

GLAM

July, 2025

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KINZA HASHMI

Tapping Emotional Depth

Megan Oldhues

Bringing Walls to Life

Faakhir Mehmood

Music Embedded in the Soul

Zafar Masood

A Journey of Survival, Leadership & Purpose in Life

Hundan

Touching the Core of Humanity

Ilyas M. Zeeshan

A Roadmap to Pakistan's Economic Revival



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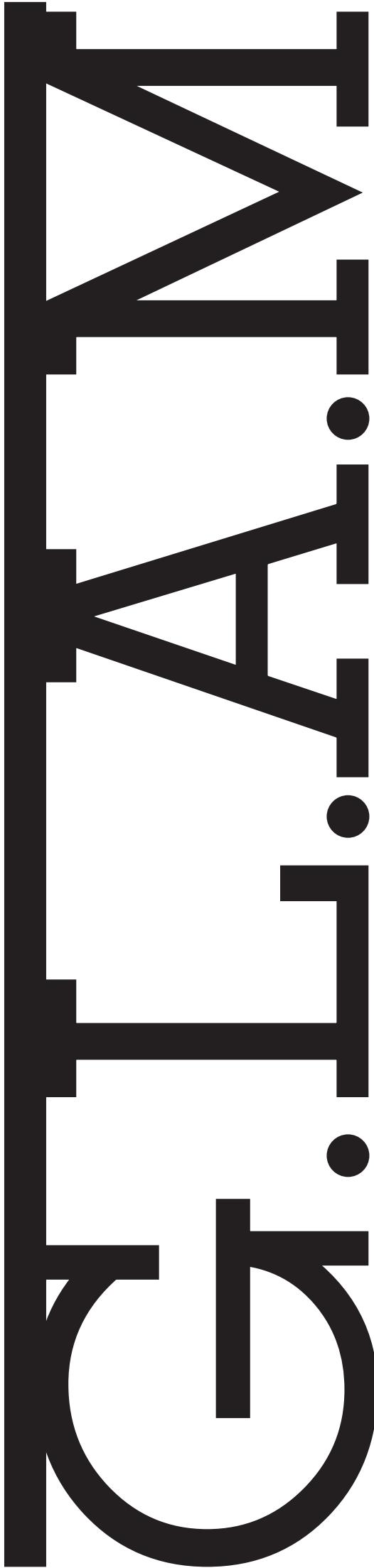
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“Success is not final,
failure is not fatal:
it is the courage to
continue that counts.”

Winston Churchill





Editor-in-Chief

Duraid Qureshi

Editor

Khursheed Hyder

Editorial Assistant

Ayman Munaf

In-house Photographers

Ali Baig

Yawar Naqvi

Feature Contributors

Ariba Fahaam Khan

Shanaz Ramzi

Ayman Munaf

Designed & Printed by:

Ayaan Printers

For Subscription, contact:

Talal Owais

talal.owais@hum.tv

UAN: 021-111-486-111

For Advertising, contact:

Talal Owais

talal.owais@hum.tv

0300-8989447

Visit our website at:

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The sacred month of Muharram marks the start of the Islamic New Year—we are reminded of one of history's most profound moments of courage and sacrifice. The resolution of Hazrat Hussain (AS) and his companions at Karbala represents a timeless legacy of standing up against oppression, even in the face of overwhelming odds. It is a universal reminder of the strength found in truth, patience and unwavering moral conviction.

The weather across Pakistan has created havoc in certain areas, specially KPK, Punjab and Balochistan, while rains in Karachi and areas in Sindh have been mild, breaking the summer heat somewhat. The downside of the rain creates a different picture on the infrastructure, broken roads, standing water, garbage and sewage outflow making life miserable for the inhabitants. The apathy of the concerned departments cannot be overlooked, bordering on crime to an extent.

On the global stage, the recent flare-up between Iran and Israel was alarming, although a fragile ceasefire seems to have paused immediate hostilities. The wounds, especially in Gaza and across Palestinian territories, where hundreds of thousands have suffered physically and emotionally are deep and lasting. We pray for global healing, peace, and justice where it is essentially needed.

The demise of iconic journalist Zubeida Mustafa, the former Asst. Editor of Dawn, was a sad day for the media. A brilliant woman specializing in education, she was upright, intelligent and above prejudice and bias. She was truly a woman of substance.

President Hum Network Sultana Siddiqui, will be conferred with an honorary doctorate in August at Buckinghamshire New University, England in lieu of her outstanding work in media. She will also be honoured by Habib University with a scholarship in her name for her achievements 'Sultana Siddiqui Distinguished Scholarships'. And Hum Network always on the go, has signed an MOU with Nestlé NIDO to launch the "Nestlé NIDO HUM Spelling Whizz 2025" competition—a journey to nurture language, confidence and literacy among young learners in Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. This initiative reflects HUM's commitment to education and the empowerment of future generations.

Independence Day, the most important one in the history of Pakistan will be celebrated on 14th August. May we see a prosperous and just nation through the years. This can be achieved only with good governance, an educated society and observance of rules which we need to work on for a better tomorrow.

Happy Reading!

K. Hyder



RAMP ACT

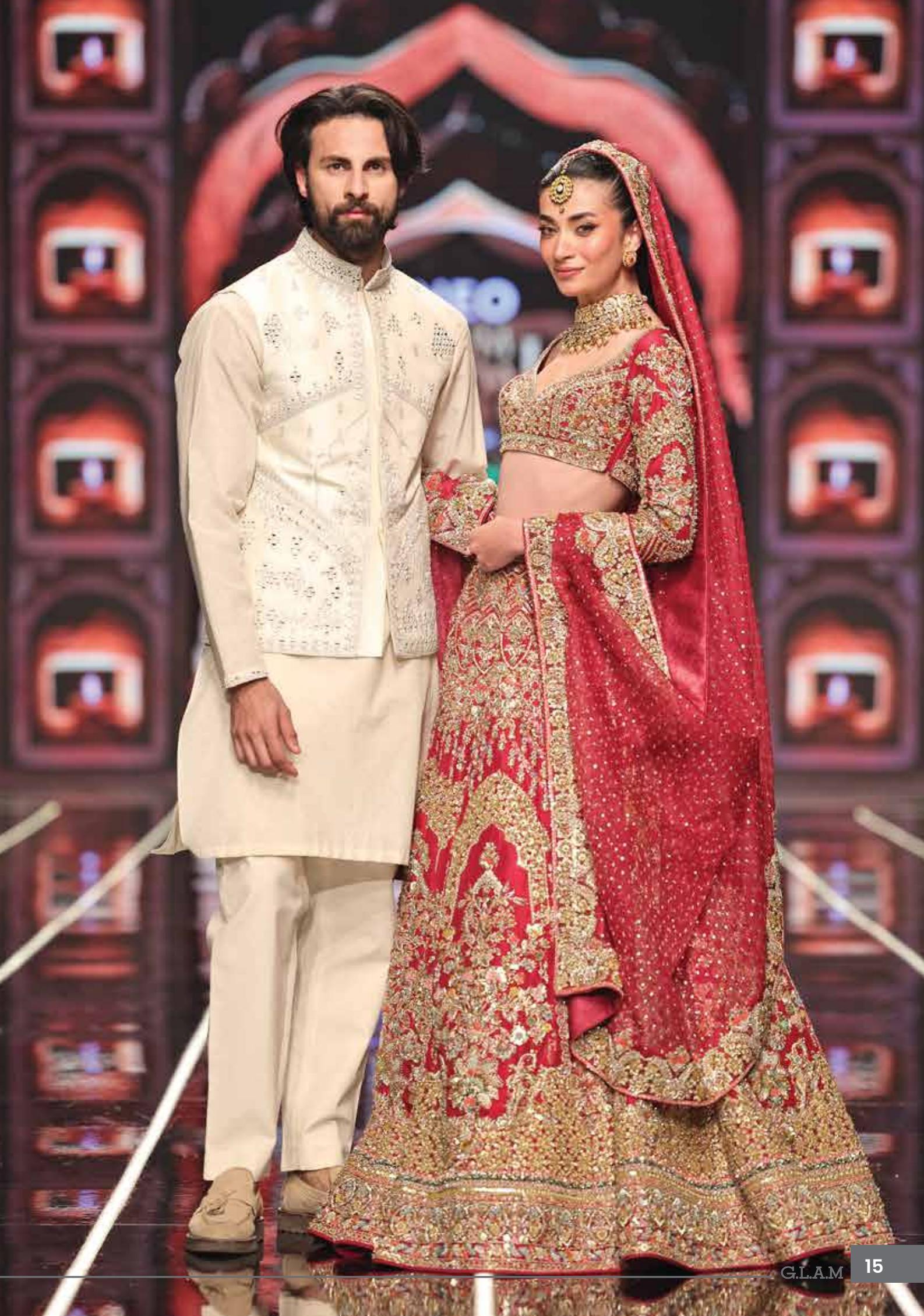






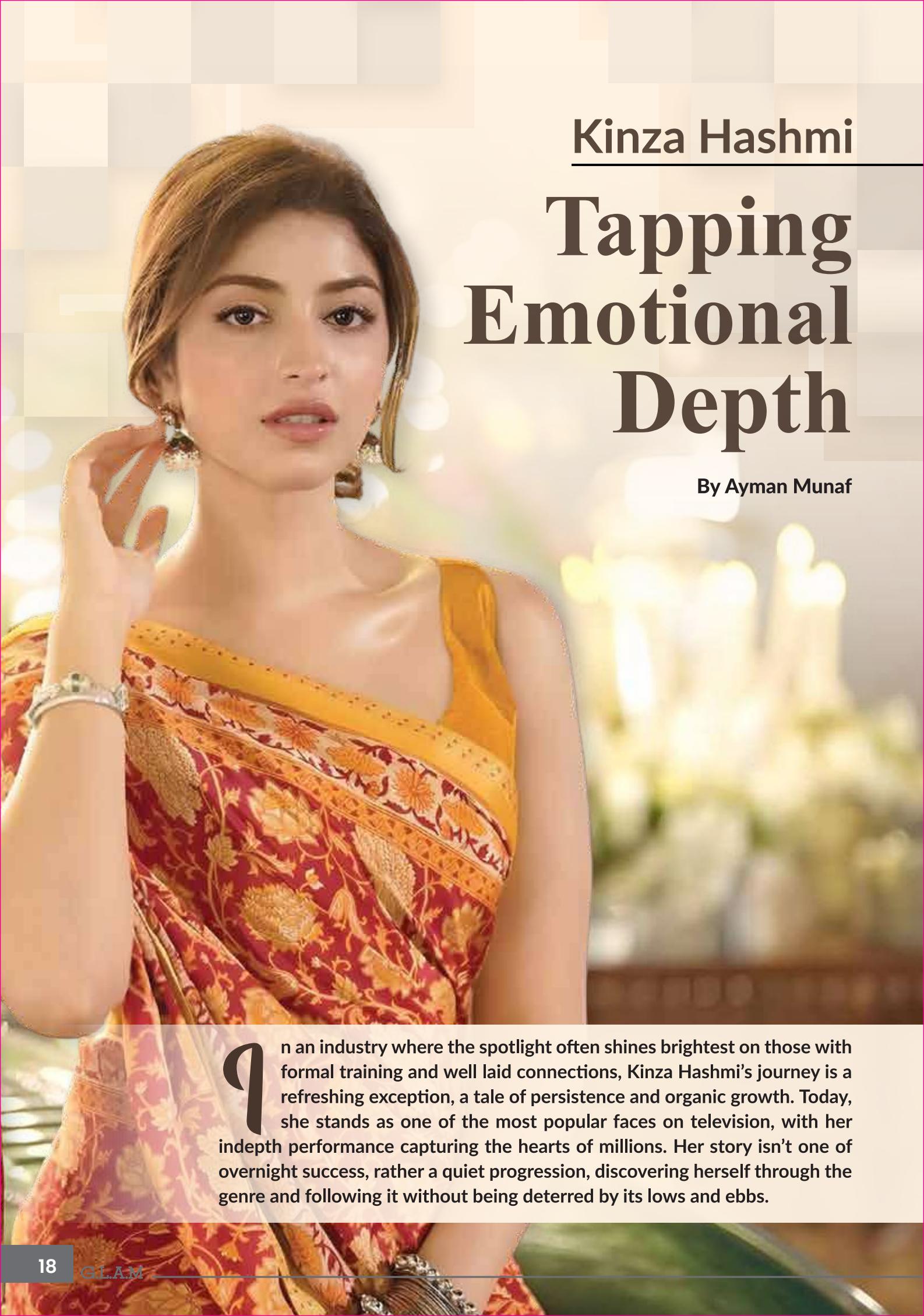










A close-up photograph of Kinza Hashmi. She is wearing a traditional Indian outfit, specifically a saree, with a yellow blouse and a red and gold patterned saree. She has her hair styled in an updo and is wearing large, ornate silver earrings. She is looking directly at the camera with a soft expression. The background is blurred, showing some greenery and what might be a city skyline at dusk.

Kinza Hashmi

Tapping Emotional Depth

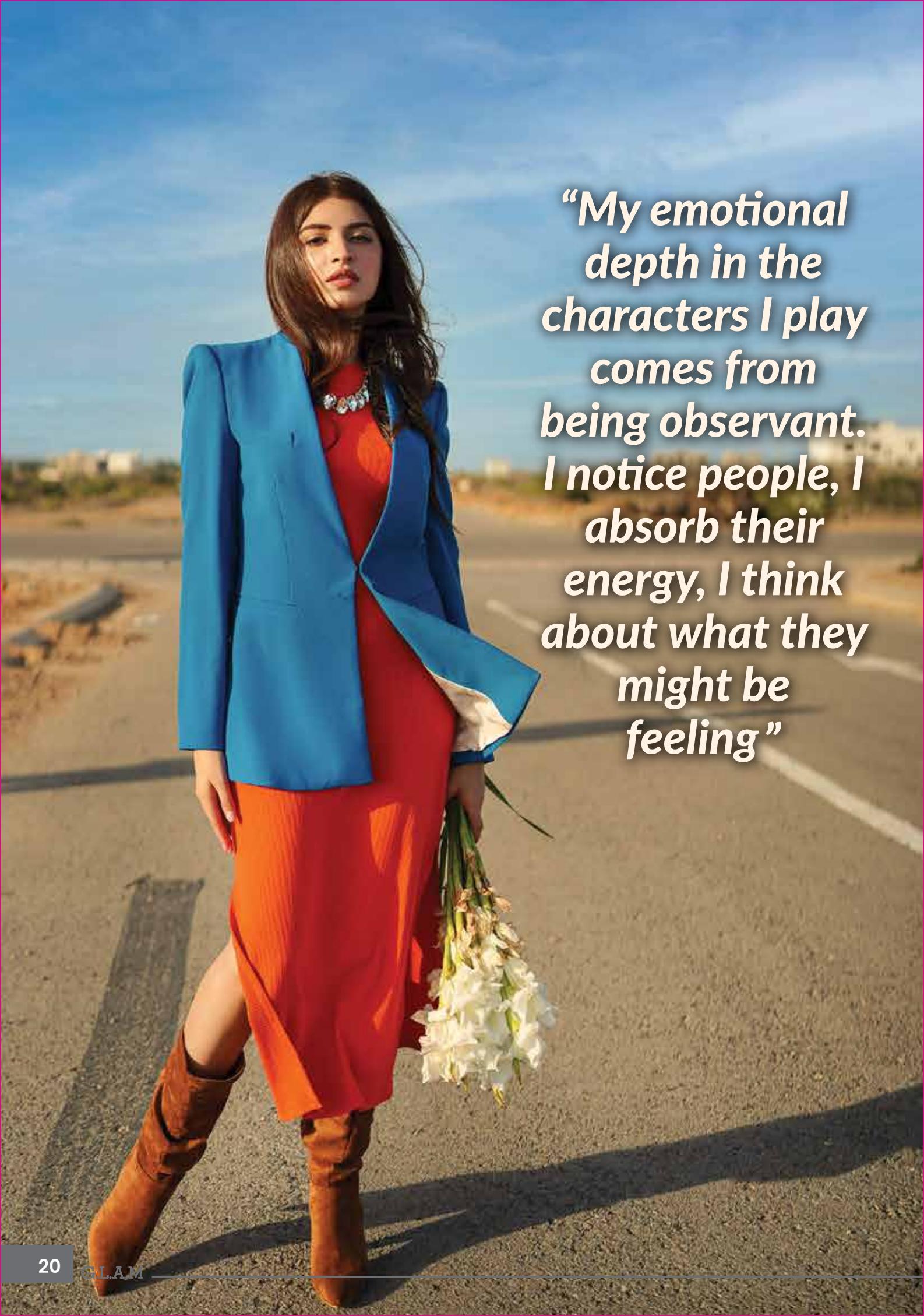
By Ayman Munaf

Kn an industry where the spotlight often shines brightest on those with formal training and well laid connections, Kinza Hashmi's journey is a refreshing exception, a tale of persistence and organic growth. Today, she stands as one of the most popular faces on television, with her in-depth performance capturing the hearts of millions. Her story isn't one of overnight success, rather a quiet progression, discovering herself through the genre and following it without being deterred by its lows and ebbs.

"I never studied acting at a formal institution," Kinza says with honesty. "I learnt on the job. I've been lucky to work with very talented and senior actors who not only inspired me but also guided me along the way." For Kinza, acting wasn't a calculated career move; it was something that emerged from within, a spark that refused to dim. "Acting is a natural instinct," she says. "If that spark lives in you, it can be refined, sharpened and transformed into something beautiful. And I'm still learning. Every new project teaches me something different. It's a never-ending process."

Like many young girls Kinza had dreams, but seeing herself on television at that time wasn't something she had imagined would happen. "When we're children we dream of doing so many things. But I started taking the idea seriously when my teachers and classmates encouraged me. They told me I had a voice that should be heard, because I could sing as well." That early encouragement lit a fire in her, one that her family nurtured from the beginning. But in the end it was acting that took precedence over singing. While many aspiring artists face resistance at home, Kinza's story was different. "I was lucky to always have support from home, especially from my mother. She's been my biggest cheerleader from the very beginning. When I decided to pursue acting seriously, she stood by me without any hesitation."



A full-page photograph of a woman with long brown hair, looking directly at the camera. She is wearing a bright red, knee-length dress with a subtle texture and a blue blazer over it. She is also wearing brown, knee-high boots. She is holding a large bouquet of white flowers in her left hand. The background is a bright, sunny day with a clear blue sky and a road stretching into the distance.

