances to Nepal government and scholarships to Nepali students to pursue higher study in medicine, humanities, science and technology. Both the countries have jointly been organizing educational and cultural programmes time to time. However, Pakistan-Nepal cooperation extend beyond formal diplomatic interactions. The people-to-people fraternity is deepening each passing years, with the various people-centric activities and cooperation involving the two nations.

Pakistan is an important nation in the South Asia. It has made feat in the fields of science, technology, agriculture, commerce and so on. In order to maintain peace, stability and shared prosperity in the region, Pakistan's role is vital. It is my faith that newly elected PM Shehbaz Sharif will greatly contribute to attain these common goals.

I am highly hopeful that Nepal-Pakistan relations will further be consolidated in the years to come.

LONG LIVE NEPAL - PAKISTAN FRIENDLY RELATIONS

Dr. Manju Ratna Sakya
Chairman of Nepal-Pakistan Friendship and Cultural Association

An Interview with H.E. Mr. Abrar H. Hashmi

Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Nepal
Interviewed by M.B. Thapa, Editor-in-Chief

Pakistan has been celebrating its National Day every year. May I humbly request Your Excellency to kindly enlighten our readers on the historical importance of National Day of Pakistan?

On the auspicious occasion of Pakistan Day, I would like to extend my best wishes to all our citizens here, inside Pakistan and across the globe and friends in Nepal.

This day holds special significance for the Pakistani nation. We celebrate it on 23rd March each year as National Day. On this day in 1940, Pakistan Resolution was adopted at Lahore by the forefathers under the leadership of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Father of the Nation. Moreover, on this day in 1956, Pakistan Constituent Assembly adopted first Constitution of Pakistan declaring it an Islamic Republic.

On this auspicious occasion, we honour the indefatigable and extraordinary efforts of the father of the Nation and his companions. We also pay tribute to the immense sacrifices rendered by our forefathers in the freedom struggle leading to creation of Pakistan on 14 August 1947.

It is also an occasion to celebrate our successes of the past years, an



H.E. Mr. Abrar H. Hashmi

occasion to recognize our people, progress, culture, youth, women and men in art, sports and in uniform and much more.

This year Nepal-Pakistan relation is going to be 64 years old. What are some of the highlights of the Nepal-Pakistan relations in these years?

The major highlights of our relations are that the two countries have no issues and enjoy cordial relations. While diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Nepal were established in 1960, this is not a new relationship. It had a long history of friendly relations. Whether it was the sages that traversed the mountain ranges thousands of years ago or

common cultural moorings to the civilizational bonds. Our relations rest on the reservoir of our long accumulated experience of cordiality over millennia.

May I request Your Excellency to shed light on the sectors in which Government of Pakistan has been extending cooperation to Nepal?

We cherish our good relations with Nepal in many sectors. The relations are multifaceted including in technical, economic, education, defence and climate change etc. Pakistan and Nepal have identical positions on most international issues at UN and regional organizations.

Our contemporary relations, aided by advances in communications and other means of connectivity, allow us to forge even deeper ties. A wide spectrum relation encompassing socio-economic, political, defence, and cultural relations are cut out for us - the diplomats. My priority is to further tap into the unrealized potential, especially in trade in services and people to people exchanges to deepen and diversify our bilateral relations to let them truly mirror the cordiality existing between our two countries.

Your Excellency, would you please provide an overview of Pakistan's Foreign Policy for our readers in context of new Government?

Foreign Policy Objectives

Considering the guiding principles laid down by the founding fathers and the Constitution as per aspirations of the people of Pakistan, the objectives of foreign policy can be summarized as under:

- Promotion of Pakistan as a dynamic, progressive, moderate, and democratic Islamic country.
- Developing friendly relations with all countries of the world, especially major powers and neighbours.
- Safeguarding national security and geo-strategic interests, including Kashmir.
- Consolidating our commercial and economic cooperation with international community.
- Promote the internationally recognized norms of interstate relations, i.e., respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, non-interference in the internal affairs of other State, non-aggression and peaceful settlement of disputes as enshrined in UN Charter.
- Safeguarding the interests of Pakistani Diaspora abroad.
- Ensuring optimal utilization of national resources for regional and international cooperation.

How do Your Excellency suggest for the promotion of trade and commercial relations between Nepal and Pakistan? Is there any possibility to establish industry under the joint venture of these two countries?

Commercial relations deserve special collaborative efforts. This sector holds great potential. However, despite the potential, the actual bilateral trade is below par (US\$7.19 million during 2022-23). Few of the suggestions or ways to improve are:

- (i) Trade fairs and exhibitions including Single Country events linking the traders of the two countries;
- (ii) promote interface between the businessmen and entrepreneurs of the two countries. There exist at least three such arrangements between Nepal Chamber and three major Chambers of Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi;
- (iii) Leverage the existing bilateral Mechanisms such as Trade agreement-1982, Avoidance of double Taxation-2001, Joint Economic Commission (JEC) and Joint Business Council (JBC) - 7th meeting of JEC and 3rd of JBC being convened soon;
- (iv) Exchanges in services hold huge promise such as ITeS as youthful population from both countries can push the frontiers to new ventures and horizons;
- (v) Trade expansion is also possible in new goods; e.g. Pakistan imports over US \$600 million worth of tea annually and Nepal's tea export by value (over US\$30 Million) is tea; and
- (vi) E-Commerce by enabling payment platforms of our own would go a long way.

The Exchange of visits of high-level government officials, politicians, journalists and businessmen between Nepal and Pakistan is taking place from time to time providing strength to Nepal-Pakistan relation. Is there any possibility of the visit at the level of head of state or head of government between these two nations?

Bilateral visits and those in the context of SAARC have been a regular feature. The formal diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in March 1960. The very next year (Late) King Mahendra visited Pakistan. President Ayub Khan paid a return visit to Kathmandu in 1963 and it was during this visit that the two countries decided to establish diplomatic missions in each other's capital. Since then various high-level visits have taken place. From Nepal the Late King Mahendra, late King Birendra, former Crown Prince Dipendra, Prime Ministers Nagendra Prasad Rijal, Surya Bahdur Thapa, Marich Man Singh, Girja Prasad Koirala and Sher Bhadur Deuba visited Pakistan on different occasions. From Pakistan's side President Ayub Khan and Prime Ministers Muhammad Khan Junejo, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Shaheed, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Shaukat Aziz, Syed Yusuf Raza Gillani and Shahid Khaqan Abbasi visited Kathmandu. Besides, there have been a number of ministerial and senior official level visits between the two countries.

Besides, the leadership-level exchanges including among the political and parliamentary leadership, we stand to gain by deepening people-to-people contacts. Pakistan attaches great importance to exchanges between businesses,

academia, journalists, sports, and youth. The cultural relations are much older and deeper given our splendid heritage of Buddhism (and other religious sites) and high mountains make us natural partners in tourism.

Pakistan Government has been providing scholarship to Nepalese students for their further studies in Pakistan. Excellency is there any, possibility to increase the scholarships for more Nepalese students?

Pakistan's educational institutions are not new to Nepalese students. Pakistan offers number of fully paid scholarships under Pakistan Technical Assistance Program (PTAP) each year. In addition to PTAP, scholarships under SAARC, and bilateral arrangements as well as self-financed programs exist. These provide opportunities for education and specialized training which have enabled over 7000 Nepalese to equip themselves with the tools and skills necessary to contribute to Nepal's development. Higher Education system of Nepal has also Pakistan's contributions. We are in the process of further expanding and widening these programmes to serve more and meet the needs for higher education, skills and specialized training in Nepal. An "Education Fair" in Kathmandu is on cards by Higher Education Commission of Pakistan later this year. There has been a Pakistan Chair at Tribhuvan University, which we hope will again start functioning contributing to mutual understanding and knowledge sharing. Bilateral arrangements between the two governments for learning are as follows:

- Pakistan Technical Assistance Program (PTAP) -1982
- MoU between College of Physicians & Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP) and Institute of Medicine Nepal -12 April 2001
- MoU on the Establishment of An Academic Link between Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan and Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu -August 2008
- General Agreement for Scholarly Exchange and Collaboration between Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu and University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore - 08 May 2012
- MoU between National College of Arts (NCA) Lahore and Nepal Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) - 01 June 2015
- MoU for Cooperation in the Field of Literature between Nepal Academy of Nepal and Pakistan Academy of Letters of Pakistan -13 May 2018

What can be done to enhance people to people relations between Nepal and Pakistan?

Institutionalized efforts to promote tourism would certainly be useful. There already exists an Agreement on Tourism since 2009 and a Joint Working Group on Tourism was constituted which has met thrice so far. We are working on convening its next meeting soon. Restoration of direct air link between Pakistan and Nepal could be a major

step to attract tourists from Pakistan (and Nepal) to witness the astounding beauty of Nepal (and Pakistan). Fairs about new opportunities in high-altitude trekking and expeditions hold a great promise. Between the two countries we share 14 highest peaks, the 8000ers. Besides, high altitude and ecological tourism, religious tourism is a promising area. A lot of interest has been exhibited by many in Buddhist (and Hindu) religious sites. Fairs and tailored tours, such as we held last year at Swayambhunath Temple, IMBC, Gandhara Symposium and launch of books are creating interest.

9. What message do Your Excellency wish to extend to the people of Nepal and Pakistan on the occasion of National Day of Pakistan?

I wish the Government and People of friendly Nepal all the success in days and years ahead. Pakistan will continue to stand for peace, mutual respect and trust and partner in socio-economic growth, development, and prosperity. We hope the region enjoys peace, progress and tranquillity for the good of people of South Asia. The young population of both Pakistan and Nepal may enjoy the fruits of continued prosperity and progress to new heights - as high as Mount Everest and K-2. I wish the people can easily visit and enjoy serenity and beauty of both countries. Also I want to see empowered youth and women, modern skill impartation and innovation to bring more prosperity.

Memories of Nepal

Nepal was one of my best postings abroad: the fascinating natural beauty, friendly environment and warmth of hospitality all made it an extraordinary time of my life.

My stint at Kathmandu was from 2008 to 2011. This was an eventful period. 2008 was the year that marked the end of monarchy and paved the way for democracy. When I arrived in Kathmandu in May 2008, my credentials were received by Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, as King Gyanendra had been suspended from exercising his duties by the interim legislature since early 2007. However, it was after the elections of the first Constituent Assembly that the kingdom was officially abolished, and the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal was declared on May 28, 2008. Subsequently, Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias Prachanda was elected as the first prime minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal in August 2008. However, in less than a year, he was replaced by Madhav Kumar Nepal and then Jhala Nath Khanal.