“My emotional depth in the characters I play comes from being observant. I notice people, I absorb their energy, I think about what they might be feeling”

And then came the breakthrough, a moment every actor remembers well. "My real break came when I was cast in *Ishq Tamasha*," she reveals. "That drama changed everything for me. People started recognizing me, appreciating my work. It opened doors to new opportunities and allowed me to grow as an actor." *Ishq Tamasha* which was aired on HUM TV, became a turning point in her career, not just because of its success, but because it allowed Kinza to show the depth of her talent. From there, as the saying goes, she never looked back.

Kinza's path into the entertainment industry had its initial hiccups. "The early days were definitely challenging," she reflects. "There's so much to figure out when you're starting out, how the industry works, how to carry yourself, how to improve your performance. A lot of it, I had to learn on my own. But again, I was lucky to meet the right people at the right time."

Her breakthrough didn't suddenly happen, it came slowly. One project led to another, and soon people began to notice the girl with the expressive eyes, fresh looks and the emotional depth that seemed to come naturally on screen. "I didn't have a mentor in the traditional sense, but I watched and learned. And slowly, things started falling into place."

Today, Kinza Hashmi isn't just a face on screen, she's a voice, a presence. There's something quietly magnetic about her performances. Whether she's portraying a conflicted daughter, a misunderstood lover, or a woman finding her strength, there's always a thread of authenticity that connects her to the audience. So, where does this emotional depth come from? "I think it comes from being observant," she reflects. "I notice people, I absorb their energy, I think about what they might be feeling. And then I try to bring that into my characters. Every story has truth in it, even fiction reflects real human emotion."





With success comes attention and the pressure to maintain a certain image. But Kinza seems to navigate that space with humility. She's present on social media, but not overly curated. She dresses with style but without pretension. And most of all, she talks with the sincerity of someone who hasn't let fame harden her. "Fame is part of the job, but it's not the reason I do it. I act because I love it. And as long as that love remains, I'll keep going," she emphasises.

Off the camera, Kinza is soft-spoken and introspective. She values her quiet moments, cherishes her inner circle and doesn't chase trends for the sake of relevance. "It's easy to

lose yourself in this industry," she admits. "But I try to remain connected to, who I was before all of this." When asked about the kind of characters she's drawn to her response is immediate: "I love roles that portray characters who are complicated, who struggle and who evolve." And it is this very love for layered storytelling that makes her performances memorable. She's not afraid to show vulnerability on screen, letting silence speak when its needed, or making her characters uncomfortable if that's what the story requires. Whether she's playing a romantic lead or a complex character wrestling with inner conflict, she brings a sincerity that feels refreshingly





unforced. In dramas like *Gul-o-Gulzar*, she portrayed the quiet strength of a girl betrayed by her closest friend with remarkable poise, while in *Mohlat*, she convincingly embodied the vulnerability of a woman navigating a loveless marriage. In *Dil Awaiz*, Kinza embraced emotional depth playing a character caught between familial duty and personal longing, while in *Tera Yahan Koi Nahin*, she delivered a layered performance that earned her wide appreciation.

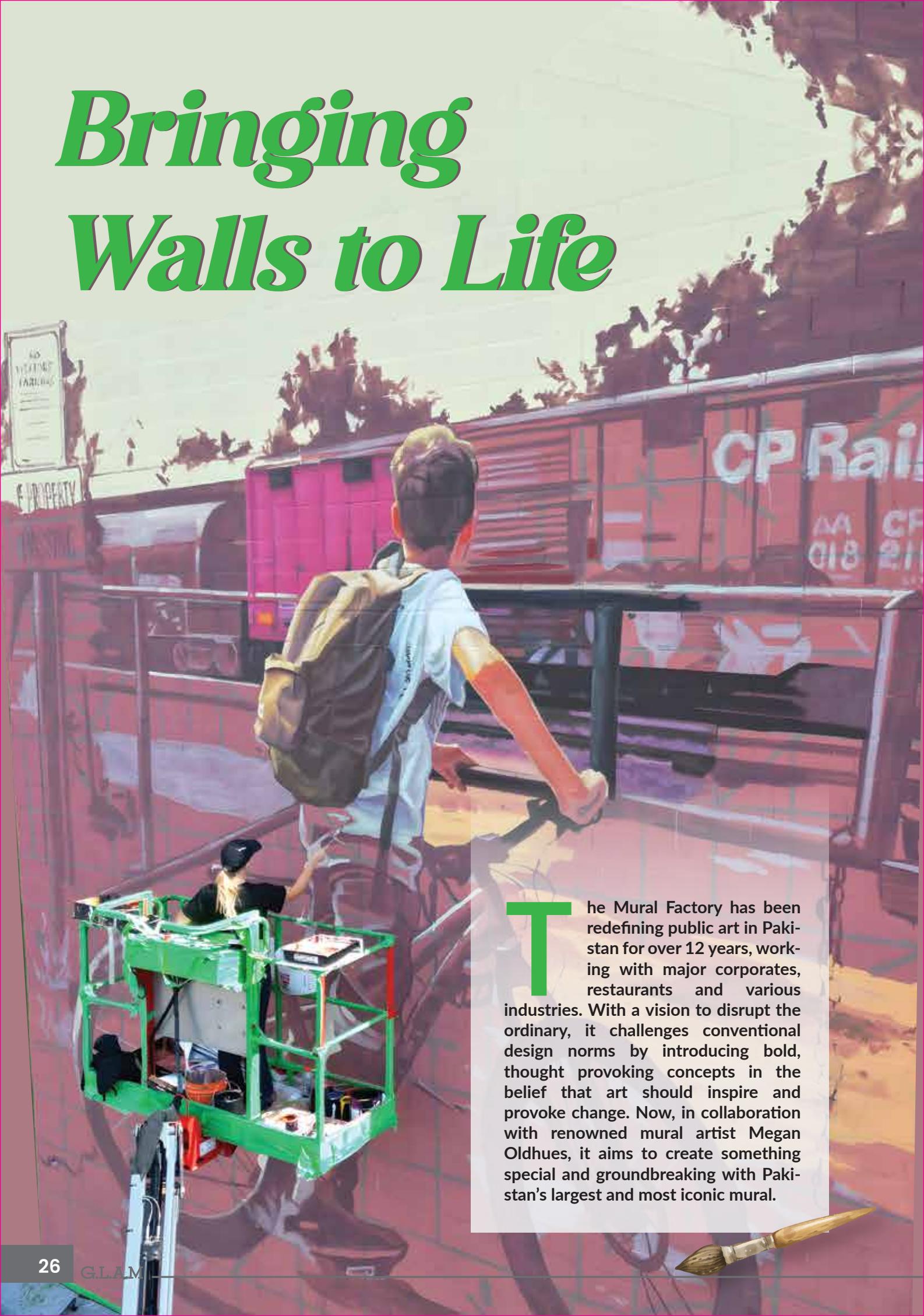
But Kinza doesn't rest on her laurels. She views each project as a new challenge, each role as a chance to expand her artistic range, and it is this dedication to growth that keeps her evolving as one of television's most versatile and promising actresses. "I want to take risks," she says with a quiet confidence. "I don't want to be typecast. There's so much I haven't done yet and I'm excited to explore all that is required to make my characters come to life."

Given Kinza's association with one of the biggest networks in the country, it's only natural to ask how she feels about HUM TV, a platform that has supported and elevated many actors' careers. "HUM TV has been like a home to me," Kinza says with genuine affection. "They believed in me when I was still finding my feet. I've done some of my most important serials with them, and I'll always be grateful for their faith in me." Her bond with HUM is more personal than professional. There's mutual respect and a shared passion for quality storytelling.

Her fans, no doubt, are excited to see what she does next. But Kinza Hashmi isn't in a rush. She's walking her path with patience, purpose and the same quiet determination that brought her from schoolgirl dreams to national stardom. And if her journey is any indication, the best is yet to come.



Bringing Walls to Life



The Mural Factory has been redefining public art in Pakistan for over 12 years, working with major corporates, restaurants and various industries. With a vision to disrupt the ordinary, it challenges conventional design norms by introducing bold, thought provoking concepts in the belief that art should inspire and provoke change. Now, in collaboration with renowned mural artist Megan Oldhues, it aims to create something special and groundbreaking with Pakistan's largest and most iconic mural.

Megan Oldhues has transformed blank spaces into breathtaking works of art with a unique approach that blends passion, experience, and an unshakable creative spirit. Unlike many artists who follow a structured path, Megan's journey into mural painting was purely organic. "As a child, painting was my escape, weekends spent outside, brush in hand, turning ordinary surfaces into colourful expressions of imagination. What started as simple enjoyment eventually became a calling, leading to shape cityscapes around the world."

Q: What inspired you to start mural painting, and how did your journey begin?

You know, it wasn't a conscious decision it just happened naturally. Painting was always an escape for me as a child. I'd take my paints to a bridge on the weekends and just spend hours outside. It wasn't about becoming a mural artist; I was simply having fun. But over time, that passion grew, and the path unfolded on its own.

Q: Did you formally study mural painting, or was it a skill you developed through experience?

I dropped out of school twice. The first time, I was studying interactive design basically coding, which I was terrible at. The second time, I tried illustration, but again, school just wasn't for me. Everything I learned about mural painting came from experience, trial, and error.

Q: Large-scale murals require incredible accuracy. What techniques or tools help you maintain precision?

The only thing that really needs to be accurate is the initial sketch. I use a grid system, much like when sketching on paper, only bigger. But the great thing about painting large is that it doesn't have to be perfectly detailed. Up close, my murals can look chaotic, almost like an Impressionist painting. But when you step back, everything comes together, it's all about the bigger picture.

Q: Painting massive murals, sometimes on high buildings, comes with risks. How do you ensure safety while working?

Proper training and equipment usage are key. There have been muralists who lost their lives due to accidents on swing stages those platforms you see hanging from tall buildings. It's a real risk. But when I'm painting, I'm more focused on whether the art looks good rather than worrying about falling!

Q: What types of paints and materials do you prefer for outdoor murals to ensure durability?

I use regular house paints what you'd call emulsion paints. I stick to basic colours: red, yellow, blue, black, and white, mixing them like an oil painting. These paints are made for exterior use, so they're naturally waterproof and built to withstand the elements.



Megan Oldhues



Q: How do communities typically respond to your murals? Any particularly memorable reactions?

People usually respond really well. Seeing a neighbourhood come alive through art is a unique experience. One of my most memorable moments was in Brazil, where I painted a mural of a woman hanging laundry. A local cleaning lady told me she had never seen someone like her depicted in art before. She felt beautiful seeing herself represented, and that moment really stayed with me. It reminded me that everyday moments, the simplest gestures can be the most profound.

Q: Can mural painting be a sustainable career? What advice would you give to aspiring mural artists?

Absolutely! It depends on whether you pursue it as fine art or commercially. There are two paths: working on commissioned projects or creating personal work. My biggest advice? Put yourself out there! Learn business skills, network, and don't be afraid to show your work. Once you put yourself out there, opportunities start coming, but you have to make that first move.

Q: Street art and murals often reflect social or cultural themes. Do you see your work as a form of activism or storytelling?

Yes and no. I just create art, meet people, and try to be positive. I don't control how people perceive my work. Sometimes, it resonates deeply with people; other times, it's just a beautiful image to them. That's the beauty of art, it's all about personal interpretation.



Q: What has been the most challenging mural you've created, either technically or emotionally?

Every mural has its challenges, but honestly, I don't dwell on them. The biggest difficulty isn't always the painting, it's staying hydrated and avoiding sunburn when working under extreme conditions! No mural has ever been 'terrible,' but each comes with its own set of obstacles.

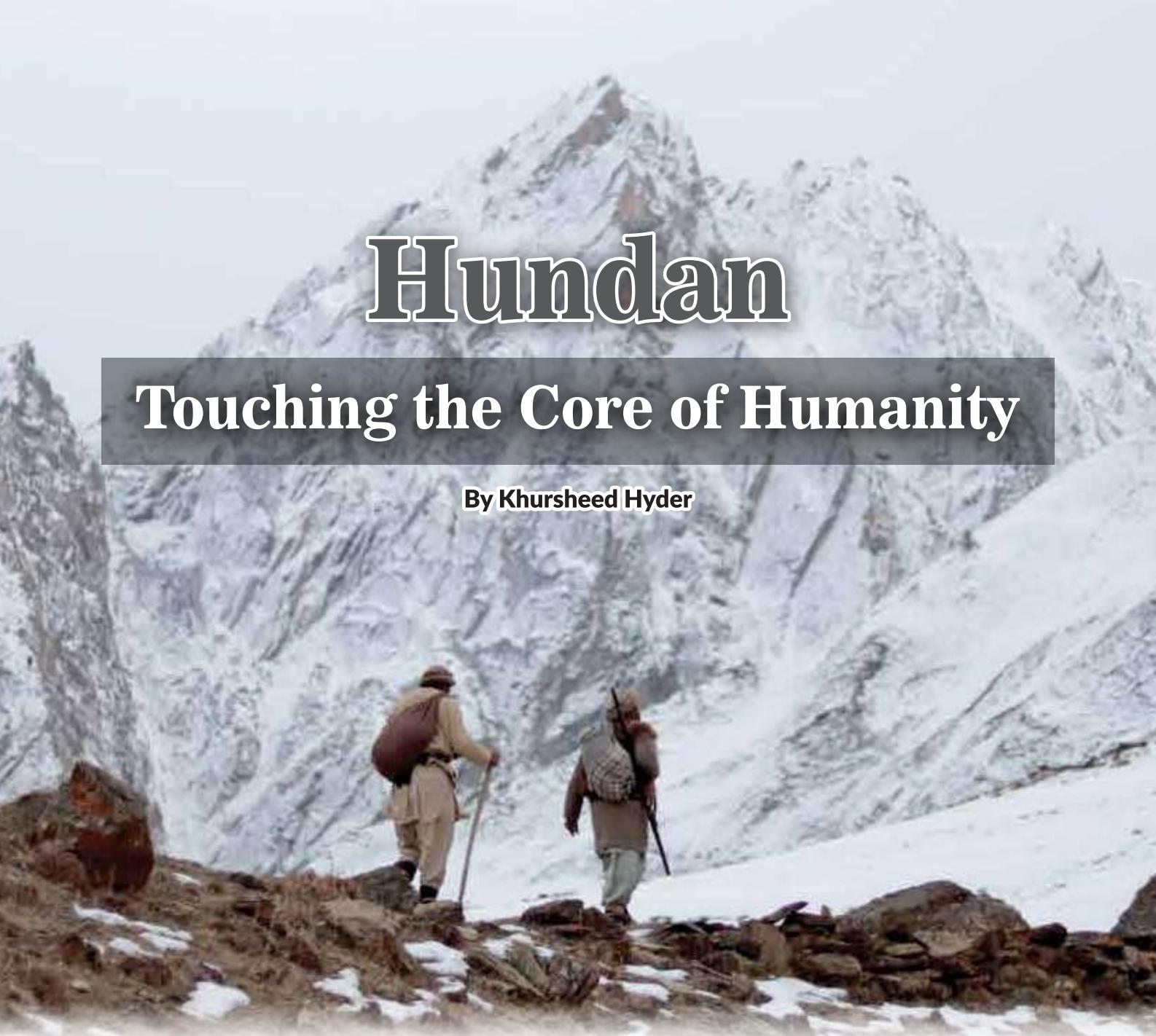
Q: If you could paint a mural anywhere in the world, with complete creative freedom, where would it be and why?

I'd love to paint near the pyramids in Egypt. As a child, I was fascinated by ancient Egypt, and there's something so mysterious about that place. I don't know exactly what I'd paint, it would have to be inspired by the surroundings, but I imagine something with greenery, maybe an impressionist scene that blends history with nature. - Ayman Munaf

Hundan

Touching the Core of Humanity

By Khursheed Hyder



In the bleak, haunting silence of Gilgit-Baltistan's snow-capped mountains, a story of nature, love, loss and its consequences took place centuries ago. Told in hushed tones by flickering firesides by the elders, it was immortalized in the film *Hundan*. Written, directed and produced by Karamat Ali, who belongs to the area, the filmmaker has a deeprooted passion for folklore and cultural preservation.

A mass communication graduate, Karamat Ali brings to the screen a story bound in legacy. *Hundan* is a docu-drama that protects forgotten voices, confronts environmental exploitation and resurrects the dying Burushaski language.

"My grandmother used to cry while telling me this story," Karamat said, when asked what inspired him to make *Hundan*. "This story was part of my childhood. My grandmother would narrate it with such

emotion that it stayed with me. There was no television, no other distractions in those days. The story is about coexistence, and how doing wrong never goes unpunished." That seed of storytelling was planted in 2007. After an initial attempt as a documentary and a reenactment performance that won hearts at a cultural event, he decided to take the bold step into narrative cinema. Eighteen years later, *Hundan* was born.

"Trophy hunting is not sport, it's a crime against innocence." At its heart, *Hundan* is a powerful protest against trophy hunting, a practice that has devastated local wildlife, particularly the endangered species like the ibex. "Who has given us the right to kill an innocent being just for entertainment?" Karamat questions with intensity. "We portrayed both sides the greedy, and those trying to stop the greed. But my intention was clear: to show the heartbreak, the

Filming Hundan was anything but smooth. The movie was supposed to be shot during the snow season, but due to climate change the team found themselves waiting weeks for snowfall that never came



loss. There's a scene where a mother ibex is killed in front of her young. That pain is real. And unforgivable." The symbolism goes deeper. "Hun means wood, and dan means stone. Together, 'Hundan' is a metaphor when you go against the path of righteousness, nature will respond. It becomes your teacher."

Hundan also protects Burushaski, a dying language native to the region. "When someone is about to die, people go to see them with all their emotions. That's what I've done with Burushaski I've shown its joy, sorrow, anger, peace and mourning," says Karamat with feelings. Though the film is being dubbed in Urdu for a wider audience, its original language remains its soul.

Filming *Hundan* was anything but smooth. The movie was supposed to be shot during the snow season, but due to climate change, the team found themselves waiting weeks for snowfall that never





came. "I had to manually fill snow in some patches to make the scenes consistent," he explained. Budget was another battle. "Most of the money went into fuel, we needed heaters, electric mattresses and generators to survive the mountain cold."

But passion found a way. The cast, though not professional actors, were chosen with precision. Shahino was played by Alhan ul Qudrat, a seismologist, while Mayon was brought to life by Zahid Azeem, a school principal, both belonging to the area. Their physical endurance made it possible to shoot in the toughest terrains. "I didn't stick to a fixed script," Karamat says. "I'd explain the previous and upcoming scenes and asked the actors to speak in their own way. Munira Shah, who played Nisa, didn't speak Burushaski, she had to learn her dialogues and understand it from scratch." The grandmother's character was portrayed by a real elderly woman, encouraged to act as naturally as she would. An old man who was also a professional storyteller delivered the final tale in the film.