These were challenging times in Nepalese politics. However, these ups and downs did not affect Pakistan's bilateral relations with Nepal. In fact, every government had very cordial relations with Pakistan.

Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani came to Nepal on a bilateral visit in April 2010. He was accompanied by his wife, senior officials and a group of

The writer was Ambassador of Pakistan to Nepal from 2008 to 2011



Syed Abrar Hussain

journalists. Earlier, Foreign Secretary Salman Bashir visited Kathmandu in June 2009 as part of regular bilateral consultations. One year later, in June 2010, the Nepalese Home Minister also visited Islamabad and held a meeting with his counterpart, Rehman Malik.

2010 was also the golden jubilee year of Pakistan-Nepal diplomatic relations, established in 1960. Our celebrations started in March 2010 with the Pakistan Day reception attended by a large number of Nepalese dignitaries, including the chairman of

the Constituent Assembly, ministers, army chief, parliamentarians, politicians, representatives of the business community, journalists and members of the diplomatic corps.

The golden jubilee year also saw the first Made in Pakistan Exhibition at Kathmandu. More than 80 businessmen from Pakistan participated in this five-day trade fair. It was so popular that an average of 25,000 people visited it daily.

The Pakistan Embassy also used to hold cultural programmes and invite Pakistani singers who were very popular among Nepalese people. During my tenure, Sajjad Ali, Abrar-ul-Haq and Shafqat Amanat Ali came to Kathmandu to entertain their Nepalese fans. We also used to organise an Ambassador of Pakistan Golf Tournament every year.

The Pakistan Study Centre (PSC) in Kathmandu was established as an intellectual and academic bridge between the two countries. My friend and former diplomat, the late Madhav





Kumar Rimal, was its Chairman. We formally inaugurated the centre in March 2009, and it organised many seminars, talks and other programmes. I still remember a seminar on ‘Pakistan and Changing Regional Scenario’ where Senator Mushahid Hussain was the keynote speaker, and Mr. Rimal was very active despite being in his eighties.

With the help of PSC, we launched the Nepalese version of the *Buddhist Gandhara*, a treatise by Dr. Ihsan Nadiem that provides information about the Buddhist art, architecture and history of the Gandhara region in Pakistan. The book was translated into Nepalese by a journalist, Rajan Karki, and reviewed by the Vice Chancellor of Lumbini Buddhist University, Professor Tulasi Ram Vaidya, at our request. This book became so popular that all its copies were sold out within

months and more copies were printed to fulfill the demand.

Another Nepalese friend that I fondly recall was the late Himalaya Shumsher Rana. He was a gem of a person. He had served as the finance secretary and governor of the Central Bank of Nepal and resident representative of UNDP in Islamabad. After his retirement, he was elected president of the Nepal-Pakistan Friendship and Cultural Association in 1996. He was awarded Sitara-e-Pakistan in 1998.

And, of course, who can forget Manju Ratna Shakya. He has been serving as the general secretary of the Nepal-Pakistan Friendship and Cultural Association for 40 years. In recognition of his dedicated services, we conferred the Golden Jubilee Friendship Award on him in 2010.

During my tenure in Nepal, we



successfully revived the Everest K2 Society, an association of alumni of Pakistani universities. It was established in 1996 but remained dormant for some time. Hundreds of Nepalese students have graduated from Pakistani educational institutions, and there is a need for them to have a collective forum. To mark the golden jubilee of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Nepal, the society organised a blood donation group and also published a book on the 50 years of relationship between the two countries. Even after 14 years, I can recall my meetings with its office bearers – Bidur Adhikari, Rajendra Prajuli and others.

On a personal note, I remained in contact with a former Nepalese ambassador to Pakistan, Niranjan Bhattarai, who was instrumental in convincing Agha Hasan Abedi to build Bharatpur Eye Hospital. At my request, he also wrote an article on the golden jubilee of Pakistan-Nepal relations. I was really shocked to learn about his sudden death in August 2010. I, along with some other officers of our embassy, visited his residence and saw some of the last rituals.

I also recall some friends from Nepalese literary circles, such as Madhav Kumar Ghimire, Tulsi Diwas and Professor Abhi Subedi. Mr. Ghimire, the national poet of Nepal, known for his epic poetry, musical drama and songs, was in his nineties at that time. He died at the age of 100 in 2020. Mr. Abhi Subedi, who had a doctorate in English literature, was a poet, playwright and a wonderful human being. They were all very kind and always responded positively whenever I invited them to any event.

While delving into the recollections of my time spent in Nepal, let me admit that I can never forget the friendly nature of the Nepalese people. I wish them all the best and pray for their progress and prosperity.

Climate Change: A Common Challenge – Building a Resilient Society

Our world has been changing fast, in ways and in a manner that is portentous. The north-south divide of our globe continues along the binary of rich and poor, developed and developing. The foremost focus of humanity remains ‘development’ – how to achieve it or sustain it. A simplistic vision framed around brick and mortar, infrastructure, industry, socio-economic modernization and expansion conveniently passes for ‘development’. How ‘development’ is defined, conceptualized and pursued is often given short shrift.

However, as humanity pursues the path of ‘development’, it now is becomingly clear, our backdrop is changing or rather slipping. The environment, or global climate, is changing quicker than we realize.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has shown in its studies a strong causal link between anthropogenic activities and climate change and more precisely extreme weather events. There has been an increase of 30% in the acidity of surface ocean waters since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. The oceans

The writer was Ambassador of Pakistan to Nepal from November 2020 to November 2022



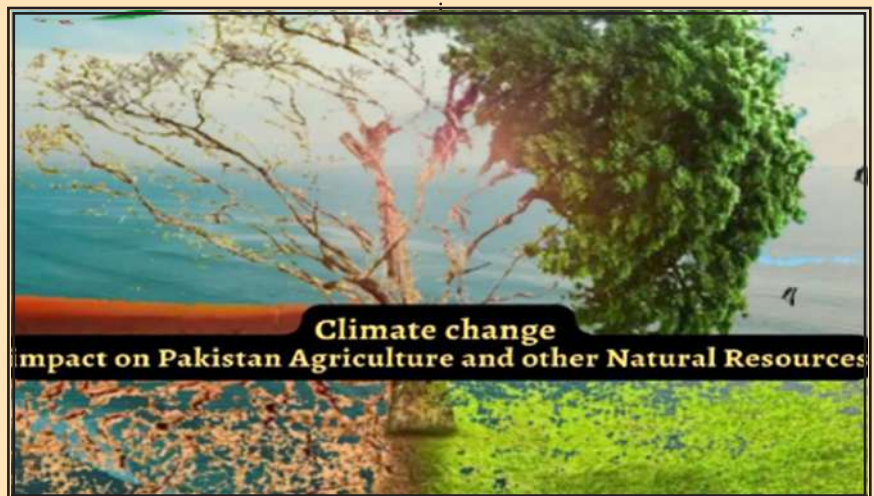
Syed Haider Shah

have absorbed between 7.2 to 10.8 billion metric tons per year (20% and 30%) of Green House Gas (GHG) emissions in recent decades. Average surface temperature of the earth has risen about 01 degrees Celsius since the late 19th century.

The warming of ocean surface as a

result of human activity, including the release of GHG into the atmosphere, has triggered a series of cascading events. Irregular rain patterns impact agriculture and crops. Floods and other climate-induced disasters wipe away years of progress. Roads, bridges, buildings and other infrastructure are damaged or swept away. Communities suffer human and material losses and displacement.

Nepal and Pakistan remain among the most vulnerable countries in terms of climate change, including natural catastrophes and extreme climate events. This is so despite the fact that these two countries have negligible contribution to GHG emissions. If these trends of severe and extreme weather events continue, the costs



will only escalate astronomically, particularly for the developing world.

Pakistan contributes only 0.9% to global GHG emissions. However, it remains among the top 10 countries most adversely impacted by climate change. It ranks 152 among 181 countries on the vulnerability and readiness index.

After the super-flood in 2010 with massive damage, Pakistan had to face the mega-flood of 2022, leading to human loss of around 1700 people. The flood impacted 33 million people including 8 million displaced. The damages from 2022 flood are estimated at US\$14.9 billion, and total needs of US\$16.3 billion, besides causing a loss of about 8% of Pakistan's GDP. These floods are apart from other extreme weather events including heat waves, droughts and Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) that Pakistan has suffered with increasing intensity in recent years.

According to World Bank's 2022 report, Pakistan's investment needs for a comprehensive response to climate and development challenges between 2023-2030 amounts to a staggering \$348 billion, equivalent to 10.7% of the cumulative GDP of the country for the same period.

Nepal is also impacted seriously by climate change, in particular, riverine floods, heat exposure, drought and landslides. This is so despite the fact that in terms of GHG emissions, Nepal ranks 164 out of 190 countries and in terms of total emissions it stands at 87 out of 194 countries.

In 2021 unprecedented heat and lack of precipitation led to forest fires at a large scale. Black carbon deposition on snowcapped mountains, air pollution and variation in rain patterns



have been impacting humans and ecological balance. Already the glacial cover in the Himalayas, Andes and Alps is shrinking fast. The situation is particularly precarious in the Himalayas region with the increasing threat of GLOF.

The northern mountainous areas of Nepal remain vulnerable to landslides. The southern parts of the country face the threat of riverine floods, heat and droughts. However, due to variation in coping ability, the mountainous areas in the north are more vulnerable to climate change compared with the Terai region and urban areas of Nepal.