Hundan is dedicated to Ghulam Ali Hunzai, a beloved teacher and poet who translated the Quran into Burushaski and wrote educational books despite having only learned through the Qaida. "He was selfless. He taught generations and now, they are all successful in their fields."

When asked what advice he has for aspiring filmmakers, Karamat doesn't hold back, "You need to be madly in love with your story. Don't make films

just to get views - make them to change lives. If your story doesn't have a purpose, don't tell it. And don't do it if you don't have the resources, unless you're truly passionate. You need to be *mad* about your work."

Karamat isn't done telling stories. His next project, "A Missing Piece, Peace" is a short film series focusing on the alarming youth suicide rate in Gilgit-Baltistan. "In one year, 56 suicides were reported aged 14 to 35. That's heartbreaking. The lack of opportunity, peer pressure etc, it's real, and it's killing our youth." He's also preparing for a cross-border film on Pakistan-China friendship, partially shot in China. "It's a story of a child's struggle, a message of unity."

"If *Hundan* could stop just one person, many just come for the fun, from trophy hunting," Karamat says, "we've succeeded. Why not turn it into a sight-seeing opportunity instead? The animal doesn't know it's part of the game, it's not a sport, it's murder. Shoot it with a dart and make it unconscious, don't kill it for the sport of it."

Hundan: An Echo of a Dirge is more than a film. It's a resurrection of language, a cry against cruelty, and a tribute to the power of folklore. Through the eyes of a grandmother, the blood of the mountains, and the beating heart of a culture on the edge, Karamat Ali has told a story that refuses to be forgotten. And as long as the stones whisper and the wood remembers, *Hundan* will echo its message.



Alhan Ul Qudrat, Karamat Ali (Director), Zahid Azeem, Shagufta Rasool (Asst. Director), Munira Shah

Cast and Crew Share the Soul Behind Hundan

Alhan Ul Qudrat (Shahino)

I never imagined I'd step into acting, it just wasn't part of the plan. But growing up in the mountains, we've witnessed these stories all our lives. They're part of who we are. The message of Hundan, that we must preserve wildlife and avoid harming nature, really resonated with me. Because what we destroy in nature eventually finds a way back into our own lives. It was also a proud moment to be part of the first film ever made in the Burushaski language. I gave it my all.

Munira Shah (Nisa wife of Shahino)

I don't speak Burushaski, and I was really nervous about my accent. I told Karamat I wasn't sure I could do it, but he simply said, 'I'll support you,' and that meant everything. I had always dreamed of visiting Hunza, but I wanted to go with purpose. The love and support I received were overwhelming. We weren't just a crew, we were a family. Every moment was joyful, filled with warmth and laughter.

Zahid Azeem (Mayon)

Like Alhan, this was my first time in front of the camera and honestly, I never thought I'd be able to do it. But with Karamat's mentorship and the support on set, everything felt possible. Burushaski is my own language, and I feel lucky that I could express this story in words that come from my roots. It made the experience even more personal.

Shagufta Rasool (Asst. Director)

Karamat is an incredible director, truly committed and calm even during duress. Yes, there were challenges during the shoot, but every problem was taken care of. The support from our team, especially our First AD Amjad, who's also Karamat's brother, made it all smooth. We pulled through as a strong, united crew.

Opening Vistas for the Youth

An interview with Misbah Khalid on the evolution and vision of PIFF

Misbah Khalid, one of the driving forces behind the Pakistan International Film Festival (PIFF), shares its background, challenges and hopes for Pakistan's film industry. Since its launch in 2018, PIFF has grown as a vital platform for young filmmakers, aiming to elevate Pakistani cinema on the global stage. This interview highlights PIFF's mission, achievements, hurdles and future ambitions. Recently, PIFF held its four day festival from 19th June.

Q: How has PIFF evolved since its inception and what is the main focus of PIFF?

Pakistan International Film Festival (PIFF) is a project of the Karachi Film Society (KFS), which was founded in 2018. It is the brainchild of Sultana Siddiqui, and our goal from the very beginning was to create a platform for young people where they could showcase their talent and find real opportunities in the film world.

Our first festival in 2018 was a huge success. We had an incredible lineup of guests from India - directors, producers, and writers — as well as participants from the US, France and Iran. It was an international gathering. We screened a wide range of films and received a very positive response.



We also organized workshops and panel discussions that brought professionals and aspiring filmmakers together. For example we invited renowned Indian screenwriter Ashwini Malik for a scriptwriting workshop. We also brought in special effects makeup artists from Turkey and invited Pakistani makeup professionals to come and learn the craft firsthand. One of our main goals is to bridge the gap between young creative industry professionals and masters of their craft. We want our local talent to receive the same level of training and exposure as professionals internationally.

Q: What have been some of the biggest challenges you've faced in running a festival of this scale?

There are persistent visa issues and security concerns, making international guests hesitant to travel here. That's why films are so powerful, they can reshape perceptions. We need to show the world that Pakistan is a beautiful place with rich culture, despite its challenges. I remember a group from the U.S. once visited us to explore filming opportunities. When we took them around, to Lahore's food street, the historic havelis, and the stunning North — they absolutely fell in love. That's the kind of image we want PIFF to project.

Q: How do you see PIFF contributing to the growth of Pakistan's film industry both locally and globally?

PIFF plays a vital role in developing filmmakers. We're not just showcasing films, we're working at the grassroots level on scriptwriting, makeup, budgeting, and all departments that go into film production. Our goal is to provide a platform where young people can learn and eventually begin making their own films.

When we send participants for training or bring in expert trainers to work with them, it sparks creativity. This field thrives on inspiration, and when young filmmakers interact with seasoned professionals, it opens up new ways of thinking.

We're fortunate to have names like Mehreen Jabbar, Sarmad Khoosat, Javed Jabbar and Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy on our board, incredibly talented people who serve as mentors to the younger generation. That creates a huge scope for learning and growth.

Q: What kind of support do you think is still missing for film festivals in Pakistan to truly flourish?

The biggest missing piece is government support, especially funding. It's easy to dream big, but making those dreams a reality takes money. Organizing a festival, bringing people in, setting everything up, it all comes with costs.

So far, we've done what we could with a group of passionate, like-minded people. But without consistent financial backing from the government, there's only so much we can do. There are many challenges, and I really believe the government needs to step up not just with funds, but also with moral and structural support.



PIFF plays a vital role in developing filmmakers. We're not just showcasing films, we're working at the grassroots level on scriptwriting, makeup, budgeting, and all departments that go into film production

Film festivals like PIFF help put Pakistan on the global map. They also create crucial platforms for young talent to learn, grow, and move forward in their careers. For that to happen on a larger scale, we need sustained investment.

Q: What's your vision for PIFF in the next five years? Any new initiatives or directions you're excited about?

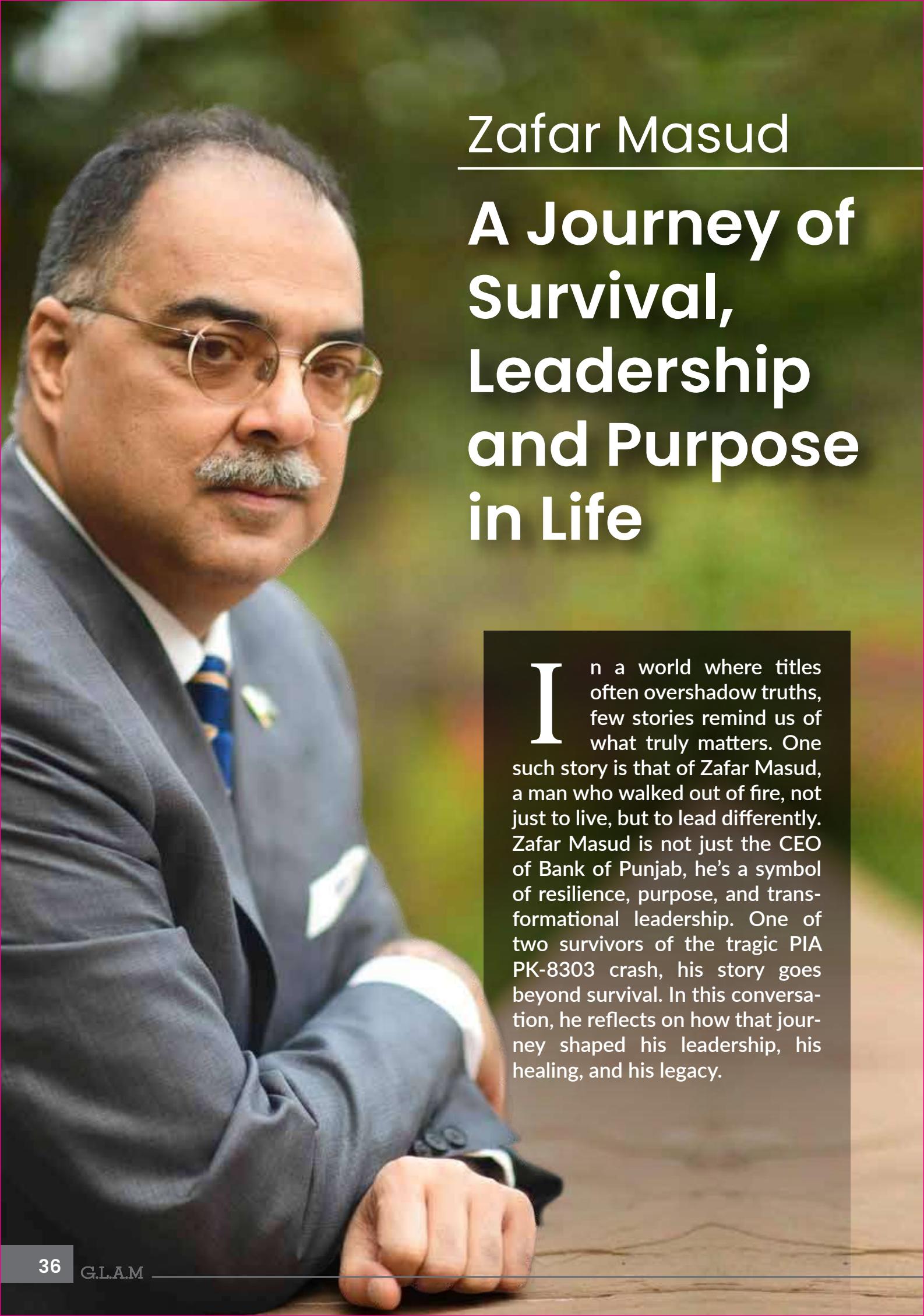
My vision for PIFF is for it to one day celebrate 75 incredible years that's how long I want it to thrive and grow. When I went to the Berlin Film Festival early this year, I saw everything they had built over the years, and honestly, it opened my eyes. It made me realize what's possible, even though we don't have that kind of budget or support yet.

I also want to see our filmmakers and our stories showcased globally. Right now, we don't have a strong footprint on the international circuit. A few passionate, dedicated individuals have taken it upon themselves to create films and get them into festivals, but we need more people to step up.

Q: What advice would you give to aspiring festival organizers or filmmakers in Pakistan?

Dream. Dream big and keep your goals high. Stay positive and never give up. When you bring an idea forward, many people might say it's impossible, that it can't happen. But believe me, whatever you carry in your heart, you can achieve it.

Universities, colleges, and the government should come together to nurture young talent. Train them properly, send them abroad if needed, but with one condition: when you train, you must produce films that can succeed globally. I firmly believe Pakistan's films will soon be featured in every major film festival, winning awards, telling our stories and showing the world who we really are.



Zafar Masud

A Journey of Survival, Leadership and Purpose in Life

In a world where titles often overshadow truths, few stories remind us of what truly matters. One such story is that of Zafar Masud, a man who walked out of fire, not just to live, but to lead differently. Zafar Masud is not just the CEO of Bank of Punjab, he's a symbol of resilience, purpose, and transformational leadership. One of two survivors of the tragic PIA PK-8303 crash, his story goes beyond survival. In this conversation, he reflects on how that journey shaped his leadership, his healing, and his legacy.

Q: You belong to an illustrious, intellectual family and have a famous actor father. How has your background molded you?

Growing up in a family where ideas, culture, and public engagement were front and centre gave me a deep appreciation for both expression and responsibility. My father's world was one of performance and presence – he taught me the importance of connecting with people beyond words. That doesn't just apply to acting, it's central to leadership too. You learn how to hold a room, how to listen, and how to bring your full self to difficult situations.

On the other side, my extended family was steeped in academia, law, and public service. Dinner conversations often revolved around governance, ethics, literature, and society. That environment shaped how I think: not just in terms of what's effective, but what's right. I was raised to question, to reflect, and to be deeply mindful of the world beyond myself. That blend - of emotional intelligence and intellectual curiosity - has stayed with me throughout my career, especially in the boardroom and during moments of crisis.

Q: You became the head of a bank and went through a life-changing experience. How did surviving the PK-8303 crash change your perception of life, leadership and purpose?

Surviving the crash stripped everything down to the essentials. Before that moment, like most professionals, I was locked into outcomes, deliverables, targets all important, no doubt. But the crash rewired my priorities. I realized how temporary everything is your title, your plans, even your body. What remains is your intent and your impact.

As a leader, it made me more empathetic, more human. I started paying closer attention to the people behind the numbers the families behind the accounts, the young staff members carrying hidden burdens. Leadership, I learned, isn't about projecting strength; it's about creating safety, meaning, and direction, even in uncertain times. And that shift from success to significance has stayed with me ever since. Purpose became more than just a strategic goal. It became a moral compass. I started seeing institutions not just as financial engines, but as platforms for national development, for dignity, for inclusion.

Q: Can you describe the moment after the crash?

In a word: surreal. There was confusion, pain, a strange stillness and then a sudden, visceral

The moment after the crash The world around me had been ripped apart, and yet there I was, conscious, breathing. I remember the heat, the silence, the smell of fuel and smoke. But above all, I remember a sense of stunned clarity

awareness that I was alive. The world around me had been ripped apart, and yet there I was, conscious, breathing. I remember the heat, the silence, the smell of fuel and smoke. But above all, I remember a sense of stunned clarity. I knew this wasn't just survival it was a turning point. The question wasn't "Why me?" but "What now?" And from that moment, everything how I lived, how I led, how I thought started to shift.

Q: What inspired you to write *Seat 1C*? And what did you discover about yourself while writing it?

I didn't set out to write a book. *Seat 1C* began as a personal attempt to make sense of the chaos. There was so much I was holding inside fear, gratitude, questions about fate, systems, survival. Writing gave me a way to process it, and eventually, to share it.

But as I wrote, I realized this wasn't just about a crash. It was about leadership, vulnerability, institutions, and how we deal with crisis in a society where systems are often brittle. I discovered that I had more to say – not just about what happened, but about what it meant.

What surprised me was how writing became a mirror. It brought to the surface parts of myself I hadn't examined before my coping mechanisms, my fears, my unfinished business with the past. And it taught me that telling the truth even when it's raw can be a deeply healing and connective act.

The healing began when I stopped trying to "get back to normal." I realized there was no going back. Something had shifted, and I needed to go forward from there. That required sitting with the discomfort - not bypassing it

Q: From surviving the crash to writing Seat 1C, how did the healing journey begin?

The healing began when I stopped trying to "get back to normal." I realized there was no going back. Something had shifted, and I needed to go forward from there. That required sitting with the discomfort not bypassing it. I allowed myself to feel the weight of it all: the lives lost, the randomness of survival, the expectations that came with being one of the few who made it.

For a while, I leaned into solitude. But gradually, conversations with close friends and family helped. Writing helped. So did work - but only when it was rooted in purpose. The process of writing Seat 1C was pivotal. It gave form to my emotions and allowed me to reclaim the narrative from trauma.

Over time, I came to understand that healing isn't linear. Some days you're okay, some days you're not. And that's fine. What matters is learning to walk with the experience - not be defined by it. In doing so, I found not just recovery, but a renewed sense of clarity about who I am, why I lead, and what truly matters.

Q: What was the hardest part the physical recovery or the emotional weight?

The physical recovery was painful, but it followed a clear path: scans, surgeries, physiotherapy. There was structure to it. The emotional weight, though,

was far more complex. You don't realize it at first you're grateful to be alive, surrounded by well-wishers, back to work. But the trauma doesn't vanish. It shows up quietly in the pauses between meetings, in dreams, in your reactions to loud noises or sudden silences.

What made it harder was the public nature of it all. I was expected to bounce back, to lead, to set an example. And while I understood that, it sometimes meant shelving my own grief to play the role of the "resilient survivor." That balancing act between being a professional and being human was the hardest part. Accepting that healing isn't about being unbreakable, but about being honest with your scars, was a lesson I had to learn in the long run.

Q: Is there a quote or line from the book that means the most to you?

There's a line in Seat 1C that I come back to often:

"Survival isn't a full stop; it's a comma a pause before a new sentence you never thought you'd write."

That line encapsulates the heart of the book for me. Survival isn't the end of the story. It's a starting point, and one that carries its own burden. You don't just move on - you move forward with the memory, the weight, the responsibility. That quote reminds me that life after crisis isn't about erasure. It's about integration - about making peace with the interruption and writing a new chapter, knowing the punctuation has changed.

Q: When you took over the Bank of Punjab, what was your vision and where do you feel the bank stands today?

When I joined BOP, the vision was clear: to transform it from a legacy institution into a forward-looking, impact-driven bank - one that doesn't just serve balance sheets but enables real economic mobility. We wanted to shift the conversation from transactional banking to transformational banking - rooted in transparency, technology and trust.

Today, I feel proud of how far we've come. We've institutionalized governance, cleaned up the balance sheet, and invested heavily in digital infrastructure. But more importantly, we've reoriented the bank's soul. Whether it's MSME financing, agricultural support, or our partnership with innovation ecosystems like NICL, the focus has been on catalyzing real, inclusive growth. There's still work to be done, but the foundation is solid. The



bank now stands as a credible, modern institution that plays offense, not defense especially in an environment as volatile as Pakistan's.

Q: What's your take on the current economic crisis in Pakistan, and how can banking institutions play a greater role?

Pakistan's current crisis isn't just fiscal it's structural. It's about a persistent inability to convert potential into productivity. We've long depended on external lifelines while neglecting domestic competitiveness, innovation, and institutional depth.

Banks can no longer afford to be passive intermediaries. We need to move beyond lending against collateral to lending against ideas. That means rethinking risk, developing sectoral expertise, and partnering with the government in smart, targeted ways not bailouts, but co-investment in infrastructure, agri-value chains, and digitization.

Financial institutions also need to democratize access. There's a massive unbanked population and a trust deficit we have to address especially among women, youth and informal businesses.

Banks must become enablers of dignity, not just providers of capital. That requires product innovation, tech-driven outreach, and a shift in mindset from gatekeepers to catalysts.

Q: What legacy do you hope to leave in banking and in life?

In banking, I hope to leave behind institutions that are more than just profitable institutions that are principled, progressive and people centered. If I've helped move the needle on governance, inclusion, and innovation, then I'll consider that meaningful work.

But beyond banking, the legacy I hope for is simpler: that I showed up with integrity, that I used whatever platform I had whether in a boardroom or in a book to make people think, feel, and hopefully act a little differently. I want to be remembered not just for surviving a crash or running a bank, but for the way I tried to turn adversity into purpose, & systems into stories worth believing in.

At the end of the day, legacy isn't about your name it's about the impact that quietly continues, long after you've stepped away. - Ayman Munaf

A Satire That Hits the Heart

In a time where entertainment is often reduced to screens and scrolling, *House Arrest* by Anwar Maqsood breathes life back into the stage. Performed at the IBA City Campus Karachi, this political satire drew in crowds not just for its name, but for the promise of something meaningful beneath the laughter.

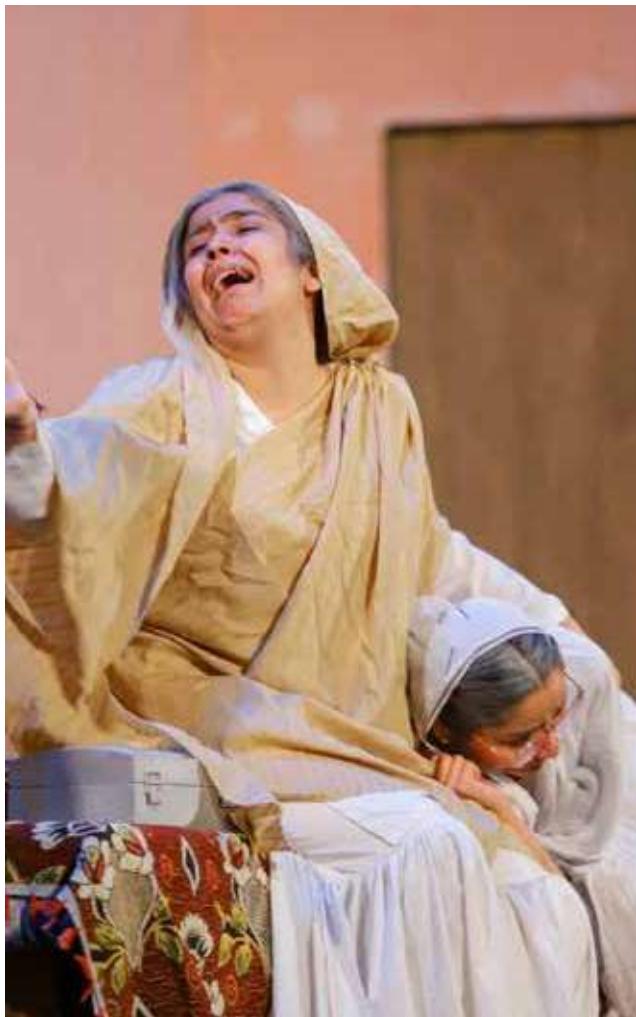


The play confined to one room, presents two elderly women seemingly forgotten by time and family. Their world is at a standstill, and memories are the only sustenance in the confines of the four walls that haven't seen visitors for a long time. The title, 'House Arrest' couldn't be more appropriate to their situation.

On the surface it appears to be a domestic drama, an ongoing conflict between the old women and their materialistic son and daughter-in-law. But beneath that lies a scathing, satirical reflection of a broader reality. The obsession with ownership, the desperation for control and the pettiness of egos. In their arguments over a name on a gate we see our own societal hierarchies, our personal wars for validation, and the illusion that money and power equals peace.

The brilliance of Anwar Maqsood lies in his layers. As the women remain 'arrested' in their own home, the audience is introduced to a parade of visitors: a robber, a retired judge, a former police officer and a disillusioned hockey player. Each is symbolic, each a thread in the unraveling fabric of the society portrayed in the play. Together, they paint a bleak but bitingly humorous portrait of a nation where the powerful exploit, where the system has failed, and the common citizen is left caught in the crossfire.

The house isn't just their prison. It's a metaphor for the country. Its locked doors echo with stories of betrayal, of promises broken in the name of reform. And as the characters weave in and out, bringing their chaos and confessions, we're left with an uncomfortable truth: perhaps we are all, in some way, under house arrest.

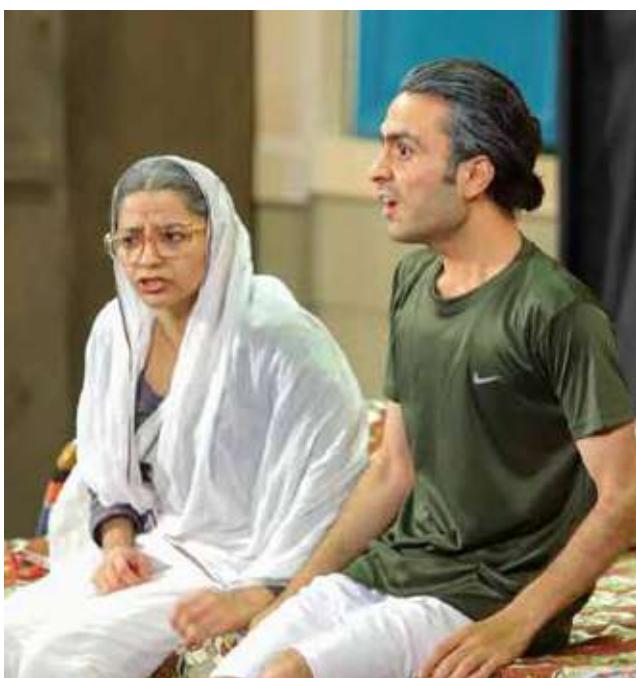


Raisa Raisani

Yet, despite the weight of its message, *House Arrest* never feels preachy. Anwar Maqsood's wit is razor-sharp, his humour disarming. He allows us to laugh before we realize what we're laughing at.

One of the play's most powerful moments comes in the form of a domestic brawl, a comedic yet deeply moving scuffle between the women and their daughter-in-law. The movements bordering on gymnastics are brilliantly performed by the cousin and daughter-in-law. It's chaotic, yes. But also cathartic. Because in that moment, the tension breaks. The truths spill out. And we are reminded why theatre remains such a vital art: it makes us feel and think.

The play had its humorous moments with laughter resonating in the hall unabashedly. The acting of the characters was superb, specially the main characters Shameen Tariq who played the role of Bee Amma and Raisa Raisani who played Nasreen. But one felt the lack of cohesion in the presentation here and there. Was it due to the meddling of strong outside factors and censorship perhaps? Overall, the play was a much needed injection for the Karachi crowd, bringing to mind the adage 'laughter is the best medicine'.



Shameen Tariq and Ghalib



Short & Sweet

Ahsan Afzal Khan

By Ariba Fahaam Khan

Describe yourself in two words:
Passionate Learner.

Quote that resonates with you:
"Dil ko dil se raah hoti hai." Always.

First time on set?

They threw the toughest scene at me on day one. I panicked inside, "ab mai kya karun?", but I pulled it off.

Most unexpected career lesson?

Downfalls come and go. What matters is that you keep going.

Coffee or tea on set?

Neither. I run on vibes.

Favourite holiday destination?

Call me basic, but New York has my heart.

Most cherished memory?

Playing a football match with Ronaldinho during my A'levels. Unreal!

A movie you can watch on loop?

Fight Club and Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara, both fuel different parts of me.

Phrase you hear a lot?

"Boss, aaj scene konsa ker rahay hain hum?"

Happiest time of the day?

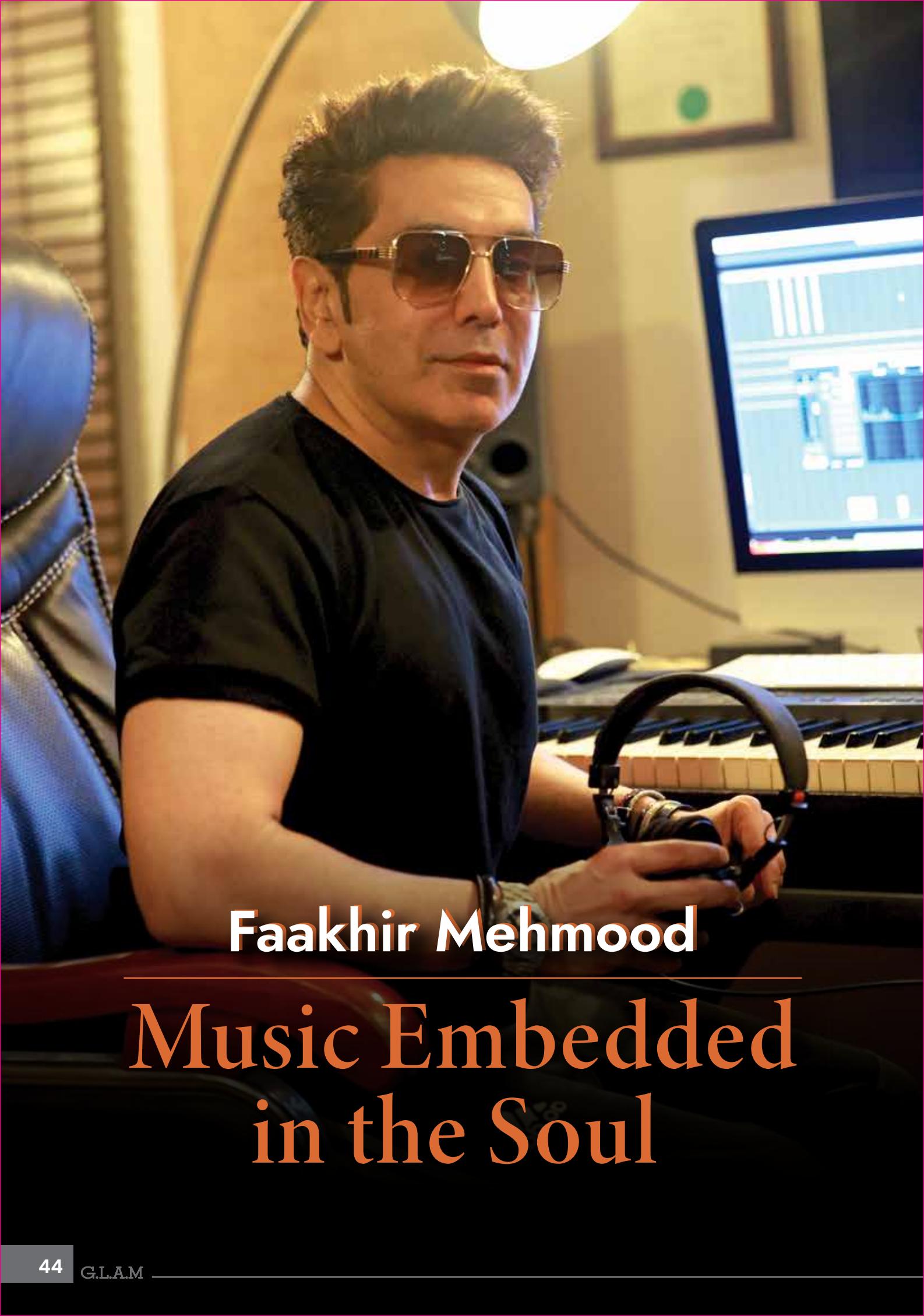
Post one a.m. That's when my creativity kicks in hard.

Guilty pleasure?

Late nights. Every. Single. Time.

Advice for aspiring artists?

Learn the art. But never lose your touch, be original.



Faakhir Mehmood

**Music Embedded
in the Soul**

Meeting an artist whose voice defined an era, Faakhir Mehmood greets you not with the air of a pop legend, but with the warmth of an old friend. Witty and friendly, Faakhir's journey from the Awaz days, crafting patriotic anthems and soulful ballads is a chapter in Pakistan's music history.

Now, as digital waves replace cassette decks and TikTok trends redefine hits, Faakhir continues making melodies and staying true to what first pulled him into music. "Honestly, it feels like riding a wild musical roller coaster," he smiles, reflecting on his journey. From engineering classrooms to global stages, the transformation has been surreal. "I barely recognize the engineer-turned-musician in old pics!"

Faakhir's musical career first took flight with Awaz, the iconic '90s pop band that helped shape the sound of a generation. And while the band has long disbanded, the memories remain golden. "What I miss the most is the friendship, the chaos," he says fondly. "Haaroon's energy, Asad's stratocaster riffs, my frantic keyboard noodling... and those epic moments when we'd finally agree on a final version of a song. It was electric."

From those jam-packed, impromptu sessions to today's meticulous studio marathons, Faakhir's process has evolved with time but the same heart remains. "Back then, we'd jam until someone had to escape for a date," he laughs. "Now it's long hours in the studio, powered by karak chai or a strong Americano."

While his discography is filled with iconic hits, it's 'Kaash Hum Juda na Hotay' from the album Mantra that holds the deepest place in his heart. "It came from a very personal space," he shares quietly. "It still gives me goosebumps every time I hear or sing it." His breakout solo anthem, "Dil na Lagay Pakistan", still stirs hearts across the country something he says was born out of youthful hope and a desire to connect with the nation. "I wanted to give people a proud, emotional wake-up call for loving the country. It just came in my heart one day."



A man of many hats - singer, composer, director, what role does he enjoy the most? "Composing," says Faakhir instantly

And who could forget 'Mahi Ve'—the song that became a cultural reset? "Ironically," he chuckles, "that melody was actually a rejected jingle from an ad I did. Later, I turned it into a full-fledged song. Never thought it would become a classic!"

A man of many hats composer, singer, director what role does he enjoy the most? "Composing," he answers instantly. "It's like cooking a fusion dish. But performing live? That's the ultimate high. That energy, that crowd it's addictive." Despite the quieter public presence in recent years, Faakhir's creativity hasn't slowed down. "I'm always composing," he reveals. "I have tons of unreleased material sitting in my vault."

Still, he admits the changing tides of the music industry have been a lot to keep up with. "Streaming, social media, TikTok, it's overwhelming," he says honestly. "I desperately need someone to help me with that

To young musicians trying to find their voice in this fast-paced world, Faakhir's advice is delightfully simple, "Stay weird. That's your flavour"

part!" He credits Coke Studio for keeping local music alive and ever-evolving. "It's like a chemistry lab," he says. "Taking old, new, folk, pop—mixing it all together to create something that resonates with everyone. It's genius."

To young musicians trying to find their voice in this fast-paced world, his advice is delightfully simple, "Stay weird. That's your flavour," he says. "Learn the tools, sure, but don't let them erase your creative spark."

Behind the scenes, Faakhir still surprises fans. Did you know he's a certified electrical engineer? "Yes, I can probably fix your Wi-Fi router," he jokes, "but only after I've tuned a piano."

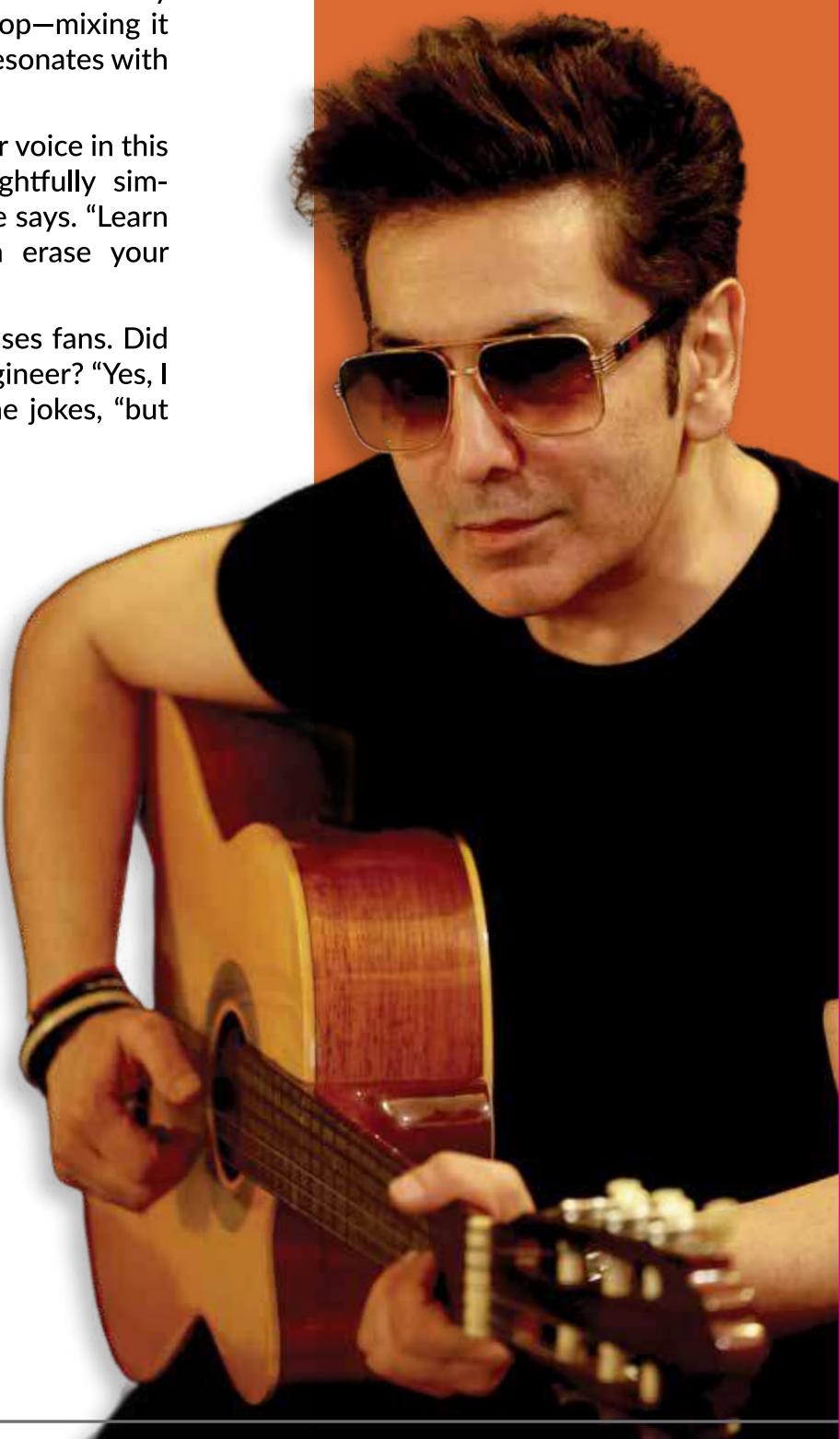
As for what's next, the composer hints at a few exciting collaborations. "They're brewing," he says with a mischievous grin, "but I'm so lazy! Fingers crossed."