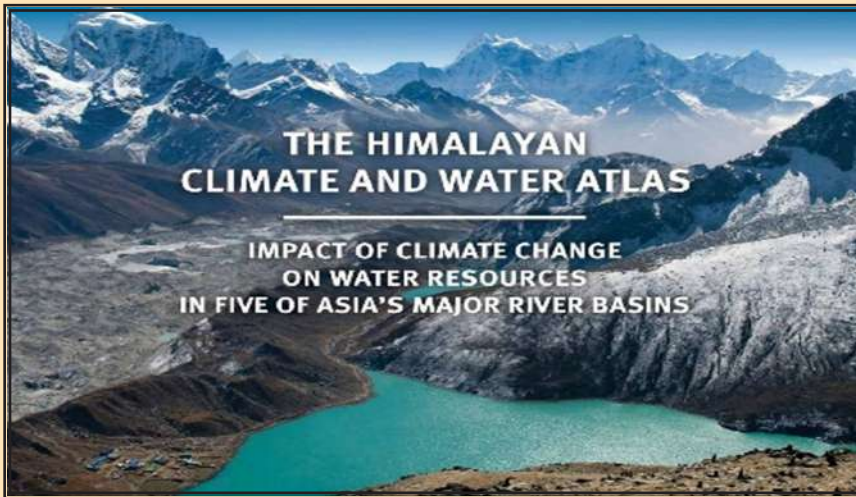
The rapid urbanization, especially in Kathmandu Valley has been pushing human settlements towards steeper slopes, making them more vulnerable to landslides and floods. Similarly, rapid urbanization has led to increase in settlements or built-up areas on agricultural, farm, and forest land. According to one estimate, 17.5% of all municipalities lost 20% or more of their cropland between the year 2000 and 2019.

Nepal's topography also makes it challenging to extend services to remote, rural and hard to access communities. The communities in

such areas need greater assistance to cope effectively with effects of climate change in a resilient manner. Particularly, the western provinces of Karnali and Sudurpaschim require greater assistance for adaptive measures to cope with extreme weather events. Southern parts of Nepal, reliant on crop production and livestock herding, are comparatively more resilient despite their vulnerability to droughts, heat and riverine flooding. Effective climate coping strategies have to factor in these regional variations in vulnerability and resilience.

Thus, climate change challenges are broadly similar for countries like Nepal and Pakistan. Scope, therefore, exists for cooperative endeavors to deal with climate change. Such resilience requires adaptation and mitigation. There is a need to invest in green technologies, shift away from fossil fuels, tap more renewable energy sources, promote sustainable consumption patterns, and build community resilience especially in remote, hard to reach and climatically vulnerable regions, including through resilient infrastructure development.

However, such measures involve heavy costs. According to one estimate, the



needs for adaptation and mitigation till 2030 are more than \$4 trillion. Thus, in the absence of adequate financial support and technology, or means of implementation, such measures may come at the cost of reduced economic output and GDP growth.

Different developmental levels of countries influence their climate policies. For developing countries, economic growth and sustainable development remains a priority. On the other hand, the industrialized countries, traditionally responsible for most of the GHG emissions, prioritize emission reduction and transition to low-carbon economies. However, transition to low-carbon economy and climate-resilience, requires resources which are often lacked by developing countries like Nepal and Pakistan. Dependence on fossil fuels makes energy transition challenging. Abruptly phasing out fossil fuels can cause economic disruptions.

The Conference of Parties (COP) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate change has been held regularly to discuss climate issues and to develop consensus on the most pressing issues related to climate change.

At the latest COP28 in Dubai

in December 2023, an important achievement from the perspective of developing countries was the decision on operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund. It is important that this fund is operationalized at the earliest. Close to \$790 million have already been pledged to this fund. More needs to be done. Similarly, other climate related funds and mechanisms, such as Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Environment Facility (GEF), and Climate Investment Fund (CIF), etc., also need to increase their flows to developing countries based on their vulnerability.

It is important that at the multilateral level Pakistan and Nepal continue to work closely on climate change to safeguard and promote their national interests. Similarly, the G-77 and China and the group of likeminded countries need to maintain cohesion and solidarity so that the voices and interests of the developing world are heard and taken into account. The climate-vulnerable countries in Africa and Small Islands Developing States (SIDS), who often are disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change, should also be assisted by the international community as a priority.

Pakistan and Nepal should also deepen their bilateral cooperation to deal with common challenges of climate change and environmental protection. A key resource would be sharing of local knowledge and sustainable livelihood practices which can ensure communities live without causing them harm and damage to the environment.

The concept of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) should continue to inform climate change discourse including adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer, finance, and capacity building.

A key component in enhancing national preparedness and capacity to deal with climate change hinges on the availability of concessional, and grants-based, finance as well as technology transfer.

It is not possible for countries like Pakistan and Nepal to insulate themselves from the effects of climate change on their own. The resources and technology required for mitigation and adaptation are beyond the capacity of developing countries. Besides measures that can be taken domestically by each country, given the transcendental nature of climate-change challenge, much work is needed at the international level.

Building climate resilience should remain a common goal of the international community. Our efforts should be guided by a broadened conception of 'development', which is sustainable and environmentally friendly. Without solidarity and cooperation across the world, this goal would only remain a distant aspiration.

Nepal- Pakistan Friendship Built on Shared Buddhist Heritage

Last year in April, an important book titled *Nepal Pakistan Buddhist Relations* written by writer, scholar and diplomat Hiranya Lal Shrestha was launched at Chaitya, Shwayambhu in Kathmandu amidst a function attended among others by former Prime Minister Jhala Nath Khanal and Pakistan's Ambassador to Nepal Abrar H Hashmi. The book, besides highlighting Nepal-Pakistan Buddhist Relations, familiarizes the readers with Pakistan's Buddhist heritage. Ambassador Hashmi, in a foreword to the book, observes: "Pakistan and Nepal have multifaceted relationship dating back to ancient times. One significant aspect of this relationship is our shared Buddhist heritage." The Ambassador commends writer Shrestha for his in-depth analysis of the Buddhist connection between Pakistan and Nepal. The shared heritage no doubt plays a significant role in shaping and further cementing bilateral relations and friendship. Professor Tri Ratna Manandhar, former vice-chancellor, Lumbini Buddhist University, makes a positive statement about Pakistan's respect for and liberal attitude towards Buddhism.

Hiranya Lal's book, divided into eleven chapters, dwells at length on Buddhism in Pakistan from different layers of civilization to visits to Nepal, from time to time, by Pakistani monks, scholars and diplomats. Describing

*Prof. Mohan Lohani,
Former Ambassador*



Prof. Dr. Mohan Lohani

Nepal as an old nation, never a victim of colonial domination but with multiple civilizational linkages, the book pays tribute to Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Founder President of Pakistan at the time of its independence in August 1947, and refers to close and intimate interaction between Nepal and Pakistan during Gandhara Buddhist civilizational period. Shrestha remarks: Pakistan as a multi-center of cross country relationship between West Asia, Central Asia, East Asia and South and Southeast Asia has made valuable contribution to expand Buddhism to Central Asia and East Asia. Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah, on the eve of Pakistan's independence, made a speech of historic significance in which he assured protection to its minorities and guaranteed freedom of religion in Pakistan. Pakistan has stood by its commitment despite political, economic and social ups and downs over the years.

As one of the founding members of UN International Committee for

Lumbini development established in 1970, immediately after the visit to Lumbini by then UN Secretary General U Thant, Pakistan, Shrestha says, has contributed to the development of Lumbini in several ways, such as Pakistan's commitment to institutionalize Lumbini development at global level. We learn from Shrestha's book that Pakistan has donated US dollars 10,000 in 1974/75 and NRS 5 Lakhs in two phases for the development of Lumbini. Both countries reached an agreement in 2008 aimed at promoting regional tourism under which historically renowned places, such as Lumbini (Nepal), Kandy (Srilanka), Nalanda (India), and Takshila (Pakistan) were interlinked. Lumbini, the birth place of lord Buddha, remains center point in Buddhist circuits of different layers.

Hirannya Lal Shrestha, commenting on Pakistan's Buddhist civilization, observes: "The remains of Buddhist civilization have been discovered throughout the length and breadth of Pakistan, from the foothills of the Himalayas in the north to the shores of the Arabian Sea in the south. Pakistani people are proud of their rich heritages being conserved and developed by the Government of Pakistan."

The book mentions the popularity of Jataka tales in both Nepal and Pakistan. Dawn, a popular English daily of Pakistan, praised the multiple lessons of Jataka in September 2022. These tales, the paper writes, teach us to think with humility, patience, contentment, and delight, to act

with kindness, honesty, forgiveness, gratitude and responsibility, to find mercy in life through courage, service, principles and aspiration. Jataka stories which establish Buddha as a story teller have become highly popular in Nepal and Pakistan.

Shrestha describes Pakistan as geo-strategically center point of linkage so far as the transmission of Buddhism from South Asia to Central Asia, East Asia and West Asia is concerned. Buddhism in Gandhara prevailed from the middle of the first millennium CE. In this period, Buddhism was not only consolidated in Pakistan but also the latter contributed a lot to transmit Buddhism abroad. Mahayana and Vajrayana developed and expanded from Gandhara to Central Asia and East Asia.

The book describes Buddhism as a global religion covering all continents of the world through old and new silk roads. According to Shrestha, Buddhism first reached Pakistan during the reign of Emperor Ashoka (304-232 BCE), when he sent a monk from Varanasi called Majhantika

to preach Buddhism in Kashmir and Gandhara. Ashoka's edicts are available in India, Nepal and Pakistan. Most of us are familiar with Emperor Kanishka of Kusan dynasty who was well known as patron of Buddhism. He gathered 500 monks headed by Guru Vasumitra. Emperor Kanishka was not only a believer in Buddhism but encouraged its teaching as well. During Kanishka's reign, Buddhist relations between Gandhara-Kashmir-Lumbini became more intimate and much closer. In this context, one of the most influential monks of Pakistan Acharya Vasubandhu came to Nepal with a thousand disciples, taught the Mahayana doctrine and died in Shwiyambhu where Vasubandhu Memorial Chaitya was erected with his relics. Another Buddhist Guru who visited Nepal was Padmashambhava in the 8th century. The interrelationship between Gandhara and Lumbini in ancient and medieval times is thus confirmed.

Finally, mention should be made of Nepali monks and scholars like Acharya Vikshu Amritananda

Mahasthavir and several venerable Lamas who visited Gandhara and other Buddhist archeological sites in Pakistan. Likewise, Pakistani monks, scholars and diplomats have visited Nepal and participated in several conferences such as the 4th World Buddhist Conference held in Kathmandu in November 1956. Pakistani Buddhist delegation was led by Ven. Visuddhananda Mahathera, a well known monk of Pakistan who was happy to visit Lumbini as a place for pilgrimage. Pakistan also participated in International Buddhist Conference held at Lumbini in 2001. All Pakistani diplomats have unreservedly described Nepal Pakistan relations enriched and deepened by civilizational and historical links. One aspect of those links, as stated earlier, is the common Buddhist heritage shared by the two countries. Writer Hiranyalal Shrestha's suggestion that both countries should not lag behind to conduct soft power diplomacy makes a lot of sense in the context of cultural connectivity between the two countries.