If he could give his younger self any advice? "Pace yourself. Don't be lazy, don't get too comfortable."

And what does success look like to Faakhir Mehmood in 2025? He smiles thoughtfully. "A peaceful home, a cup of karak chai, a melody on the keys... and knowing that someone out there still hums one of my songs and understands the heart behind it."

In the end, how does he want to be remembered not just as a musician, but as Faakhir? He answers simply, without pause, "As someone genuine, generous, kind-hearted... and who truly loved his craft."

- Khursheed Hyder





لجدال

WED & THU | 8:00 PM

WRITER: SANA ZAFAR | DIRECTOR: AMIN IQBAL

PRODUCER: BJ PRODUCTIONS & MD PRODUCTIONS

CAST: FAISAL QURASHI, HINA AFRIDI, JAVED SHEIKH,
ALI TAHIR, HARIS WAHEED, AREZ AHMED, RASHID FAROOQUI & OTHERS.

A Mission for Inclusive Empowerment

Bisma Qamar is Pakistan's official Youth Delegate to United Nations. Born and raised in the US, she made a deliberate move to include Pakistan, focusing on bridging the gap between talent and opportunities across both regions. She believes the real challenge lies not in talent but in the lack of recognition and representation of that talent to grow.

In the field of learning and development, Bisma has focused on developing learning interventions and platforms aimed to acknowledge, educate and then empower individuals across academic and corporate sectors, tapping their potential through capacity building.

As a representative on global forums such as the United Nations, she has been working towards creating inclusive policies and platforms, where it's no longer about waiting for a seat to be offered but rather on enabling individuals to bring their own chair and expand the table. "The world belongs to those bold enough to shape it." For Bisma, leadership is about abundance by building equitable access and opportunities for all those who simply dream.



The Knockout Queen of Lyari

From the streets of Lyari to the world-boxing arena, 19-year-old Aaliya Soomro is punching her way through history, one knockout at a time.

In just 45 seconds, Aaliya floored her Thai opponent in 'World Boxing Fight' in Bangkok, making global headlines and proving that

power doesn't come from privilege—it comes from passion. With no sponsors, no fancy gyms, and no big names backing her, Aaliya's strength came from within. "Boxing isn't just for men," she declared, smashing stereotypes with her gloves and grit.

Born and raised in one of Karachi's most underprivileged areas, Aaliya started boxing at the age of six. What began as a childhood dream has now grown into an unstoppable legacy. She remains undefeated in her professional career and is now gearing up for her next bout—a high-stakes fight against an Indian opponent in Dubai this August, for the Women's International Boxing Association title.

Honoured at the Karachi Press Club with a ceremony hosted by the Pakistan Association of Press Photographers, Aaliya's story resonated deeply with everyone present. "Her success is a beacon of hope for young women," said veteran journalist GM Jamali.

Today, Aaliya Soomro isn't just fighting in the ring, she's fighting for recognition, respect, and for every girl who dares to dream.

Barrister Breaking the Barriers

Zahrah Sehr Vayani is a seasoned litigator with over 14 years of diverse legal experience across Pakistan and the UK. Appointed as Assistant Attorney General for Pakistan in January 2024, she has represented clients in high-profile civil, constitutional, family, commercial, banking, and criminal matters before the High Court of Sindh and other forums.

A graduate of the University of Manchester and a member of Lincoln's Inn, Zahrah was called to the Bar of England and Wales in 2008 and later became an Attorney at Law in New York after clearing the NY Bar. Her legal journey began in London, where she trained at a criminal set and became one of the few Pakistanis to complete pupillage in the UK. In Pakistan, Zahrah has worked with prestigious chambers before co-founding the female-led firm Malkani and Vayani. Today, she leads her own practice, Zahrah S. Vayani & Associates, with a team of twelve associates.

Beyond the courtroom, she is a fierce advocate for women's rights and legal empowerment. Zahrah is the founding CEO of the Women Lawyers' Association, and has served as a subject-matter expert on child abuse for the Sindh Provincial Parliamentary Advisory Committee. She is actively engaged in pro bono work, particularly in cases involving harassment, domestic abuse, child rights, and rape.

She is also a member of the Employment Lawyers Bar Association (UK) and has worked on projects with PILER and the Legal Aid Society, focusing on property rights and legal education.



Kicking Stereotypes

Mazhar Mehsud of South Waziristan just put Pakistan on the global Taekwondo map and he did it in gold. The young martial artist clinched a gold medal at the 21st WATA Open Taekwondo Championship held in Osaka, Japan, defeating India's Vinodh Kumar in a fiercely fought final.

Hailing from a region often overlooked in sports, Mazhar's victory is not just a personal triumph but a win for the entire nation. His dedication, discipline, and spirit have made him a symbol of resilience and rising talent from Pakistan's tribal belt. Draped in the national flag, standing tall with medals around his neck, Mazhar Mehsud is not just a champion; he's a beacon of hope for a new generation of athletes.



Rising Stars on the Track

From the bustling streets of Karachi emerge three young athletes redefining what it means to dream big. Anaya Ahsan Feroz, Alayna Asif, and Rania Fayyaz, all under the age of 15, are capturing national attention with their exceptional track and field performances.

With golds and bronzes from the Quaid-e-Azam Games 2024 and podium finishes at the National Games in Multan, their achievements speak volumes. Representing Pakistan at the 8th Children of Asia Games in Russia, they've already made their mark internationally. These girls aren't just running races, they're paving the way for Pakistan's bright athletic future.





Huma Akbar, a veteran actor whose graceful performances once lit up Pakistani television screens, recently returned to Pakistan for a holiday after many years in the US. Known for her powerful presence and natural acting on screen, Huma appeared in some of the most memorable TV serials of her time, including iconic hits such as Karawaan, Raat, Shaheen and Nijaat. While she may have stepped away from the spotlight, the love and admiration for her work has clearly stood the test of time.

Q: How does it feel coming back to your country after so many years, especially with such beautiful memories from showbiz?

Showbiz memories aside, because those have their own place, coming back to Pakistan is something else entirely. I've always been a Pakistani at heart. A few years ago, I told my husband, "I want to go to Pakistan," and he asked, "Why? Your whole family is here now." But I said, "I miss the streets of Karachi, I miss our rangrez Ramzan bhai, I miss the scent of Pakistan." There's a feeling here that I can't put into words, I just love being back.

As for showbiz, yes, those memories are beautiful and incredibly precious. But more than the fame or the acting, what truly stays with me are the relationships I built. The people I met, the friendships I formed, those are what mean the world to me.

Huma Akbar

Delving Into the Spotlight of Yore

Q: There's a long-standing rumour that you are the stepsister of Indian actresses Tabu and Farah. Can you clarify?

I would really like to clear that up as it's absolutely false. My father's name was Akbar Ali, and Tabu and Farah are actually the daughters of my second cousin. I've met them only once or twice. The last time I saw Tabu, she was very young and it was in India.

Q: You were a household name in the 1980s and 90s. What do you miss most about that period of television? And how has the industry changed since then?

Change is inevitable in life, as they say, 'Sabat ek taghayyur ko hai zamane mein.' I haven't followed the industry too closely in recent years, so I can't comment much on how it functions now, but I do have beautiful memories from back then. The work ethic, the respect, the simplicity, everything was so sincere. Back then, there wasn't much money in it. Our only incentive was passion, to create something meaningful that people would remember. That's what made it so pure.

Q: Which of your past roles still stay with you today, and why?

One role that really impacted me was Sukhaan in Karawaan. It was such an interesting and memorable character. At the same time, it was quite challenging, I had only two days to prepare. I had to learn the language, understand Sukhaan's world, and fully step into her shoes in such a short time. But that's what made it exciting.

The story of Karawaan centres around Sukhaan, a Thari folk singer. Her village faces a severe drought, and the entire community is forced to migrate in search of water. During this migration, Sukhaan gets separated and ends up in the city, where she tries to pursue her dream of becoming a singer.

What made the role even more immersive was how we worked on staying in character on set. I even asked the actor playing my father to speak in the same dialect throughout our scenes so I could stay connected to the language and the rhythm of the culture.

Q: Tell us something about Huma Akbar that the world never saw away from the camera?

That's a tough one, but what I can say is that I'm someone who values doing things with perfection and on time. I try to be a good human being, and for me, that matters more than anything else.

Life, in my view, is a continuous journey of self-improvement. We all make mistakes, we all fail, but what truly matters is what we learn from those experiences. Growth only comes when you reflect, evolve, and allow yourself to change for the better.

Q: How has the life in the U.S. shaped you compared to your life in Pakistan?

I was quite young when I was living in Pakistan. Honestly, even if I had stayed here after marriage, life would've changed because with time, growth and responsibilities come naturally. In Pakistan, I lived with my parents, had no major responsibilities. Life was simpler in that way. But the U.S. is a completely different society. Living there taught me a lot, it pushed me to grow in ways I might not have otherwise. I became more mindful of my values and consciously stayed away from things that didn't align with them.

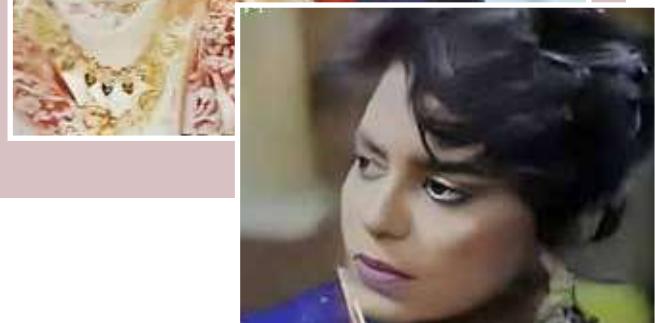
Q: You come from such a legendary family with links to both Lollywood and Bollywood. How has that influenced you over the years?

Honestly, that hasn't really influenced me the way people might assume. I never looked at myself through that lens. Yes, I come from a strong background, and I'm proud of it, but I've always believed that your identity should be defined by your own achievements. Where you come from might open a door or two, but it's what you do with those opportunities that truly matters.

Q: Would you do a role here if you are approached? Are you open to acting in web series and films as well?

Yes, absolutely! My kids are grown up now, settled in their own lives, and doing well—that gives me more time and space for myself. If the right opportunity

“Fame fades, but the bonds you create and the way you treat people, that stays. For me that's always been the most important thing”



comes along, I'd love to take it. Whether it's a web series, a film, or something else entirely, I'm open to it. Acting has always been a passion, and I'd be excited to explore it again.

Q: Is there something you wish today's generation of actors would learn from your era?

Honestly, the new generation of actors and actresses is doing a great job. I haven't worked with them personally, so I can't comment in detail but I do believe that every generation learns from the one before it. What truly matters, regardless of the era, is dedication. Whatever you choose to do, do it with sincerity. Put your heart into it. That's the one quality that never goes out of style.

Q: How would you like Huma Akbar to be remembered then and now?

Honestly, I didn't expect people would still remember me. It's been years since I've been away, and to be welcomed back with such warmth has truly touched me. I'm deeply grateful for that. More than anything, I'd like to be remembered as someone who was honest, sincere, and dedicated—both in my work and in my relationships. Fame fades, but the bonds you create and the way you treat people—that stays. For me, that's always been the most important thing.









Credits

Photographer : Abdullah Shahid

Models : Rukhma and Nargis

Stylist : Farjad Sheikh

Makeup : TRIO Salon

PR : Irfanistan

Where Modesty Meets Mysticism



Founded by Pakistani super model turned designer Atiya Khan, Arizai is a journey woven into fabric inspired by the path into sufism and symbolism. For the designer modesty becomes an expression of strength, mysticism and timeless elegance.

Arizai recently made its global runway debut at the Kazan Modest Fashion Day 2025 in Tatarstan, Russia an event under the prestigious Kazan Forum, a central platform for economic cooperation between Russia and the Islamic world. Invited by the Kazan Forum and supported by the wife of the Pakistani Ambassador to Russia, Arizai became the first Pakistani brand to be showcased alongside nine international modest wear labels.



The response was overwhelming. The Russian media called Arizai "a unique brand merging fashion with spirituality," and applauded its honouring of diverse faiths through design. The simple elegance of the garments captivated audiences and dignitaries.

This international milestone was followed by an exclusive fashion presentation at the Pakistan Ambassador's residence in Moscow, attended by global diplomats and cultural icons. The event became a cultural exchange through fashion rooted in Pakistan's rich textile heritage.



Ilyas M. Zeeshan

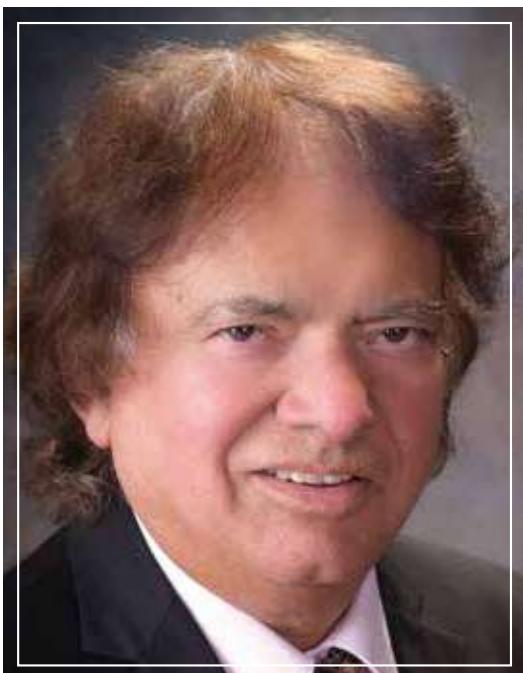
A Roadmap to Pakistan's Economic Revival

In a country where conversations around economic reform often circle the same tired points, book 'Super Pakistan' emerges as a breath of fresh air, an unapologetically bold and visionary roadmap to economic revival. Packed with unconventional proposals and untapped possibilities, this book presents ideas that have never been discussed in Pakistan's 75-year history. From Astro-tourism to futuristic universities, renaming cities to reimagining tax reforms,

author Ilyas M. Zeeshan paints a compelling picture of what Pakistan could become: the 15th largest economy in the world within just five years, if a V-shaped economic growth model is adopted.

Mr. Zeeshan's insights are anything but theoretical. Born and raised in Karachi, he earned his master's in International Relations from Roosevelt University, Chicago in 1980, and later pursued an MBA from the same institution. He is a seasoned businessman, inven-

tor and author of five books including work on President Donald Trump, and has appeared on various radio and television platforms in the United States. With firsthand experience across several dozen countries, Mr. Zeeshan brings a unique global lens to Pakistan's challenges and opportunities. Currently based in the suburbs of Washington, DC, he joins us for an exclusive conversation with Glam Magazine to share his transformative vision for a 'Super Pakistan'.



Q: 'Super Pakistan' is a bold title. What inspired you to write this book, and what is your vision of 'Super Pakistan'?

'Super Pakistan' refers to the idea that a country's economic size should match its population ranking. Pakistan is the fifth most populous country in the world. If and when its economy rises to the same level, it will justifiably be known as 'Super Pakistan'. If we follow the roadmap in the book and assuming there's no major war or natural disaster, Pakistan can reach a one trillion dollar economy in five years and become the 15th largest economy in 10 years. Within a generation, it could be the 5th largest economy globally.

Q: Your book suggests enterprising ideas to boost Pakistan's economy. Which one do you believe has the most realistic potential in the next five years?

First and foremost, we must drastically reduce unemployment. The way to do that is by teaching people to become entrepreneurs. The old model of going to school for sixteen years to earn above-average income is fading. Now, with the internet and YouTube, one can become productive in less than 16 months. I have explained this in Chapter Five: Triangle of Full Employment. I have even listed the top 20 skills that can be learned in less than a year. If someone knows English, they can be hired in Europe and beyond as independent service providers, working comfortably from home.

Q: As someone who explores ideas, how do you see the role of creativity and innovation in transforming a nation's economy?

Innovation has no boundaries. Every product tangible or intangible can be improved. That's the essence of Chapter Four: Innovation Nation. Anyone can learn to innovate. Age, background, or education doesn't matter. I describe simple, actionable steps in the book. Even low-level innovation can help people build a niche, a competitive edge and dominate markets.

Q: You've proposed several fascinating ideas. Can you share some of the 'standout' ones, which can help boost Pakistan's economy?

Yes, I've suggested more than two dozen new ideas. Let's explore a few:

Astro-Tourism: A new form of tourism that hasn't been tapped. We don't need advanced space programmes to participate. We can plan trips 30 kilometers above Earth near the Karman Line, where tourists could experience weightlessness for a few hours. It's realistic, exciting, and can generate significant revenue. Europe, Russia, and China are selling their advance space travel trips for millions of dollars.

Super University: A world-class institution where Nobel Prize winners are visiting professors. It would teach futuristic subjects like nanotechnology, genomics, and cybersecurity fields that will soon be as in-demand as AI. This would attract the children of millionaires and billionaires worldwide.

"Super Pakistan refers to the idea that a country's economic size should match its population ranking. Pakistan is the fifth most populous country in the world. If and when its economy rises to the same level, it will justifiably be known as Super Pakistan"

Reunification with Bangladesh: Politically bold, yes. But dialogue could start based on the Six Points of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Pakistan could offer a nuclear umbrella for Bangladesh's security as a basis for discussions.

A Second Name for Pakistan: Countries have changed names to strengthen identity. A second name could boost Pakistan's soft power, increase nationalism, and even reinforce our claim on the Koh-i-Noor.

Renaming Cities: Giving major cities new names rooted in culture and pride will create nostalgia and increase civic ownership.

Babri Masjid Replica: I propose constructing a replica on the historic route Babur took into the subcontinent. It could become a symbol and boost religious tourism, particularly from Muslim nations.

Redesign of Currency: A beautifully designed new currency note that foreigners would want to keep as a souvenir, showcasing art and pride.

Renaming Parliament Houses: Changing the names of both houses of parliament to Diwan-e-Aam and Diwan-e-Khas, terms deeply rooted in Mughal and South Asian history would give a uniquely Pakistani imprint.

Q: What about political reforms? How do we ensure stability in governance?

Zeeshan: In Chapter Six, I suggest a framework where every Prime Minister can complete their full term. Stability is key for economic and social progress. I also propose reforms that make political parties disincentivized to incite violence. In Chapter Seven, I discuss a law that ensures violent processions are no longer in their interest. Additionally, I've proposed a strategy to make people pay taxes rapidly and willingly. It's about rebuilding trust and delivering value.

Q: You hinted at a plan involving overseas Pakistanis and international startups. What's that about?

I have a detailed and specific plan to launch three startup corporations in the United States with the support of overseas Pakistanis. These ventures involve highly unique concepts ranging from traditional products to cutting-edge technology. The franchise potential is global, and the revenue could be in the hundreds of billions. The remittances from these companies can be reinvested in Pakistan's high-tech industries, helping accelerate growth and innovation. While I can't disclose all details publicly, interested overseas Pakistanis can contact me directly on email.

Pakistan doesn't lack talent, it lacks direction and bold execution. 'Super Pakistan' is not fiction. It's a roadmap built with realistic, achievable ideas

Q: One of your closing thoughts in the book is about mindset. What exactly is the "semi-cyborg" mindset?

It's time Pakistan says goodbye to Semi-Amish thinking—a reference to outdated, overly conservative, or anti-tech mindsets. We must embrace a semi-cyborg mindset: one that integrates tradition with futuristic thinking. This means being tech-savvy, globally aware, and driven by innovation—a people ready to shape the future rather than be shaped by it.

Q: Lastly what message would you like to give especially to the young dreamers, thinkers and future change makers of Pakistan?

Pakistan doesn't lack talent, it lacks direction and bold execution. Super Pakistan is not fiction. It's a roadmap built with realistic, achievable ideas. If the youth, overseas Pakistanis, and policymakers come together with vision and determination, nothing can stop us from becoming a global powerhouse. - Ayman Munaf

SUPER PAKISTAN®

- The ideas shared in this book are different and never before discussed in the 75-year history of Pakistan
- This book is a roadmap to stimulate Pakistan's economy to grow in a V-shape, making it the 15th largest economy in the world in 5 years or less.

Ilyas M. Zeshan received his early education in Karachi and earned his master's degree from Chicago's Roosevelt University in International Relations in 1980 and continued his education there for an MBA. He is a businessman and an inventor who had travelled several dozen countries around the world, and Mr. Zeshan's experience includes writing on international relations. He is the author of five books, including an extensive book on President Donald Trump, and he has appeared on numerous radio and TV programs in the United States. Mr. Zeshan currently resides in a suburb of Washington, DC.

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Deluxe Edition: \$49.95 (Personalized and Autographed by the Author)
Contact: ilyaszeshan@gmail.com

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Coconut Oil

Coconut oil, derived from the mature fruit of the coconut palm, has been celebrated as a beauty staple for centuries. Known for its deep moisturizing properties, it is rich in vitamins E and K, healthy fats and antioxidants. This versatile ingredient works wonders for both skin and hair, making it a favourite in beauty routines across the globe.

- **Deep Moisturization:** Coconut oil penetrates deep into the skin, leaving it hydrated, soft, and radiant.
- **Hair Repair and Shine:** It helps repair damaged hair, reduces protein loss, and brings back shine to dull locks.
- **Natural Makeup Remover:** Easily dissolves even waterproof makeup without irritating the skin.
- **Anti-Aging Properties:** Rich in antioxidants, it reduces the appearance of wrinkles and fine lines.
- **Healing Agent:** Its antibacterial and anti-fungal properties make it great for healing minor cuts, burns, and cracked heels.
- **As a Moisturizer:** Warm a small amount between your palms and apply to your face and body for instant hydration.
- **Hair Mask:** Massage warm coconut oil into your scalp and hair, leave it overnight and wash for soft, shiny strands.
- **Lip Balm:** Dab a small amount onto your lips to keep them soft and nourished.
- **Body Scrub:** Mix coconut oil with sugar or coffee grounds for an exfoliating scrub.
- **Cuticle Treatment:** Rub onto cuticles to prevent dryness and strengthen nails.



MiTE Vogue Night 2025

An evening of fashion, film & tribute

The Millennium Institute of Technology & Entrepreneurship's transnational wing, The Millennium Universal Colleges (TMUC), hosted a landmark event 'MiTE Vogue Night 2025 - Regalia Reclaimed' recently at a local hotel. The evening brought together the worlds of fashion, performance, and storytelling to celebrate the creative voices of tomorrow.

Opening the night was a contemporary display of works by current students from the Higher National Diploma (HND) in Art & Design. Their collections explored themes of sustainability and textile innovation.

The spotlight moved on to the graduating cohort of the University for the Creative Arts (UCA), Class of 2024. Each student presented a final collection that was intimate, conceptually bold, and meticulously executed.

The narrative transitioned into cinematic territory with the screening of "JADU," a short film directed by UCA Film & Digital Art student Laiba Shakeel.

One of the most moving moments of the evening came through a tribute performance in solidarity with Palestine, led by student artist Rafeh Sheikh. Combining fashion, performance, and multimedia expression, the segment paid homage to resilience and resistance through art.

Adding a poetic dimension to the evening, Ms. Kulsoom Aftab performed a powerful tribute to the late Amjad Islam Amjad, the celebrated poet and playwright.



Sultana Siddiqui and Huma Baqai



Tribute to Palestine

The final segment featured the UCA Class of 2025, showcasing collections under the theme "Designing the Future: Consciousness, Change & Creativity."

The event was graced by Sultana Siddiqui, President of HUM Network, as the Chief Guest. A pioneering figure in Pakistan's media and entertainment landscape, she praised the students' work, stating, "The collections we saw tonight speak volumes about the future of fashion in Pakistan, one rooted in culture, yet boldly global in vision."

The night concluded with the closing remarks of Dr. Huma Baqai, Rector of MiTE, who emphasized the institution's commitment to nurturing creative leadership and building bridges between academic rigour and industry relevance.



ARTISANS SPECIALISING IN CRAFTS

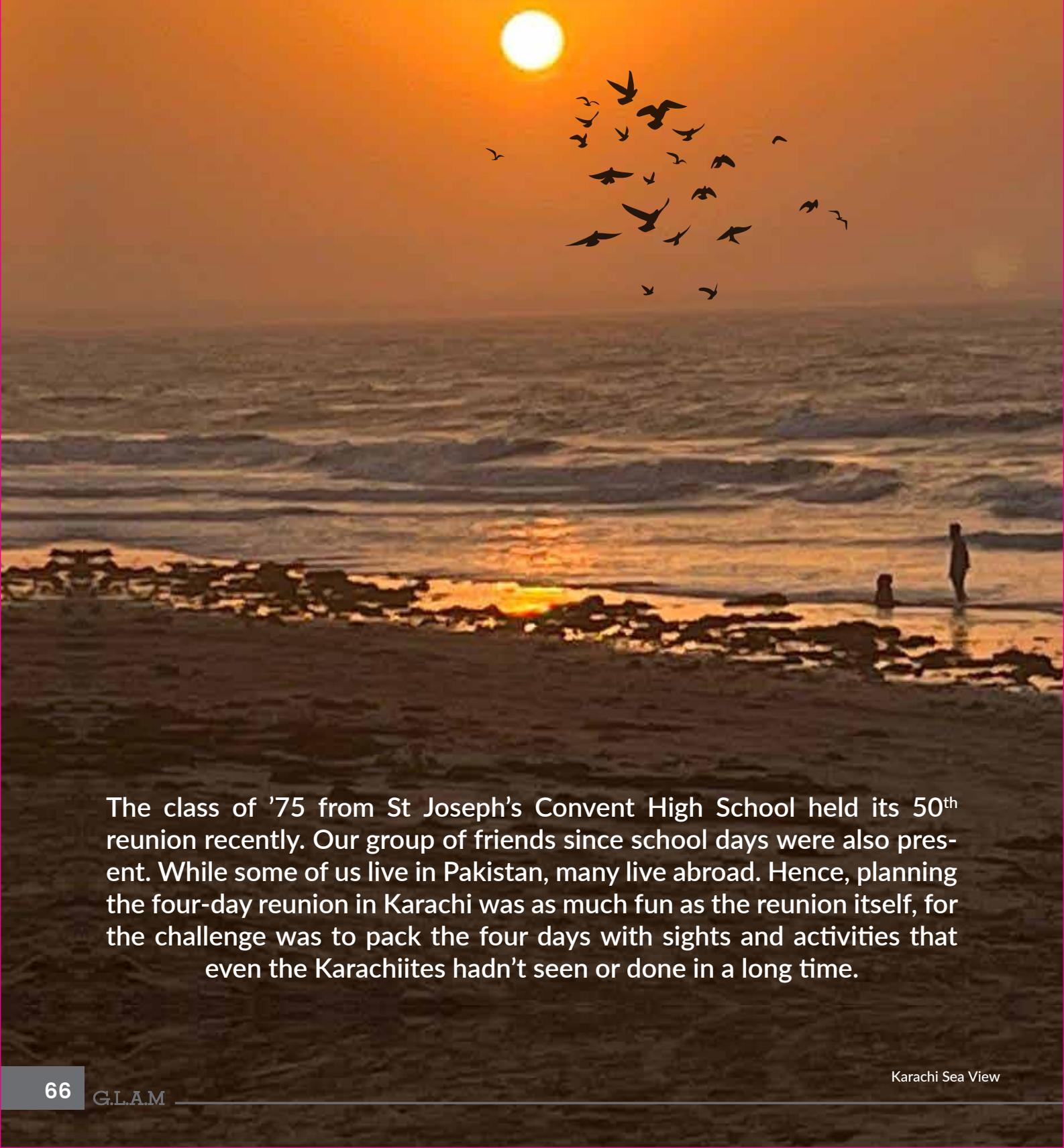
ARTEL by BINA ALI is an organization dedicated to preserving cultural heritage by collaborating with traditional artisans spanning generations. These artisans specialize in various crafts such as basket weaving, lamp making, pottery, natural fabric production using vegetable dyes, block printing, and Sindhi woven seating. Through design interventions, ARTEL combines creativity with artisanal skills to create modern products that appeal to contemporary tastes. Its commitment to cultural preservation extends to its product packaging, where each item bears an introduction highlighting its historical significance and origin. By incorporating these narratives into the packaging, the company not only enhances the consumer experience but also ensures that the stories and traditions of the artisans' communities are shared and celebrated with each purchase. Moreover, it provides training opportunities in clay art to underprivileged youth, recognizing Pakistan's legacy as the hub of the Indus Valley Civilization. In addition to fostering skill development, ARTEL supports artisans financially, particularly in healthcare and education. It also addresses the shortage of Pakistani souvenirs by developing products that authentically represent the country's rich cultural heritage.



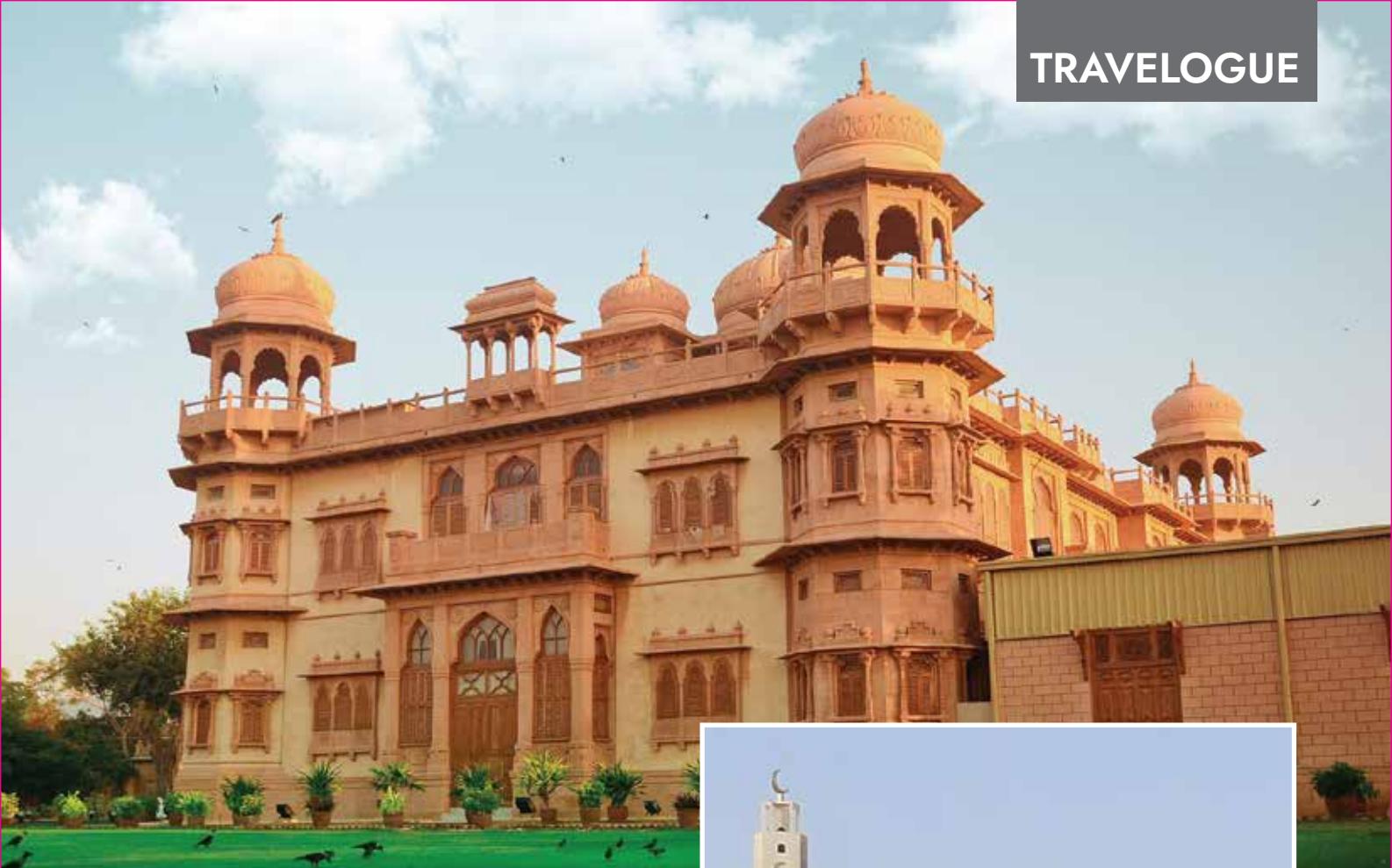


Revisiting Karachi's Interesting Places

By Shanaz Ramzi



The class of '75 from St Joseph's Convent High School held its 50th reunion recently. Our group of friends since school days were also present. While some of us live in Pakistan, many live abroad. Hence, planning the four-day reunion in Karachi was as much fun as the reunion itself, for the challenge was to pack the four days with sights and activities that even the Karachiites hadn't seen or done in a long time.



Mohatta Palace Museum

We began day one, a Friday, with a coaster trip to our alma mater. We had coordinated with the school headmistress, Sister Margarete, who happened to have taught us, too. Without anyone knowing, we had also invited our few favourite teachers to join us. Our group was as thrilled to see them as they were to see us. We took a tour of the magnificent institution, which thankfully looked largely the same as when we were in school. As it is a heritage building, with a few additions of new blocks on the premises.

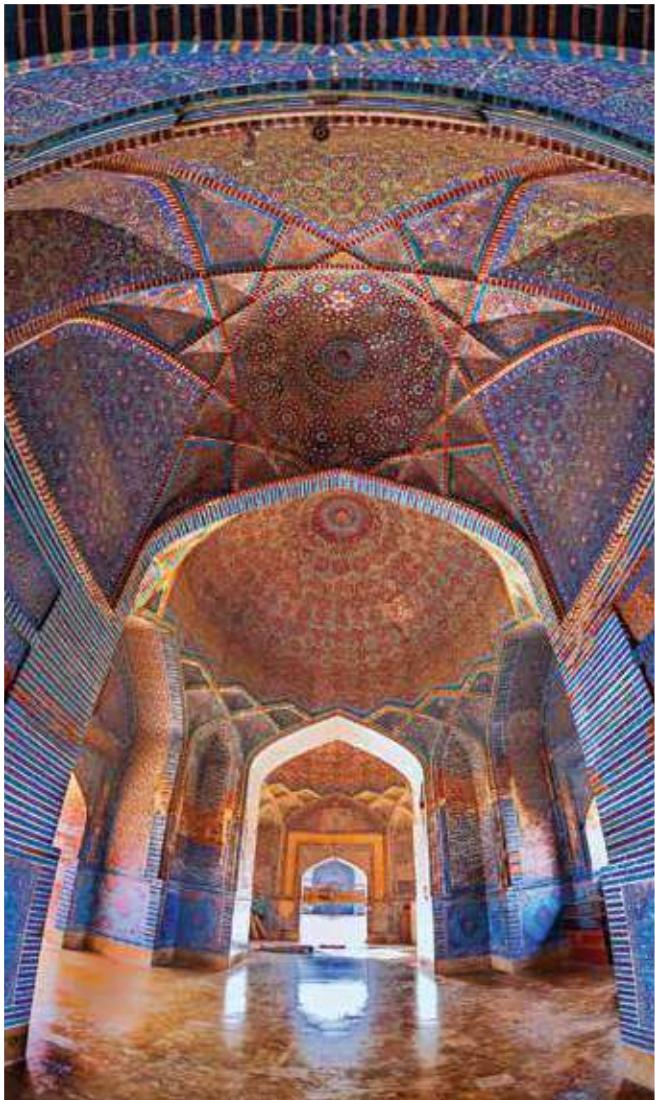
After leaving the school we made our way to LuckyOne Mall, to show off the largest mall in South Asia to our visitors. We were received by their marketing department and given a guided tour of the whole mall. After partaking of lunch at the Food Court we were taken to Onederland, their amusement centre where we were treated to complimentary rides of our choice. If visiting the school hadn't transported us to our childhood, whizzing down slides, bumping dodgem cars, and shrieking on roller coaster rides surely did!

Our next stop was Bahria Town, where we cruised through the immaculately laid out roads, and made strategic 'international' stops in front of the Eiffel Tower, and the Crookedest Street in the World, for photographs. After tea and ice cream at Murree Hills, we left to freshen up and then partake of an early dinner at the popular Kolachi, Do Darya, restaurant.