Best Wishes for Nepal - Pakistan Friendship



Dr. Manju Ratna Sakya
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Travel Diary 1981 - Karachi to Islamabad by Road

(Late Govind Prasad Lohani was Royal Nepalese Ambassador to Pakistan from 1979 till 1983. After the independence and partition of India in August 1947, Karachi became the capital of newly formed Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Later on, a new city of Islamabad was developed some 1,142 kilometers north of Karachi to permanently settle the capital of Pakistan. Some 1,445 kilometers of roadways have to be covered to reach Islamabad from Karachi. It takes some two and a half hours of air travel to cover the distance, whereas, it takes more than a day by road. Mr. Lohani travelled by air many a times between Islamabad and Karachi



Late Govind Prasad Lohani

during his tenure as ambassador. However, on 11 September 1981, he got an opportunity to have his maiden travel all the way from Karachi to Islamabad by road. Instrument:

Mercedes Benz Car. He was accompanied by his spouse Ruchila Bala Devi Lohani and two sons Pradip and Harish. Originally written in Nepali language by Late Govind Prasad Lohani in his daily diary, his youngest son Kapil Lohani recently translated and compiled this important travel account to include it in the soon to be published travel memoir of late Mr. Lohani. Things might have changed drastically over the past four decades. However, it is expected that going through this travel memoir will be equally interesting to those who have been to these places of Pakistan or those who have not yet visited).

Karachi-Hyderabad: Friday 11 September. Started journey at 10 am from Karachi. Took the national highway just east of the airport. Most of the industries in Karachi are in this part of the metropolis. We could see the Pipri Steel Mills built by the Soviets. Also seen on the way was the huge Export Processing Zone. Reached Banvor at 12 noon. This was the place where the great warrior from Arab Mohammad Bin Qasim first landed in the 7th century. This is the place from where Islam took its way into the Indian Sub-continent. Stopped for a while to witness the museum and archaeological remains. The remains of Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim era.

The sky was clear, so was the bright sun shining. Pretty dry and heat

weather. Reached Thatta--a small township. Refueled our vehicle. Bought some fruit and snacks for the road. There were so many historic things to see but my wife began to stare at me as nobody seemed to be in a mood to witness the ruins and artistic objects. It may be because of the hot temperature also.

I have a sense of history so I am quite interested to visit historical monuments. Long long time ago, the king of this place had participated in the Mahabharata war. Alexander had built ships somewhere in this area for his return voyage to Iran. Hundreds of thousands of graves dating back to different era. Once, this place was also the capital of the kings of Sindh. It was written in the highway board that there is a hill called Makli, from where

the whole area could be seen clearly. We tried to find out the road to reach there. Even the local people were not sure and just kept on guessing. So we dropped the idea to go there.

Our car halted at the bank of a canal and to have some food. Then headed towards Hyderabad. Deserted road. Crossed the Indus river at 3 pm. Were driving just above a barrage. Entered the city of Hyderabad. Stayed at Sanjy's Motel. Rs. 200 for each room. A short nap. Read some literature on Hyderabad. Elder son Pradeep called



his friend. His friend came with his brother. We took two vehicles to go around the city. Hyderabad and Latikabad are twin cities. Latikabad a bit modern. Sons' friends showed the old forts. Went up to Hill Park. The whole city was visible from there. Olden city. Dry environment. Very less greenery. They took us to the Sadar (Cantonment) Bazar, resembling to Rawalpindi. We were supposed to go to the hotel at 7 pm but the youngsters urged to have Chinese food. So went to Hong Kong Restaurant. Driver Shahwar also joined us. Had light food and at the end some Ice cream. Reached our Motel. My sons went to their friends' home to settle. Presented a box of Nepalese tea and two packets of Laligurans Cigarette of Nepal. Have booked two double rooms at a hotel called Shabistan in Mohenjodaro for tomorrow. Settled at 9 pm.

Larkana: Saturday 12 September. It was a good sleep. A bit of horrifying environment in the motel. Nobody was staying near our room. Constant sound of water leakage in the bathroom. Tried to request for tea in the morning but the telephone was not working. Nobody around. I went myself to ask the staff for tea. They took long time to bring it. Sons arrived at 8:30. Paid the hotel bill and checked out. Their friends accompanied us up to the main highway at the outskirts of the city. Crossed the Indus river. Saw the University of Engineering of Jamshoro. The whole area was dry and barren but the network of canals was seen in different places. Reached Sehwan Sharif at 11 am. Went to the mausoleum of Shahwaj Qalandar-famous Sufi saint of 13th century. Went to see the Golden Gate. Beggars began to follow. Bought some grapes and bananas.

Had some light snacks on the way. So difficult to find the right way. All the road signs written in local languages. Even the locals are

not sure about the roads. Reached Dadu. Then Nashirabad. Both small townships. The road map that I was carrying helped a lot to find the right path. Finally reached Mohenjodaro at 1 pm. Quite a barren and lonely place. There was nobody in Pakistan Tourism Development Board (PTDC) office. There were few lower staff at the gate on the way to the ruins but not having knowledge of the place and its history. The hotel that we had booked was also totally vacant. The hotel manager himself suggested us not to stay there. He told that the Museum opens only at 3 pm. Ordered food but they informed that it would be served only after an hour. Took a quick tour of the ruins even during that hot temperature. A watchman of the premises took us inside and guided us. Gave him some tips. Took a brief tour of the museum after the lunch. The sorry state of tourism service made me depressed. A lot could have been done.

Cancelled the reservation of the hotel and proceeded for Larkana. Greenery everywhere. Network of canals. Just 20 miles away from Mohenjodaro. Not sure about where to stay there, we went to the Circuit House. The keeper of the house welcomed us and asked us to stay for a while in the Drawing Room. He took my sons to meet the Commissioner to acquire permission of our stay. They came back after 1 hour. Asked us to fill up a form. Arranged a VIP room for me and Ruchila and a luxury double room for our sons. Babarchi (chef) and guard came to enquire about the food and other things that we require. Felt so homely. Asked them to serve the food at 8 pm and also the morning tea for tomorrow. Took rest. Went to the market at 7 pm. The Habeli (palace like home) of Bhutto was on the way. A huge premises. People have good faith on Bhutto here. The market was huge and interesting. Bought some food. Took sugarcane juice. Returned

to our shelter at 8 pm. Rest. Had our dinner at the Dining Room. Pretty good food. Rest. Settled at 10 pm. This is the place (government guest house) where Pakistani ministers, governors and other dignitaries stay during their travel. Nice experience.

Multan: Sunday 13 September. Had tea and then finished packing. They served the tea again. Only Rs. 10 for two rooms. Rs. 83 for food. Distributed Rs. 100 as tips to the staff. Happy happy. Left for next destination. Our car reached the highway after crossing the market place. Julfikar Ali Bhutto seems to have done a lot to develop his home district Larkana. Roads, electricity and drinking water everywhere. Had breakfast in a small restaurant on the way to Sukkur.

Reached Sukkur at 10 am. This is the oldest city of Asia having irrigational barrage system. Drove up to the main market of the city. An old city, a bit filthy. Witnessed the Clock Tower market. After driving along the main market, reached the right edge of the Indus river. Trees and greenery everywhere. Cotton and date plantation. The most developed province of Pakistan in terms of agriculture. All the rivers flowing through Punjab are located here. Canals coming out of each river for irrigation.

Reached Ghoteki at 11 am. Driver Shahbar had his prayers and breakfast. Road in bad condition. Dusty. No good place to eat before reaching Bahawalpur. Our vehicle's tyre got punctured. Took some time to repair it. Ate some food that we had with us. Went ahead along the canal. The car was getting out of fuel. Tried to get petrol in the pumps on the way but only diesel was available. The car was critically in need of petrol. Finally a pump had it. Already 4 pm, but Bahawalpur still far. Crossed the barrages of Jhelum and Sutlej river. Fortunately we caught the road to



Multan so there was no need to reach Bahawalpur.

Reached Multan at 5:30 pm. A big city it was. Stayed at Sindbad Hotel. Rs. 234 for 1 double room. Nice and comfortable room. Went to Nishtar Medical College at 6:30 pm. My sons took to different roads to find the college, while it was very near to our hotel. In fact, we had read that the address of our hotel was beside the Nishtar Medical College. They would have searched the College at the close vicinity of the hotel. The youths of everywhere are quite subjective and dogmatic, so are our sons. They had a sheer confidence that they knew the place because they had been there once before. Anyway we reached the campus. My sons went to the hostel and came back along with Rajendra Pandey, a medical science student from Nepal. He took us to different historic places such as the old fort, where there was an old tomb and a Hindu temple, that of Nrisingha. We also visited the Clock Tower. Then we reached the top of a hill from where the whole city of Multan was clearly visible.

With the sun set, the electric lights began to illuminate the city. We walked for about half an hour roaming around the busy lanes of Hussain Agahi market, which resembled to Lahore's Anarkali Bazaar. Bought some fruits and the famous sweets of Multan such as Sohan Halwa, Rabri and Malai. Also had sugarcane juice. Rajendra then took us to the newly developed posh area near the Cantonment where we stopped at the rooftop of

a restaurant and enjoyed the famous Chicken Kadai Kawab and Roti. A delicious dinner it was. Then we went back to Nishtar Medical College and had a chat with the Nepalese girls studying there. Rajendra took my sons to the boys' hostel to stay there for that night. Ruchila and I went back to our hotel.



Faisalabad-Sargodha-Islamabad:

Monday 14 September. Had tea. Nepalese students Narendra Prasad Shah and Rahful Alam came to see me. My sons also came back from the College and took the driver to have our vehicle checked at a workshop. Checked out from the hotel at 8:30 am and started our journey further north. After refueling the vehicle, we left Multan. Both sides of the highway had pleasant greenery and a network of irrigation canals. We stopped at a road side and enjoyed our breakfast with the delicious sweets and fruits that we bought yesterday. Then crossed the Rabi river. Reached the town of Jhang at around noon. There was a road going towards Sargodha, but we took a different road towards east to go to Faisalabad and reached there at 1 pm. Faisalabad is Pakistan's third largest city and industrial hub. I had long wished to see this town. A big city. Reached Faisalabad Agriculture University where a Nepalese student Bikram Lal Shrestha was studying, but could not trace him. Drove to different faculties of the huge University complex. Visited the Clock Tower market and had a brief tour around. Lunch at a local restaurant. Naan and Fish Curry along with pickle, onion and yoghurt. Quite delicious. Enjoyed a lot. Headed towards Sargodha after refueling the vehicle. Saw so many industries at the outskirts of Faisalabad. Crossed the river Chenab several times. Reached the foot of a hill while nearing the city of Sargodha at 3:30 pm. A massive

iron structure and a radar at the top of the hill. Drove to different parts of Sargodha township. Re-energized with sugarcane juice.

Came to know that we have to drive towards north-east and cross the town of Gujarat to catch the Lahore-Rawalpindi Highway. However, somebody told our driver that there was a short-cut road going through a small town of Chakwal. We took this road. This road took us all the way to a hill. The road was narrow and a bit deserted. Our vehicle kept on climbing the hill, then small vales of the hills, plateau and forests with tiny settlements passing by-a magnificent view to watch. The setting of sun, darkness approaching, and a sort of fear arising in our minds. After a while we began to descend the hills towards the plains and reached Chakwal. Now relaxed. Had tea in a local shop and enquired about the road ahead. We were informed that the road to Pindi (Rawalpindi) could be reached within 1 and a half hours from Chakwal. So we went ahead and finally caught the wide and busy Lahore-Rawalpindi Highway. All the fears gone as the highway had a heavy traffic passing both ways. Smooth drive. Reached Islamabad, the modern capital of Pakistan. It was, indeed, a great experience.

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Nepal Pakistan Initiatives Imperative For Saving the Vision, Evolution and Life of SAARC

The Background

The breaking of then East Pakistan and the formation of Bangladesh in 1971, as well as, joining India to then USSR Security Umbrella, the same year, were unprecedented regional events, then. The Shimla Agreement of 1972 between two powerful Prime Ministers of South Asia, Mrs. Indira Gandhi of India and Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan had shown some rays of hope for peaceful co-existence of relations in the region, but still, the CBM's-Confidence Building Measures to relatively smaller nations, like Kingdoms of Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal, were crucial.

Therefore, the then King Birendra of Nepal, wanted to propose his country as a Zone of Peace (ZOP) in Algiers during the 4th NAM Summit 5-9 September 1973, as a Founding Member of NAM. But, due to unavoidable circumstances, he had to satisfy by the NAM Declaration of n-Disarmament and Development. Despite the declaration of n-Disarmament by NAM in Algiers in 1973, India, but in South Asia, went nuclear, in 1974.

Late king Birendra, therefore, proposed Nepal to be declared a ZOP, during his Coronation Address, on 25 February 1975 in Kathmandu. The relevance boosted it, because, Sikkim, hardly in 4-months after his declaration, was officially merged to India as her 22nd

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state on 16 May 1975!

Despite the support of 116 countries (including all P5's) of the world, India was reluctant to support Nepal's ZOP proposal at the pretext that whole of Indian Ocean should be declared as a ZOP. But among big neighbors of Nepal, Pakistan's, together with China's, support had boosted the initiatives for peace and regional cooperation strongly.

The first official vision of regional cooperation in south asia before SAARC

On November 29 to December 7, 1977, Nepal hosted the 26th Colombo Plan Consultative Committee Meeting in Kathmandu. The then King Birendra of Nepal, not only highlighted the role of the South-South-Cooperation, but also, he, for the first time in South Asia, spoke on "South Asian Regional Cooperation" focusing on cooperation and transfer of technology utilizing the vast resources of water enhancing regional cooperation in South Asia.

The then Bangladesh President Ziaur Rehman, when King Birendra visited to Bangladesh, one year later in 1978, strongly reiterated King Birendra's vision of regional cooperation in South

Asia, besides Pakistan's strong support for the regional cooperation. Ziaur Rehman also wrote to all of the Heads of States and Governments of South Asia for the Regional Cooperation in 1980.

This vision of regional cooperation and together with Nepal's proposal for the ZOP, on many grounds, directly or indirectly, boosted the establishment of SAARC, on 8 December 1985, in Dhaka, from the then leaders of the seven South Asian Countries indeed.

The SAARC Secretariat

It was interesting that the 2nd SAARC Summit, 16-17 November 1986, Bangalore decided to establish the SAARC Secretariat in Nepal's Capital, Kathmandu. Back home, late King Birendra was keen to provide the best possible building, and facility, including the location, to the SAARC Secretariat. Being very close from the Narayanhiti Royal Palace at Tridevi Maarg, while entering Thamel, King Birendra had personally noticed the under construction building of the Department of Tourism.

This author, then working at the Department of Tourism, admin/promotion section, had the honor to brief the palace. Briefed, if His Majesty/Nepal wished to establish the SAARC Secretariat, there, it was an honor for the Department of Tourism, to handover the building to the SAARC Secretariat! It was so decided, and on 16 January 1987, the then King Birendra inaugurated today's SAARC Secretariat!

Strong Nepal-Pakistan nexus in SAARC

The 4th SAARC Summit was held in the Pak Capital during 29-31 December, 1988. With special consultation with the

host country Pakistan, King Birendra had proposed for the establishment of “SAARC Special Force” along with SAARC itself.

The then PM Rajiv Gandhi had represented India. The resolution of the “special proposal” tabled by King Birendra, could not be passed, because, as per the SAARC Charter, any resolution to be passed by SAARC, needed a unanimous decision.

It is said that it was here, besides import of arms by Nepal from China in 1988, that the rift between Rajiv and King Birendra started. It even resulted to the infamous “declared imposition” of the Indian Economic Blockade of 1989 to Nepal.

Prospects of hope after modi in power

Two emerging events drew special attention of the regional observers, like this author. The first was Modi’s oath taking ceremony of 26 May 2014. All South Asian leaders including Pakistan’s ruling Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited New Delhi to congratulate him.

The second event was that Modi made a surprise visit to Pakistan to congratulate Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s 66th Happy Birthday while returning from Afghanistan on 26 December, 2015. These two cordial events between two nuclear powers of South Asia had really encouraged SAARC paradigm shifts and development perspectives in South Asia.

But so many factors evolved, aftermath, could not prove that the relations between the two countries were bed of roses. Ultimately, SAARC had to suffer, directly or indirectly.

But agreements and disagreements within SAARC prevailed earlier too

The 5th SAARC Summit was supposed to be held in Sri Lanka in 1989. But the then President of Sri Lanka Premadasa flatly rejected that his country was not ready to host the SAARC Summit. The reason was the presence of the IPKF in Sri Lanka, despite his wish, and finally,

it was held in Male in 1990.

In 2007, New Delhi Summit included Afghanistan as the 8th member. Immediately in 2008, terrorist attack in Mumbai killed some 200 innocent people and disagreements heightened. Not to forget that in 1987, by the 3rd Summit in Kathmandu, the Resolution on Terrorism was passed unanimously.

Similarly, in 199, the 11th Summit was to be held in Nepal, but due to the Kargil War, it could not be materialized on time. This author tries to argue that SAARC Summits many times were hampered but later were managed. Simply after the 18th SAARC Summit in Kathmandu, the time period has been nearly a decade. Optimism need to be carried out, because, it’s time that guides agreements and disagreement in Diplomacy. Therefore, we should continue to be following that the 19th SAARC Summit can be held in Islamabad as scheduled.

There were strong disagreements after the terrorist attack in Indian Parliament on 13 December 2001. The year 2002 was the year of the Nuclear Threat in South Asia. When Diplomacy and Dialogues were well followed, immediately, the then Premier Vajpayee made a historic visit to Pakistan, which eased the thorny paths of SAARC.

In 2004, at the 12nd Summit of SAARC in Islamabad, one of the most important decisions of SAARC ever-declared was possible. That was the agreements on SAFTA and SAEU-South Asian Economic Union, historic decisions. Therefore, SAARC should not be taken as at the death bed.

The 18th SAARC summit and aftermath evolutions

The 18th SAARC Summit, 26-27 November 2014, Kathmandu, had a motto of “Deeper Integration for Peace and Prosperity”. As a symptom of deeper integration for peace and prosperity, the 18th SAARC Summit made a 36-point declaration.

It had decided that the 19th SAARC Summit would be held in Islamabad during 15-16 November 2016. Again it

was proposed that 19th SAARC Summit be held in Islamabad, but again, India denied it. In diplomacy, it is said that nothing is impossible. The day will come all nations agree to run SAARC effectively.

Simply, the bilateral issue further deteriorated between India and Pakistan was due to India’s revoking of Article 370 from her Constitution on 5 August 2019 baring the special status granted to Jammu and Kashmir. This again distanced the relations between the two powerful nations of South Asia. But diplomacy still has a page of history that holding SAARC Summits should not be hindered carrying dialogues side by side like Sino-Indian Border Conflicts indeed.

This is possible because SAARC Finance Minister’s Meeting was held in Islamabad on 16 August 2016 after the 18th Summit. Similarly the 37th SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting was held in Pokhara during 14-17 March and External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj had represented India. Nepal’s Former PM KP Oli had inaugurated the important meeting. Pakistan delegation was led by Sartaz Aziz, then Foreign Affairs Advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Important decision, that the SAARC Disaster Management Center would be established in New Delhi, was made.

Conclusion

The BIMSTEC cannot replace SAARC because of the geography. Afghanistan, Pakistan and Maldives exclusively belong to the South Asian Region. Of course BIMSTEC has covered to the South and South East Asian nations. The SAARC together with Afghanistan Pakistan and Maldives would be more cordial considering the proximity of Central Asia and Middle East. Therefore, Nepal and Pakistan together with other members should continue their relentless efforts to save SAARC and make it more effective with special reference to the other members of SAARC.

Uncovering the Beauty of Islamabad

Bollywood movies and serials are often screened in Movie Halls across Nepal and significantly influence Nepali culture and society. As I grew up watching Bollywood movies, I am aware of the relationship between Pakistan and India which has a long history of tensions and conflicts, along with several wars and ongoing territorial disputes. The coverage of disputes between Pakistan and India in national and international media often keeps updating about Pakistan. Likewise, the story of Afghanistan- Pakistan relations is not new internationally. Pak-India relations, and the 19th SAARC summit scheduled to be held in 2016 in Islamabad could not go ahead due to internal conflict between Pakistan and India are the major issues that always remind Pakistan.