Bahria Town Jamia Masjid

The next morning we started early to have brunch at the new Café Imran on the national highway. It must be said here that the long drives we had undertaken from day one turned out to be as much fun as the destinations themselves, for we transformed into giggly teenagers who burst into laughter at the smallest pretext. Laughter is indeed the best medicine, and we all felt rejuvenated despite our action-packed trips.



Shah Jahan Mosque, Thatta

After brunch we set off for the beautiful UNESCO World Heritage Site, the 17th century Shah Jahan Mosque, in Thatta. It was a blazingly hot day but once you stood within its corridors, the ventilation, brick structure, and amazing architecture of the mosque kept us cool and comfortable. Our next stop was Koonj Farm at Gharo, where we stopped for tea.

The third morning we set off for our city tour. Starting with Mohatta Palace, which surprisingly many were visiting for the first time, we followed it up with the well-maintained Flagstaff House, now known as Quaid e Azam House, where a knowledgeable guide informed the visitors about the history of the artifacts and the rooms on display.

Frere Hall was next, but unfortunately, was closed, being a Sunday. Considering that Sundays are more feasible for families to visit such historical sites, one hopes that the management will re-think their weekly holidays and keep the venue open over the weekend, like the other heritage sites. In fact, at Flagstaff House we were happy to note that there were other visitors also, especially foreigners, and I am sure they must have also wanted to visit Frere Hall.

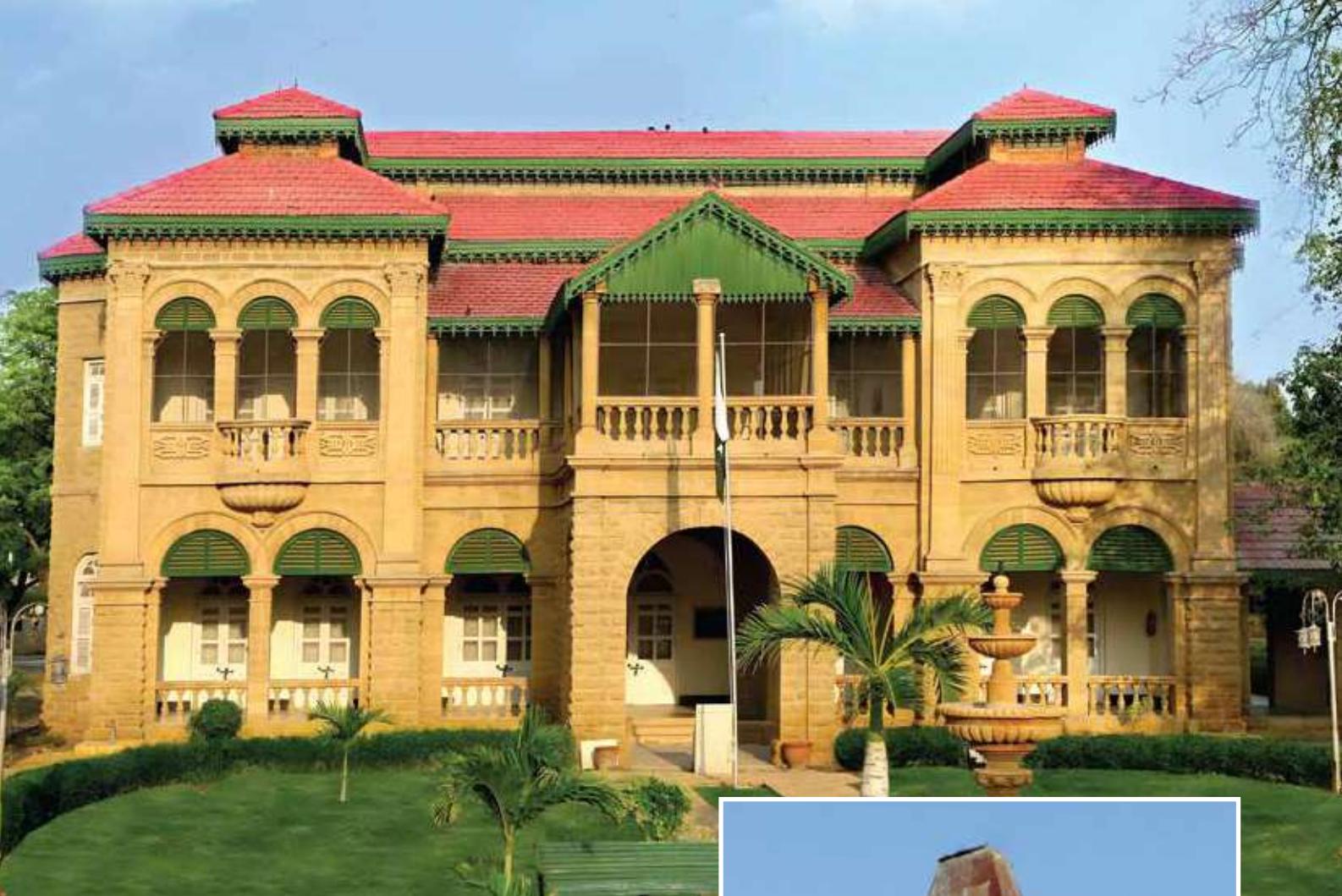
We set off for the beautiful UNESCO World Heritage Site, the 17th century Shah Jahan Mosque, in Thatta. The amazing architecture of the mosque kept us cool and comfortable



St. Josephs Convent School

We then made our way to the heart of the city, beginning with the iconic Empress Market, notoriously used for executions in the days of the British Raj, which became one of the most popular shopping sites for groceries over the years. Our next stop was Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, the erstwhile Karachi Municipal Corporation, which is also closed on Sundays, but thanks to connections, we had managed to get not only an entry into the historic building, but also a guided tour, right up to the rooftop.

Our next destination was a short distance away – the Denso Hall Rahguzar, a landscaped Walking Street, created by Heritage Foundation in 2021. In the middle of what was once a busy, dirty, over-crowded, land-grabbed lane, with shops spilling over with their wares, and motorcyclists and pushcarts jostling for space amidst pedestrians this oasis became a model street designed to mitigate the negative impact of densification and environmental degradation in Karachi's historic core. A living testament to the adage 'If there is a will there is a way,' this street, paved with terracotta tiles hand-made by women who used to beg for a living, has four Miyawaki forests in the centre of the street, offering a cool respite to passers-by and shoppers.



Quaid-e-Azam House

Our last stop for our city tour was TDF Ghar, a Dawood Foundation project that has converted what was initially an old residence of a Hindu family into a museum-cum-café, retaining many of the antique artifacts that belonged to the family, and adding interesting elements for the benefit of the visitors. We had brunch there and then left for Sandspit to enjoy the cool, nay cold, sea breeze blowing over the Arabian Sea, as we devoured a live scrumptious barbecue dinner, and shared stories from our past that can only be shared among old friends, no matter after how long you may be meeting them.

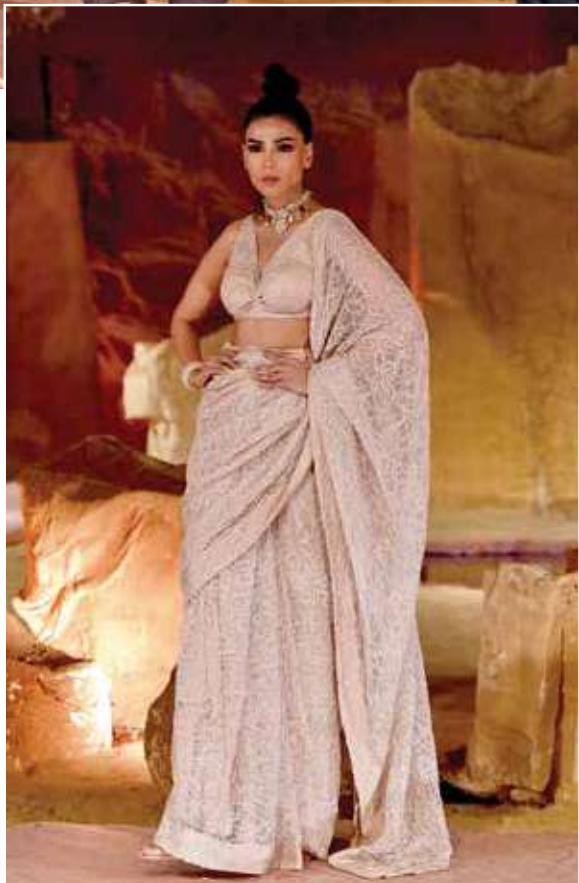
Our last day had been left for shopping as no girls' trip or outing can be complete without splurging on at least some souvenirs and gifts. So, after breakfast at Khudee, which supports Down's syndrome children by providing them internships, the morning was spent going around Bohri Bazaar and Zainab Market, and the afternoon at Dolmen Mall, Clifton. Dinner was at Creek Walk in Phase VIII where everyone had a great time trying out different gastronomical delights of their choice.

The last item on this hectic four-day itinerary was watching a movie, bringing back childhood memories of sleepovers, and culminating the reunion on a high, nostalgic and sad note that the four days had whizzed by so quickly. But it left us all determined to reschedule a reunion, in five years this time – as we can't afford to wait another 50 anymore!



Empress Market

A New Oasis of Fashion and Leadership

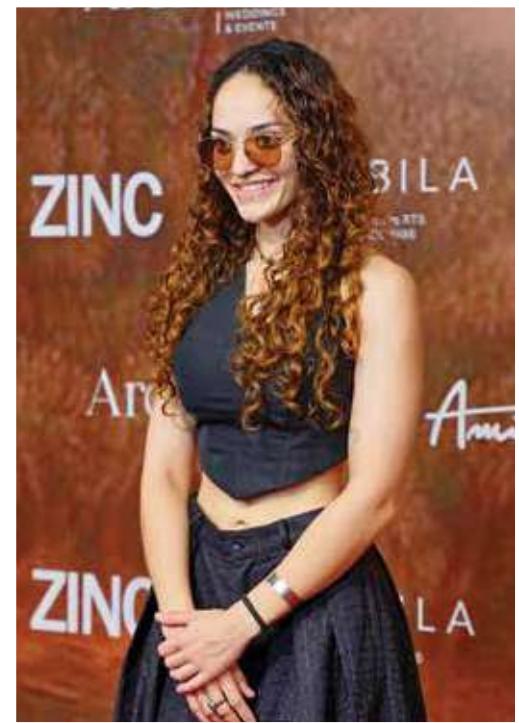


The House of Amir Adnan unveiled its Summer 2025 Collection, Nakhlistan, in a groundbreaking showcase at Area 51, Karachi. Conceptualized as an immersive journey into a desert oasis, the collection blended ancient mystique with contemporary elegance. But beyond the fashion, the evening marked a milestone in the brand's storied history. It was the official transition of leadership to Parishae Adnan, who stepped into her role as CEO of the House of Amir Adnan. A visionary designer and a fierce advocate of sustainability, Parishae has brought a new era of purpose and innovation to the iconic label, honouring its legacy while steering it toward a future rooted in cultural depth, modern relevance, and responsible luxury.

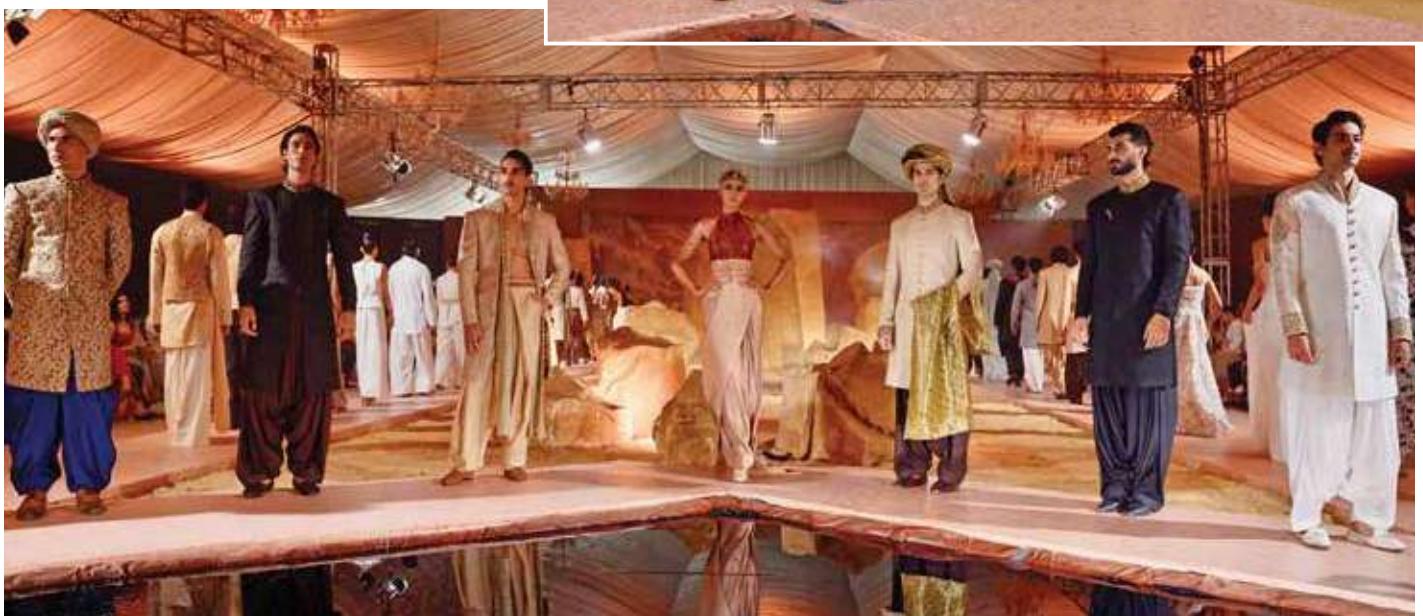
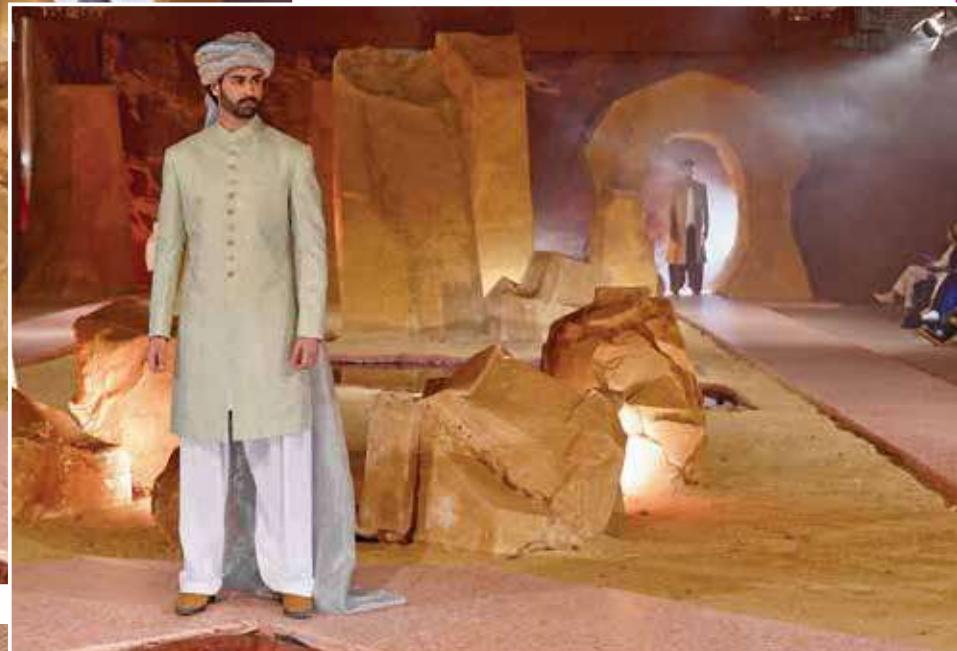
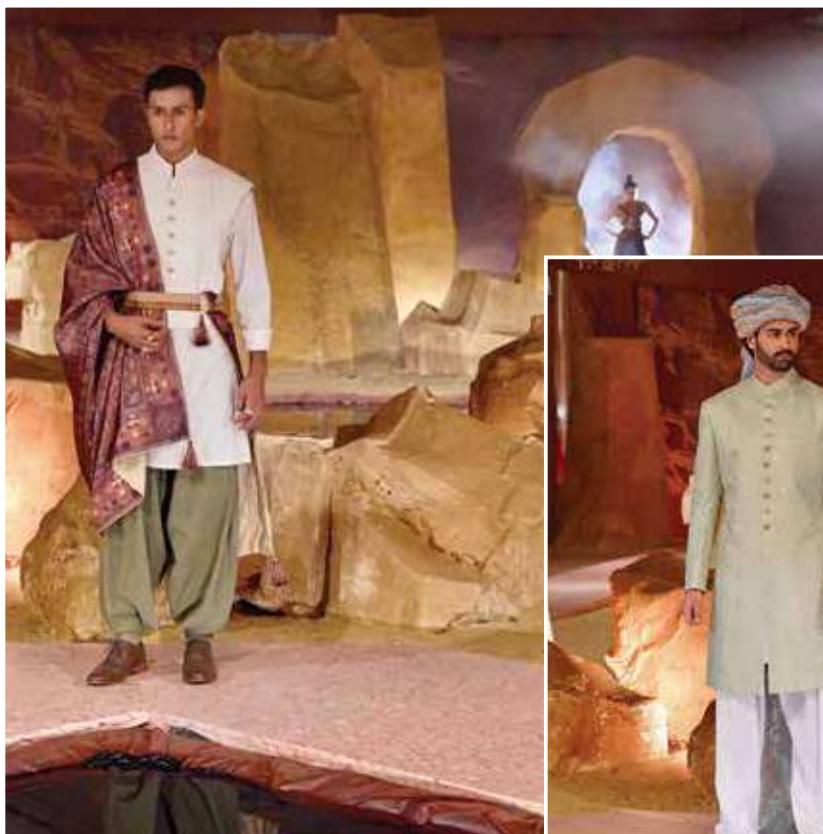
"Nakhlistan—meaning oasis—symbolizes a sanctuary of hope amidst vast, uncertain landscapes. For me, my Nakhlistan is my company and all the people I get to work with each day. We as humans need a network of support around us to remind us we are not alone, and that there is always something to look forward to. I hope this show symbolizes a beacon of light for anyone who needs a reason to keep moving forward," shared Parishae Adnan.

The Nakhlistan Summer 2025 collection was a blend of tradition and innovation, brought to life through muted desert tones, mirage-kissed pastels, and deep shadowed blacks that closed the show with silhouettes alternating between fluid drapery and structured tailoring. Asymmetrical embroideries, signature silk linings inscribed with Nakhlistan motifs, and intricate detailing reflected Parishae's unwavering commitment to craft and authenticity.