Recently, I got an invitation to visit Islamabad for a week to participate in the '4th International Workshop for Leadership & Security' organized by the Institute for Strategic Studies, Research & Analysis (ISSRA) at the National Defence University, NDU, Islamabad, Pakistan. While I shared this information with my family members and colleagues at the office, most of them were curious about security issues and the connecting flights. Before embarking on my journey to Islamabad,



Kabi Adhikari

my curiosity about its unique blend of modernity and natural beauty, the white marble Faisal Mosque, and the security system for the international participants was high. As security is still a major concern in the international arena, I commenced my trip to Pakistan with all these curiosities and excitement. Since there is no direct flight from Nepal to Pakistan and vice versa, passengers are compelled to spend hours and hours to reach their destination. My memorable experience in Islamabad started with the warm hospitality of staff members of ISSRA at the Islamabad International Airport. Meanwhile, I was the last participant to reach Islamabad, the facility provided to pick me up at the airport made me comfortable in a foreign country. In addition to this, the pick-and-drop arrangement to and

from the hotel made participants' stay quite relaxed. The five-day event was organized with the slogan 'Pakistan Dialogues with the World'. The event saw participants from around the world engaged in debates and discussions on various topics such as Evolving Global & Regional Order, Human Rights, Climate Change, Islamophobia, Culture and Heritage of Pakistan, Regional Cooperation and Stability Opportunities and Challenges, Trade, Investment, and Entrepreneurship in Pakistan, Economy of Pakistan: Opportunities and Challenges, Art & Science of Narrative Shaping in the Post-Truth Era, Looking Into the Future-Tech & Society and Strategic Leadership & Statesmanship among others. Business Leaders, parliamentarians, diplomats, advisors to governments, representatives of leading global think tanks, representatives of international media, promising young professionals, military personnel, and representatives from Pakistani missions across the world, among others, participated in the event.

The majority of the participants around the globe had their first visit to Pakistan and they were concerned about a common issue whether Pakistan is safe to travel to or not. The natural beauty, historical sites, and diverse culture make it a welcoming and intriguing travel destination, nevertheless, the country was off-limits for many years due to political unrest and safety concerns which still induce people to think twice about visiting Pakistan. However, such a question can never be addressed with a simple Yes or No format. Authorities from the Army Headquarters of



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Islamabad responded in this regard that Pakistan is not the only country in the world that has some unsecured places, rather almost all countries have such places in the globe. They argued that the rumor had been spread due to the number of enemies and also the case of the September 11 attacks carried out by Al-Qaeda against the United States in 2001.

Nepal and Pakistan have civilizational commonalities, cultural and linguistic similarities, and similar regional dynamics. Additionally, common ecological and climate change has made both countries multifaceted partners. In this respect, I had the pleasure of visiting the Lok Virsa Heritage Museum in Islamabad. The museum attempts to preserve and document folk Cultures in Pakistan. The living style of the different areas of Pakistan is exhibited through statues, pottery, music, and textile work that reminds Nepal to some extent. The large display of embroidered costumes, jewellery, woodwork, metalwork, block printing, and ivory, also reflects the traditional architecture of facades in Nepal. As South Asia is ethnolinguistically diverse, I could relate to some folk culture and traditions as a participant from Nepal. The statue of Buddha drew my attention as Siddhartha Gautama, the Lord Buddha, was born in Nepal in 623 B.C. The vivid illustrations and artefacts provide insights into the history of Pakistan and offer a glimpse into the cultural evolution and milestones. We, participants, also got the opportunity to visit Pakistan Monument, a national monument that is shaped like a petal located on the western Shakarparian Hills in Islamabad. It's a place worth going for panoramic views of the capital.

Visit of Faisal Mosque was yet another fascinating part of the program. Faisal Mosque is the largest mosque in South Asia and the sixth-largest mosque in the world in terms of capacity. The entire structure covers an area of 33 acres (1,400,000 sq ft) and the design features eight-sided shell-shaped sloping roofs that form a triangular worship hall

that accommodates a large number of worshippers at a time. Being a Hindu and a citizen of a secular state, a visit to the mosque was thrilling to me. To some extent, I was also aware of the norms and values of the mosque and had worn Kurtha Salwar with Shawl as women are encouraged to wear modest, loose-fitting long-sleeved and comfortable clothes. However, wearing a head covering in the prayer hall was new to me. As someone in the Mosque provided a few plain scarves to all the ladies, we were super excited to take pictures in front of the mosque.

The language barriers can make the trip tough and challenging, nevertheless, it can be exciting and adventurous at the same time if there are similarities. Visiting Pakistan for me was super fascinating in terms of language as most Nepali people understand Urdu language with the influence of Pakistani movies and serials. To explore the local market, we were taken to particular places and Shopping Centres. I wanted to purchase some Pashmina Shawls and Kashmiri Suits. Nonetheless, it was disclosed during interaction with shopkeepers that these kinds of stuff are exported from Nepal to Pakistan. One of the retailers shared with me that Thamel, Kathmandu is the main hub for these things. It was one of the proudest moments for me in front of my international colleagues that Nepal exports such goods to foreign countries. And, I did some shopping in Centarus Mall, a shopping hub in Islamabad where a lot of National and International brands are available.

One evening, we were taken to Des Pardes Restaurant for an event. It is a top-notch eatery in Islamabad, offering a wide range of dishes. One of the major attractions of the event was to offer live music from Ustad Raees, the best violinist who made the evening alive. As the program came to an end, the organizing team took us to The Monal Restaurant situated at the Margallah Hills for a farewell dinner. It is a perfect blend of traditional and contemporary cuisine. Since our team reached there in the evening, we enjoyed both indoor and outdoor dining with an extensive view of the Capital.

Visiting Islamabad, Pakistan was a new experience for me. Terming Pakistan as a land of ancient civilizations and cultural diversity is a source of pride for its people, and it is a unique blend of various historical, social, and religious factors that made me excited to visit and meet people there. The warm hospitality, professional behavior, and ready-to-help nature of the host institution are highly commendable. Most importantly, the workshop provided a great platform to build a network with people across the globe and their good company. Equally laudable was the assembly of attendees from various backgrounds and creating a forum to learn, share and open discussions on a variety of themes made me understand Pakistan and its role in the world today.

The event served as a convergence of ideas, insights, and perspectives on pertinent issues facing today's global community.



Green Horizons: Strengthening Nepal-Pakistan Friendship through Sustainable Economic Cooperation

In a world grappling with climate change, fostering resilient partnerships becomes crucial. Among these, the bond between Nepal and Pakistan emerges as a beacon of opportunity, particularly in sustainable economic collaboration. As we forge ahead into the 2020s and beyond, exploring innovative pathways for environmental cooperation is paramount.

Contextualizing the Relationship: Despite geographical distances, Nepal and Pakistan share a rich tapestry of cultural exchanges and diplomatic ties. Transitioning into the mid-2020s, leveraging this shared history becomes essential for fostering a new era of collaboration that prioritizes sustainability and mutual growth.

Distinctive Approaches to Sustainable Economic Collaboration:

1. **Renewable Energy Initiatives:** Joint ventures in renewable energy, such as hydropower projects in Nepal and solar energy initiatives in Pakistan, can address energy needs while reducing carbon emissions.
2. **Green Infrastructure Development:** Collaborative efforts in infrastructure development, focusing on eco-friendly solutions like green buildings and sustainable transportation, pave the way for a greener future.
3. **Water Resource Management:** Bilateral agreements on water management and conservation can address common challenges such as water scarcity and flooding, ensuring water security for both nations.

Nem Kr Manandhar, Chairperson of Pakistan Study Centre



Nem Kr Manandhar

4. **Carbon Offset Mechanisms:** Establishing joint carbon offset mechanisms allows both countries to invest in projects that mitigate carbon emissions, fostering environmental sustainability.
5. **Biodiversity Conservation:** Collaborative efforts to preserve biodiversity hotspots and protect endangered species promote environmental conservation and ecotourism opportunities.
6. **Transnational Climate Resilience Initiatives:** Collaborative efforts to enhance climate resilience in vulnerable communities along shared borders strengthen adaptation measures and foster regional stability.
7. **Sustainable Agriculture Practices:** Joint initiatives to promote sustainable agricultural practices, such as organic farming and water-efficient irrigation methods, ensure food security while preserving natural resources.
8. **Cross-border Reforestation Projects:** Nepal invests in reforestation projects to sequester carbon, while Pakistan focuses on renewable energy initiatives,

creating a mutual carbon offset mechanism.

9. **Climate Diplomacy and Policy Coordination:** Alignment of climate policies and diplomatic efforts enhances cooperation on international platforms and strengthens collective action on climate change.

Looking Ahead: As Nepal and Pakistan progress beyond 2025, collaboration should evolve to embrace emerging technologies and global trends. Investments in green technology and climate-resilient infrastructure can pave the way for a sustainable and prosperous future.

The friendship between Nepal and Pakistan holds immense promise for sustainable economic cooperation. By prioritizing environmental sustainability and fostering innovative partnerships, both nations can chart a path towards a greener and more resilient future.

In a world where climate change poses an existential threat, the Nepal-Pakistan friendship stands as a testament to the power of collaboration in addressing shared challenges. As we navigate the complexities of the 21st century, let us seize the opportunity to build a more sustainable and prosperous world together.

As the Executive Managing Director of NB Greentech International, and Chairperson of Pakistan Study Centre (PSC), I am excited about the potential for collaboration between Nepal and Pakistan in sustainable economic ventures. By leveraging our expertise in green technology and infrastructure development, we can play a pivotal role in facilitating innovative solutions that benefit both nations and contribute to global environmental stewardship.

Nepal – Pakistan Relations

Nepal and Pakistan established diplomatic ties on March 20, 1960. The current status of bilateral ties is one of friendliness and mutual benefit. Various factors increased Nepal's strategic importance in Pakistan's calculations. Pakistan was concerned about its internal and domestic difficulties after independence. Political talks between the two countries are largely held at SAARC summits; bilateral trips are uncommon. The most recent visit was on March 5, 2018, when Pakistani Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi paid a bilateral visit to Nepal after a two-decade hiatus. During this visit, Pakistan's Prime Minister also spoke extensively about Nepal and Pakistan's relations. The most recent Foreign Secretary-level Nepal-Pakistan bilateral political consultation took place in Islamabad on February 25, 2020. Mr. Tapas Adhikari has assumed the responsibility of Ambassador of Nepal to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on 7 November 2020.

Along with plans for collaboration in numerous industries, the nations also exchanged opinions on how to commemorate 60 years of diplomatic relations with various programs. In 1962, the countries struck a trade deal. In 1983, the Nepal-Pakistan Joint Economic Commission was formed to improve commercial and economic cooperation between the two nations. There is a lot of room to improve trade and commerce partnerships. Pakistan has made significant investments in Nepal's textile, hotel, and banking industries through joint ventures. In 1996, the Federation of Nepalese

Sharad K. Shrestha, Former Joint Secretary (Technical) Government of Nepal (GON)



Sharad K. Shrestha

Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry formed a joint business council. In 2009, a tourism cooperation agreement was struck. In both countries, information is shared and tourism is pushed. Inter-university collaboration is also being used to improve cultural linkages between the two countries. Both countries support SAFTA and the South Asian Economic Union.

The two countries' total trade volume is estimated to be around US\$ 4.8 million. Pakistan exports \$1.631 million worth of commodities to Nepal, whereas Nepal exports \$3.166 million worth of goods to Pakistan. Pakistan also provides financial aid to Nepalese students seeking higher study at Pakistani institutions. Both countries' economic collaboration is extensive, including a wide range of industries. Both countries have begun to deepen military ties in recent years, with Nepal acquiring guns from Pakistan. However, Cementing Pakistan-Nepal's ties have immense potential for both parties.

The newly-appointed Ambassador of Pakistan to Nepal, Abrar H Hashmi,

has said that he will make efforts to revive all existing bilateral mechanisms between Nepal and Pakistan in order to strengthen the friendly relations that exist between the two South Asian nations. Speaking to a group of journalists at his office on the eve of Pakistan's Independence Day in Kathmandu, Ambassador Hashmi expressed his commitment to reviving a political mechanism that is already in place between Nepal and Pakistan. He also mentioned that other mechanisms put in place since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1960 will be activated in due course for the benefit of both countries and their peoples.

Ambassador Hashmi also emphasized the importance of high-level political exchanges between the two countries. In this context, National Assembly Chairman Ganesh Prasad Timilsina is scheduled to visit Pakistan at the invitation of his Pakistani counterpart within the next few months. He also highlighted areas of cooperation that Nepal and Pakistan can both benefit from. Trade of high-value products such as tea and cardamom, tourism, educational and technical collaboration, IT-enabled services, and the Hindu-Buddhist heritage are some of the areas where Nepal and Pakistan can enhance their relations. He also mentioned that sports, culture, and handicrafts are other areas that can be explored to enhance bilateral relations between the two countries. Ambassador Hashmi pointed out that Nepal and Pakistan share the same concerns and challenges posed by climate change, as they are disproportionately impacted by its effects. Nepal and Pakistan should collaborate at the regional

and multilateral levels in this climate change issues. He mentioned that both Nepal and Pakistan are interested in starting a direct air service between the two countries, and initiatives are being undertaken towards that goal.

Likewise, the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry have established FNCCI-FPCCI Joint Business Council. Its meetings provide opportunities for the business communities of the two countries to meet and discuss business opportunities in each other's countries. Pakistan, under the Pakistan Technical Assistance Programme (PTAP), provides annually scholarships to Nepal in Medicine, Pharmacy and Engineering. There are 500 Nepali students undertaking higher studies in the field of medical science, engineering, pharmacy, information technology, social science,

management, and mass communication in Pakistan. Pakistan provides long and short term training's to the government officials of Nepal.

Pakistan has been providing 15 scholarships annually to Nepalese students under Pakistan Technical Assistance Programme in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and engineering. Besides, some Nepalese students have been studying in the areas of humanities and business administration on self-finance basis. Pakistan has also provided short-term and long-term trainings to Nepal Army officers. After the devastating earthquake of April 2015, the Government of Pakistan sent immediate assistance to Nepal. It dispatched rescue and relief teams, food, water, tents and other relief material. Pakistan took part in the International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction and pledged support to Nepal.

Thus at political level, Nepal and Pakistan as two south Asian nations have remained good friends over the decades. Pakistan has extended its support for the democratic process in Nepal, after the successful People's Movement-II. Pakistan welcomed the restoration of Nepal's parliament following the popular movement and hoped that the breakthrough would usher in an era of durable peace and prosperity in Nepal. Pakistan has been reiterating its support for Nepal's sovereignty, territorial integrity and peaceful development. The relationships between Nepal & Pakistan need to be further strengthened in days to come through economic diplomacy. The present government should also pay due focus in this regard through the active roles of diplomatic missions at these two nations & shaping the diplomacy accordingly.

*Source: Magazines/Articles/
Newspapers*

Best Wishes for Nepal - Pakistan Friendship



Mr. Mohan Bir Thapa
President



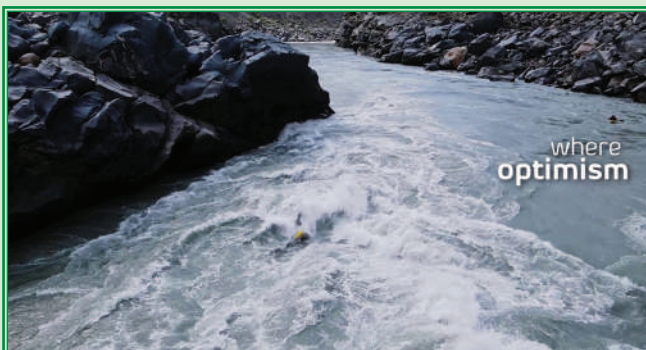
Nepal World Tourism Journalist Society

Baluwatar-4, Kathmandu, Nepal

P.O.Box : 3257, Tel. : 4512006, 4526068, 5263767, Email : tmohanbir@gmail.com



Colours of Pakistan





Colours of Pakistan



to this
gracious



and
vast land



of
wonder



history



and
beauty



where diverse
landscapes



illustrate rich
cultures



and
are
visitors
enchanted



by the
seamless
mix



of
tradition



Colours of Pakistan



and
modernity



a call to
adventure



where your
becomes the
mind
traveller



and your
heart
becomes its
guide



let your
heart



skip a
beat



only to be
enveloped



in the
joyful pulse



of a festive
reunion



In timeless
palaces



Colours of Pakistan



of
abundance



and
gratitude



where **Art** reigns
supreme



an
ancient wisdom
permeates the earth



and infuses the **senses**
with each
joyful breath



In the
reflected calm



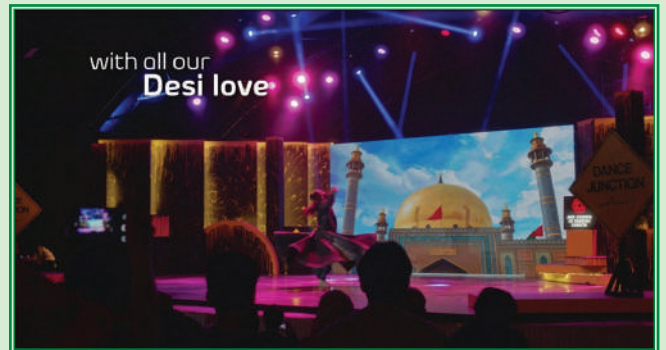
of its
serene waters



and
mosaic shrines



you **feel**
a familiar sense of
belonging



with all our
Desi love

Events/Pictorial News

Meeting of Ambassador of Pakistan to Nepal Abrar H. Hashmi with DPM & Home Minister

On 27 March 2024, Pakistani Ambassador to Nepal Abrar H Hashmi has met DPM and Home Minister Ravi Lamichhane at his office and a discussed bilateral relations including need for enhancing structural engagement b/w Nepal and Pakistan.



84th National Day of Pakistan

On the auspicious occasion of **84th National Day of Pakistan**, a Flag Hoisting Ceremony was held at the Embassy of Pakistan, Kathmandu on 23 March 2024. Ambassador H.E. Abrar H Hashmi hoisted the National Flag. Messages from the President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister were read out on the occasion. In his remarks, Ambassador H.E. Abrar H Hashmi greeted the guests and highlighted key aspects of close Pakistan-Nepal relationship and endeavours being made by the Mission for further strengthening this bond. Pakistani Community in Nepal, friends of Pakistan and officials of the Embassy and their families attended the ceremony.



Meeting of Ambassador of Pakistan with Chamber of Commerce & Chair of Expo Committee

Mr. Abrar H Hashmi, Ambassador received a team led by Mr. Puspa Ratna Shakya, President, Lalitpur Chamber of Commerce & Chair of Expo Committee regarding Lalitpur international trade Expo-2024 at the Chancery on 21 March 2024. The focus of the meeting was forthcoming 6th Lalitpur expo and participation from Pakistan.



Nepal International Film Festival

On 19 March 2024, Ambassador Abrar H. Hashmi joined Hon. Hit Bahadur Tamang, Minister for Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation, Mr KP Pathak, Chairman and others at the closing ceremony of Nepal International Film Festival. Ambassador congratulated & gave away award to the best adjudged International film.



Meeting of Ambassador of Pakistan with DPM & Minister For Foreign Affairs

The Ambassador of Pakistan to Nepal H.E. Mr. Abrar H Hashmi called upon the Honourable Mr. Narayan Kaji Shrestha, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nepal at his office on 14 March 2024. The Ambassador also conveyed felicitations on behalf of Foreign Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Ishaq Dar and the people of Pakistan to Honourable DPM/FM.



Opening Ceremony of Nepal-Pakistan Friendship T20 Cricket Tournament

9th Edition of Nepal-Pakistan Friendship T20 Cricket Tournament-2024 was jointly inaugurated by Ambassador of Pakistan, H.E Abrar H Hashmi, Mr. Binaya Raj Pandey, former President of Cricket Association of Nepal (CAN) and Mr. Ujjal Raj Bhandary, Deputy CEO of Himalayan Bank Limited on 2 March 2024.



Closing / Prize Distribution Ceremony of Nepal-Pakistan Friendship T20 Cricket Tournament

On 10 March 2024, the Closing / Prize Distribution Ceremony of “9th Edition of Nepal-Pakistan Friendship T20 Cricket Tournament-2024” was held in the Pakistan Embassy ground. The event commenced on 2nd March 2024 and 12 into teams of various clubs participated in the tournament. Honourable Mr. Shiva Koirala (Jwala), Vice President, National Sports Council, Nepal graced the occasion as Chief Guest, and awarded the trophy to the winning team of Cricket Excellence Centre (CEC) Kathmandu. Whereas Lee Cricket Club (LCC) won the runners-up trophy.



Embassy of Pakistan Hands over Newly Built Bharatpur Eye Hospital Building, Ambulance

On 1 March 2024, Ambassador of Pakistan to Nepal H.E. Mr. Abrar H Hashmi joined Prime Minister of Nepal Rt. Hon. Pushpa Kamal Dahal to inaugurate four modular Operation Theatres at Bharatpur Eye Hospital in Chitwan District. Mr. Jay Ram Shrestha, Chairman, Bharatpur Eye Hospital Board of Governors welcomed the guests. The block is named as 'Ghulam Ishaq Khan Operation Theatres' and it a gift from people of Pakistan to people of Nepal. Rt. Hon. Pushpa Kamal Dahal, while addressing the audience, expressed gratitude to government and people of Pakistan for assistance to Nepal in healthcare sector. He also handed over a memento of appreciation to Pakistani Ambassador. Ambassador Hashmi also handed over keys of an eye outreach van to Hospital.



Buddhist Heritage in Pakistan

Youth Buddhist Association and Pakistan Embassy organized an event "Buddhist Heritage in Pakistan" at Buddhist Relief Center Bhawan Hall on 10 February 2024. Mr. Abrar H Hashmi, while addressing the audience, thanked YMBA for honouring him to the event. He said that Buddhist Heritage Sites in Pakistan are pivotal in bridging people to people contact of Nepal and Pakistan.



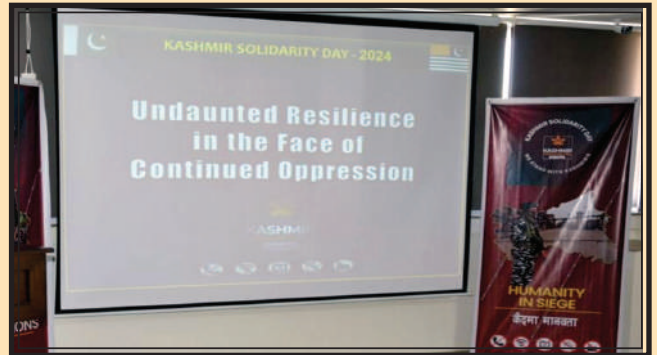
Buddha International Day

On 23 February 2024, Buddha International School, Kathmandu organized an event to celebrate Buddha International Day. Embassy of Pakistan sponsored a stall exhibiting Pakistani culture and history.



Talk Program on Kashmir Solidarity Day

On 5 February 2024, Pakistan Embassy organized a Talk Programme on “Kashmir Solidarity Day: “Undaunted Resilience in the Face of Continued Oppression”. The event was attended by journalists, writers and analysts as well as human rights activists. Messages of the President, Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister of Pakistan were read out. Ambassador Abrar H Hashmi emphasized the role and response of international community in view of numerous UNSC resolutions promising to the people of Jammu and Kashmir about their right to self-determination.



PAKISTAN EMBASSY – SPONSOR FWEAN

On the occasion of 7th International Women’s Trade Expo-2024, H.E. Ambassador Mr. Abrar H Hashmi hands over the cheque of sponsoring to FWEAN chapter - Rasuwa District.



Ambassador of Pakistan met with the Team of FWEAN

Pakistani Ambassador to Nepal, Mr. Abrar H Hashmi has met with the team of Federation of Women Entrepreneurs Associations of Nepal. On 1 February 2024, Ambassador Hashmi had a meeting with the team of the Federation at the Pakistani Embassy. During the meeting, both sides resolved to work together in the annual expo to be held in April. The president of the Federation, Shobha Gyawali, said that there were discussions regarding international entrepreneurship and fundraising, and important progress could be achieved for the improvement of entrepreneurship.



Ambassador of Pakistan Visited Bharatpur Eye Hospital

On 28 January 2024, Pakistani Ambassador to Nepal, Mr. Abrar H Hashmi visited Bharatpur Eye Hospital in Chitwan. H.E. Mr. Abrar H Hashmi was given a warm welcome by Bharatpur Eye Hospital. The Pakistani embassy has been supporting the hospital every year since its inception with financial support and equipment.



Ambassador of Pakistan Hashmi and Sri Lanka Ambassador Pathirana Discuss Bilateral Issues

Pakistani Ambassador to Nepal Abrar H Hashmi met with Air Chief Marshal SK Pathirana (Retd), Ambassador of Sri Lanka to Nepal on 24 January 2024. The two ambassadors discussed furthering excellent bilateral relations, coordinate 3-way relations, among other issues. They also discussed various issues surrounding SAARC, according to the Embassy of Pakistan in Kathmandu.



40th Anniversary Celebrations - ICIMOD

On 11 December 2023, Pakistan Embassy congratulated ICIMOD for its 40th Anniversary Celebrations. Mr. Umair Ali, Charge d'Affaires, Embassy of Pakistan participated at the event. Rt. Hon. Mr. Ramchandra Paudel, President of Nepal was the Chief Guest at the event.



Nepal International Trade Fair - 2023

9th Nepal International Trade Fair was inaugurated on 30 Nov 2023 in Kathmandu. Over 200 Stalls from various countries including 8 Pakistani Stalls exhibited handicrafts, jewelry, garments etc. Mr. Umair Ali, Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Pakistan was present on the occasion.



Talk Programme on Kashmir Black Day

On 30 October 2023, Pakistan Embassy organized a talk programme on “Consequences of Illegal Occupation” to commemorate the Kashmir Black Day.



Gandhara: Unwinding A History Treasure Trove; Exploring Pakistan-Nepal Buddhist Linkages

On 24 September 2023, Embassy of Pakistan, Kathmandu organized a symposium titled “**Gandhara: Unwinding a History Treasure Trove**” to showcase rich Buddhist heritage of Pakistan and historical linkages with Nepal. Mr. Dhananjay Regmi, CEO, Nepal Tourism Board graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. Other guests present at the event included intellectuals, Buddhist monks & scholars, tour operators and representatives of Nepal Tourism Board.



Chairman, Senate Defence Committee Paid a Courtesy Visit - Nepal

Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman, Senate Defence Committee paid a courtesy visit to the Embassy of Pakistan in Kathmandu on 13 October 2023 and held discussions with the officers on the important bilateral matters between Pakistan and Nepal



Pakistan Football Team Participate In SAFF U-19 Championship - 2023

Charge d' Affaires Mr. Umair Ali attended in the opening ceremony and match of Pakistan and Nepal held on 21 September 2023 under SAFF U-19 Championship 2023 on the invitation of Chairman ANFA.



Pakistan-Nepal Friendship Festival

On 23 August 2023, Centre for Asian Studies, Nepal & Mahakali Dance Council organized "**Pakistan-Nepal Friendship Festival**" in Bhaktapur with the collaboration of Embassy of Pakistan. The event which was held from 23-26 August 2023 involved more than 700 students from 30 schools who competed in essay writing, handwriting, painting competition, and cultural dances.



76th Independence Day Anniversary of Pakistan

On 10 August 2023, the Embassy in collaboration with Nepal-Pakistan Friendship and Cultural Association (NPFCA) organized a reception to celebrate **76th Independence Day Anniversary of Pakistan** at Hotel Yak & Yeti, Kathmandu. Rt. Honourable Vice President of Nepal Dr. Ram Sahay Prasad Yadav was the Chief Guest at event. Other special guests included politicians, members of civil society, businessmen, government officials, intellectuals, journalists, diplomats, and Pakistani community in Nepal attended the event.



TALK PROGRAM ON YOUM-E-ISTEHSAL

The Embassy of Pakistan organized a Seminar on “Kashmiris’ Youm-e-Istehsal” on 5 August 2023, which was attended by distinguished analysts, media persons, Pakistani diaspora and representatives of civil society. Ambassador Abrar H. Hashmi in his remarks highlighted important developments and global reactions to India’s illegal action of 5 August 2019 and intensification of HR violations in disputed territory. The participants in their remarks also urged for an early resolution of the core dispute in South Asia.





CULTURE

Pakistan has rich and unique culture that has preserved established traditions throughout history.



PUNJAB



SINDH



BALUCHISTAN



KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA



AZAD KASHMIR



GILGIT BALTISTAN



Facts About Pakistan

Official Name:	Islamic Republic of Pakistan
Father of the Nation:	Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948)
National Poet:	Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938)
Head of the State:	Asif Ali Zardari, President
Head of Government:	Mian Muhammed Shehbaz Sharif, Prime Minister
Administrative Division:	4 Provinces (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh & Balochistan) and Gilgit Baltistan & Azad Kashmir
Flora:	Pine, Oak, Poplar, Deodar, Maple, Mulberry
Popular Games:	Cricket, Hockey, Football, Squash
Tourist's Resorts:	Murree, Quetta, Hunza, Ziarat, Swat, Kaghan, Chitral and Gilgit-Baltistan
Archaeological Sites:	Moenjo Daro, Harappa, Taxila, Kot Diji, Mehr Garh, Takht Bhai
Major Cities :	Islamabad, Karachi, Rawalpindi, Hyderabad, Faisalabad, Multan, Sialkot, Lahore, Peshawar
Seaports of Pakistan:	Gwadar Port, Gwadar (Balochistan) Karachi Port, and Port Muhammad Bin Qasim, Karachi (Sindh)
Famous Mountain Peaks:	

		World Rating
K-2	8611 m	2 nd
Nanga Parbat	8125 m	8 th
Gasherbrum-I	8068 m	11 th
Gasherbrum-II	8047 m	14 th
Gasherbrum-III	7952 m	15 th

HBL

रिकरिङ्ग
खाता



एक, एक गरी पुरा हुनेछ, हरेक बचतको एकमुष्ठ सपना

उच्च प्रतिफल सहितको हिमालयन बैंकको ३ वर्षे “रिकरिङ्ग खाता”

विशेषताहरू:

- न्यूनतम मौज्दात: रु. १,०००/- मात्र
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- अवधि सकिनु भन्दा अगाडी रकमको आवश्यकता परेमा जम्मा भएको रकमको न्यूनतम ९०% सम्म कर्जा सुविधा पाइने
- रु. ५ लाख सम्मको निक्षेप सुरक्षण

*शर्तहरू लागू हुनेछन्।

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