The showcase drew a high-wattage guest list across the creative, fashion, and entertainment industries. Notable attendees included actors Ahad Raza Mir, Ahsan Khan, Khushhal Khan, Azfar Rehman, and Ali Rehman. Designers and proud parents Huma Adnan and Amir Adnan were also present to show their support, along with theatre director Nida Butt and philanthropist Ronak Lakhani.



Parishae Adnan





Unveiling Debut Collection Floréal

Emerging designer Murk Tariq Bajari introduced her label, Murk, at a launching event in Karachi. The evening featured the debut collection titled Floréal, a harmonious blend of luxury prêt, formals, and bridal ensembles, marking an addition to Pakistan's fashion landscape.

The event commenced with an introduction by renowned model and host, Mushk Kaleem, setting the tone for the evening. The introduction was followed by the unveiling of the brand's fashion film featuring the stunning Hania Aamir, paving the way for designer Murk Tariq Bajari to take the stage. Expressing heart-

felt gratitude, she shared, "Murk is not just a brand; it's a piece of me."

The fashion showcase presented craftsmanship and contemporary design. The ambiance was elevated by a live performance from singer Affan Khan, who energized the runway with his hit song "Pal Pal." The evening culminated with actress Sarah Khan gracing the ramp as the showstopper, receiving applause from guests.

The launch of Murk was a refreshing addition to the fashion industry, blending traditional aesthetics with modern sensibilities. The event was attended by celebrities, influencers, socialites, and members of the media fraternity.





Serial **Goonj** Sheds Light on Workplace Verbal Harassment

A thought-provoking media junket was organized recently for the upcoming drama serial 'Goonj', a powerful project that delves into the often-overlooked issue of verbal harassment in the workplace. The event saw the presence of the drama's leading cast Gohar Rasheed, Komal Meer and Feroz Qadri along with several notable bloggers and digital media platforms.

Goonj is more than just a drama; it's a bold attempt to create awareness around the emotional and psychological toll that verbal harassment can have on individuals, especially in professional environments. Unlike physical harassment, verbal harassment is often brushed aside or normalized, making it difficult for victims to speak up. It can include unwanted comments, derogatory remarks, sexist jokes, manipulation, threats, and any communication that makes the other person feel unsafe, humiliated or demeaned.

The drama highlights how such behaviour not only affects the victim's mental well-being but also their professional growth, confidence and ability to work in a safe space. 'Goonj' also sheds light on the laws

that exist to protect individuals from this kind of misconduct laws that many are either unaware of or unsure how to act upon.

During the junket, the cast spoke passionately about their roles and the importance of telling such stories through mainstream media. Gohar Rasheed emphasized the responsibility artists carry in using their platform to drive social change, while Komal Meer opened up about how her character reflects the real struggles of many women in today's workplaces. Feroz Qadri added that the drama aims to encourage both victims and bystanders to recognize toxic behaviour and take a stand against it.

The event was received with enthusiasm, with bloggers and media outlets praising the team for tackling such an important topic. The creators of Goonj hope the drama will spark meaningful conversations, empower victims to speak up, and remind organizations of the need to create respectful and harassment-free workplaces.

As Goonj prepares to go on air, it carries the promise of not just entertainment, but education, empathy, and empowerment. - Ariba Fahaam Khan



Pakistan's First Superman Fan Club' Launched in Karachi

For fans of pop culture, entertainment, anime, comics, gaming, and cosplay in Pakistan, an event titled "Comic Con Pakistan" is being organized by Aamir Sajjad Ventures which will be held on January 31, 2026, at the Karachi Expo Centre. This announcement was made during a special press briefing by Syed Aamir Sajjad, CEO of Aamir Sajjad Ventures & President Comic Con Pakistan. He stated that this event would serve as a major milestone for the promotion of pop culture and creative arts in Pakistan, offering not only entertainment but also a high-profile platform for global artists, brands, and digital creators.

As part of the event's Road to Comic Con Pakistan 2026 initiative pre-launch, an iconic life-sized Superman statue was unveiled from the private collection of curator Syed Aamir Sajjad. On this occasion, Pakistan's first Superman Fan Club was also launched, along with a tribute fan club dedicated to the legacy of late Christopher Reeve, who famously portrayed Superman in the 1978 film.

The event received more emphasis as Superman's new movie, after a lapse of 13 years, was released recently. Directed by James Gunn, Superman is

portrayed by David Corenswet with Rachel Brosnahan as Lois Lane. Superman's Logo was also revealed on Comic Con Pakistan's Head Office Building in Karachi, by Syed Aamir Sajjad after the press conference. HKC Entertainment distributor of Warner Bros. new Superman movie also collaborated with the event by sending official Superman movie display and posters.

The official Mascot of Comic Con Pakistan was also revealed. Aamir Sajjad said, "Superhero Pakistan's movie is under production in Hollywood right now as we speak." The ceremony was attended by notable personalities from Pakistan including media representatives and distinguished guests. In response to a question, Syed Aamir Sajjad stated that the purpose of this launch event was to share the vision and details of Comic Con Pakistan and to highlight the importance of the creative and entertainment industry in the country. "Comic Con Pakistan aims to not only provide a memorable experience for young people but also to play a pivotal role in showcasing local creative talent on an international stage," he added.

The ambiance and the minute detail focusing on Superman and his history impressed the audience, lauding the hard work of Aamir Sajjad who meticulously explained everything in detail.



Cinematic Excellence and Cultural Heritage Shine Bright

HUM Network in partnership with the Karachi Film Society (KFS), hosted the Pakistan International Film Festival 2025, a celebration of creative empowerment, cinema and cultural heritage. Spanning four vibrant days, the festival began on June 19 with a special focus on World Intellectual Property Day, in collaboration with the Intellectual Property Organisation (IPO). The event attracted a diverse audience comprising media professionals, academics, corporate leaders, students and aspiring filmmakers.

The opening day featured compelling keynote addresses from IPO leadership, industry experts and cultural icons, exploring the nexus of creativity, technology and intellectual property in Pakistan's arts and music sectors. Honoured guests included Senior Minister and Member of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, Sharjeel Inam Memon and HUM Network President, Sultana Siddiqui, who emphasised the media's vital role in safeguarding and

promoting original creative works. Former ambassador Farukh Amil, Chairperson of IPO-Pakistan, delivered a keynote speech underscoring the importance of IP protection in nurturing creativity and driving economic growth. The day also featured panel discussions on the impact of technology particularly AI on creative ownership and innovation among youth.

The afternoon culminated in a lively musical performance by the NAPA ensemble and Saif Samejo's band, blending cultural melodies with themes of intellectual property. The day concluded with souvenir distribution and a networking lunch. Day two spotlighted international storytelling in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut. Attendees enjoyed screenings of acclaimed German films 'Beyond the Blue Border' (2024) and 'Red Sky' (2023), celebrating cross-cultural narratives and cinematic innovation.

The third day showcased Pakistani film 'John' (2023), directed by Babur Ali, which captivated audiences with

its compelling storytelling and stellar cast. This was followed by the German film 'She Chef' (2023), directed by Melanie Liebheit and Gereon Wetzel, narrating the inspiring culinary journey of a young Austrian woman navigating Michelin-starred kitchens across Europe.

The highlight of the day was the grand premiere of 'Hundan: An Echo of a Dirge' (2025). The film's unveiling was attended by its director Karamat Ali Hunzai and the cast. Distinguished guests including Sindh Minister Nasir Hussain Shah, Amin Hashwani and notable personalities from the media and social sectors.

The festival's final day was dedicated to community outreach and youth engagement. It featured a special screening for children from a local orphanage, followed by a showcase of short films created by university students. The closing screening featured 'Glassworker', a poignant film depicting the life of a young glassblower navigating relationships amid war and upheaval.

HUM Network Partners with Pixel Entertainment to Bring Back MasterChef Pakistan

After over a decade, the world's most celebrated cooking reality series, MasterChef, is officially returning to Pakistan. This exciting revival is being led by Pixel Entertainment, the rights holder and official production partner, in collaboration with HUM Network, which proudly comes on board as the exclusive media partner for the show's much-anticipated return.

The format rights for MasterChef Pakistan have been secured through a landmark agreement enabling the local adaptation of the internationally popular show for Pakistani audiences, combining world-class production values with the rich and diverse culinary culture of Pakistan.

Call for entries began in June 2025, inviting amateur cooks from across the country to audition for a chance to compete on Pakistan's most prestigious culinary stage. Auditions are scheduled for July, with full-scale production commencing in Karachi in August. The show will premiere on HUM TV in October 2025, reaching millions of viewers across Pakistan and beyond.

MasterChef is officially recognized as the world's most successful cookery television format by Guinness World

Records. With 70 local versions, over 700 seasons, and more than 16,000 episodes aired globally, it remains a true global phenomenon.

With MasterChef Pakistan set to premiere in October, viewers can look forward to a spectacular return filled with passion, flavour and fierce culinary competition made possible through the powerful collaboration between Pixel Entertainment and HUM Network.



IBA Karachi Celebrates AACSB Accreditation



IBA Karachi hosted an alumni dinner to celebrate the prestigious AACSB accreditation, an achievement that places IBA among the top six percent elite business schools globally, at a local hotel. The evening opened with warm remarks by Dr. S Akbar Zaidi, Executive Director, IBA Karachi, moderated by Dr. Sahar Awan, Assistant Professor and Chairperson, Management Department, IBA-SBS. The evening brought together a distinguished gathering of IBA alumni and industry leaders, marking a momentous milestone not just for IBA, but for Pakistan's higher education landscape.

The event featured reflections from Dr. Abdullah Sheikh, Dean, IBA-SBS; Malahat Awan, Director, Alumni, Resource Mobilization and Corporate Relations, and guests including Mohammad Zubair, Former Governor of Sindh; Wasif Rizvi, President, Habib University; Amir Paracha, CEO, Unilever Pakistan; and Sultana Siddiqui, Chairperson, HUM Network, who shared how this global recognition is a game-changer for business education in Pakistan. IBA Karachi, Pakistan's leading and most prestigious institution of higher education, has nurtured generations of trailblazers, with 20,000+ alumni driving innovation and leading organizations across the globe.



HUM Network launches Nestlé NIDO HUM Spelling Whizz

In a significant step toward promoting literacy and a passion for language among young learners in Pakistan, HUM News and Nestlé NIDO (Pakistan) have launched Nestlé NIDO HUM Spelling Whizz' competition. The inauguration ceremony of the project was held at the head office of HUM Network, where a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between the two parties.

The 'Nestlé NIDO HUM Spelling Whizz' project is spearheaded by "HUM in Education," an initiative dedicated to creating engaging learning opportunities. The development of this project has been led by HUM Network's Special Projects and Events team.

The collaboration with Nestlé NIDO centres on organising nationwide spelling competitions aimed at involving students from Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad, along with their parents and teachers, in educational activities that promote a love for language. Through this unique initiative, students will have the opportunity to demonstrate their spelling abilities while building confidence, enhancing their focus, and expressing themselves more effectively.

As part of this collaboration, regional rounds of the spelling competition are scheduled to take place in the HBL Auditoriums of Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad. The event was attended by a large number of journalists and dignitaries including Fabrizio Bielli, Consul General of Italy in Karachi, Pawan Dhande, Acting British Deputy Head of Mission and Rimsha Hussain, Social Culture Department, Consulate of Indonesia in Karachi.

The ceremony was attended by key representatives from Nestlé NIDO, including Affan Cheema, Sr. Marketing Manager; Mahrah Rizwan, Sr. Brand Manager; Taha Khan, Head of Media and Haroon Masood, Client Relationship Director along with Bilal Kashif, Associate Director, Media Buying at Publicis Media.

HUM Network was represented by Arif Hussain (COO), accompanied by Hassan Akbar (Head of Digital Sales) and Sahar Saad Head of Special Projects and Events, Masala, PR team and other officials.

The partnership agreement was signed by Hassan Akbar on behalf of HUM Network, while Affan Cheema signed the agreement on behalf of Nestlé NIDO.

Imperium Amidst Opium Blossoms

By Zehra Jummabhoy

AKashidakari on the era of the East India Company titled Imperium Amidst Opium Blossoms was presented at the Mohatta Palace recently. The artist Adeela Suleman's brilliant and painstaking work spread over more than half a year, combined applique work, hand and machine free motion embroidery on atlas jamawar banarsi katan / poth silk, brocade kimkhwab, brass, crystal and zari tassels. The size of the tapestry was 17.5 by 15.66 foot.

This Kashidakari was specially commissioned for the exhibition 'Tigers & Dragons: India and Wales in Britain,' curated by Katy Freer and Zehra Jumabhoy at the Glynn Vivian museum in Swansea, Wales (23rd May – 2nd November 2025) Adeela Suleman's tapestry, combining the Tiger of India with the Dragon of Wales, focused on the inter-weaving symbols of British Imperialism and the resistance towards it.

Imperium Amidst Opium Blossoms showcases key figures from the East India Company (EIC), as well as its impact on India, China and Wales. Through its use of Kashida (a Mughal-era embroidery technique that combines silk appliquéd with hand-stitched embellishments) it alludes to the by-gone splendour of the Mughals – and the ascendency of the British in their place. At the heart of this story (and tapestry) are Robert Clive (aka Clive of India) and Powis Castle (located in Wales, UK). Winning the Battle of Plassey (1757), Clive was responsible for kickstarting the British Empire in India. Much of the loot he gleaned resides in Powis Castle. His son, Edward Clive, as Governor of Madras, was involved in the death of Tipu Sultan (the 'Tiger of Mysore'); whose jewel-encrusted, tiger-themed treasures were subsequently relocated to Powis.

If such loot continues to be parked in Wales – making it a beneficiary of the Empire – Welsh historians argue that Wales



was (and is) a victim of Imperialism too. In Imperium, the Tiger of India is paired with the emblem of Wales: the Red Dragon. Entering the Welsh flag in 1959, the fiery dragon has been read as a symbol of Welsh resistance to English rule from Medieval times. Likewise, in Suleman's work, tigers denote defiance. Suleman explains: "Tipu Sultan famously used tigers as symbols of his rebellion against the British." But, Suleman's silky embroidery is not simply about past oppression. It reflects on the Chinese Opium Wars of the 1800s, instigated by the EIC in the name of free trade. In the foreground are hallucinating opium addicts, including a Chinese aristocrat. A closer look at the Kashidakari's seductive, red folds reveals bloodied waters, populated by Chinese junk boats and the British warship, Nemesis. As Imperium's border entwines white poppies with the EIC logo, it tells a timely cautionary tale against greed.



France Celebrates National Day in Karachi

The Consul General of France in Karachi, H.E. Mr. Alexis Chahtahtinsky, hosted a reception to mark Bastille Day, France's National Day, commemorating the historic revolution of 1789. The event was attended by Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon, Local Government Minister Saeed Ghani, diplomats, business leaders and members of the French and Pakistani communities. Addressing the gathering, Mr. Chahtahtinsky said, 'Today we celebrate the unity of the French people and their enduring commitment to liberty, equality and fraternity – values born out of the French Revolution, 236 years ago.' He recalled that on 14 July 1789, the people of Paris stormed the Bastille prison, symbolizing the fall of monarchy and arbitrary power. Celebrating this event in Karachi symbolizes France's enduring friendship with Pakistan. He said France was the first non-Muslim country to recognize Pakistan's independence in 1947 and has stood by it ever since from military partnerships to cultural exchanges. He mentioned joint work in defense: Mirage jets, Alouette helicopters, and Agosta submarines built in Karachi with French assistance a legacy that "cannot be undone." The Consul General emphasized cultural and educational bonds "For over 60 years, French archaeologists have worked in Sindh and Balochistan, uncovering priceless artifacts and amplifying the 'Voices of the Soil'." He highlighted: Improved economic conditions in Pakistan, acknowledged by the IMF

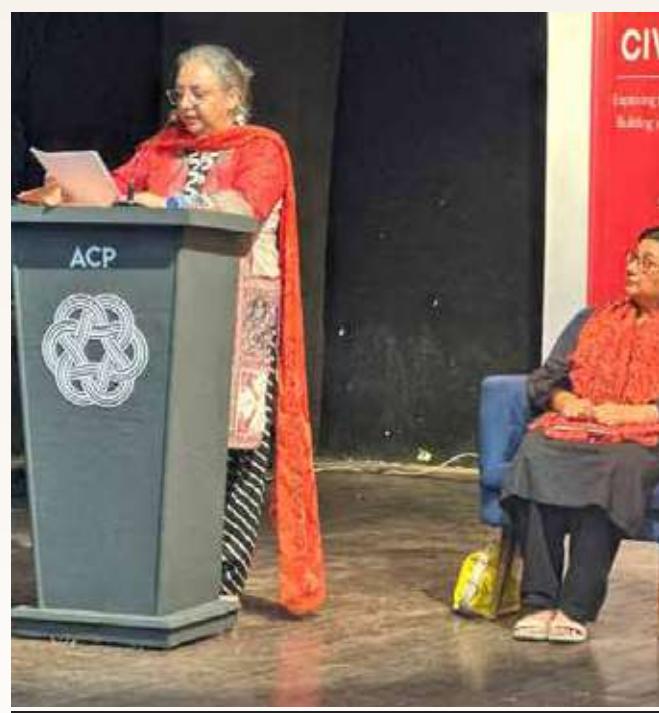
French companies' growing interest in the local market: CMA/CGM, Schneider Electric, Thales, L'Oréal, Peugeot (in partnership with Lucky Motors in Korangi, Karachi) Strong Pakistani exporters and investors in France: Gul Ahmed, Chottani Industries, Martin Dow. He thanked the Pakistan France Business Alliance, with special mention of Mr. Humayun Akhlaq (CEO, Schneider Electric) for helping revive economic ties. He acknowledged work with IBA, Aga Khan Foundation, and Alliance Française Karachi, the oldest foreign cultural center in Pakistan, founded in 1954. He shared that the Campus France office is now permanently based at Alliance Française Karachi to support growing academic exchange. In conclusion, he declared "Vive la République, Vive la France Pakistan Zindabad!" Fireworks, live concert and cheese flown in from France enhanced the lively atmosphere of the celebration.



The Future of Civilization

Arts Council Karachi in collaboration with the family of Syed Muhammad Taqi (late), hosted a book launch of 'The Future of Civilization: Exploring the Profound Impact of the Role of Sacrifice in Building a Noble and Humanitarian Society.' Originally published in Urdu in 1980 under the title Karbala: Tehzeeb Ka Mustaqbil, the book has now been translated into English by Syed Muhammad Tagi's granddaughter, journalist and writer Sumera Naqvi, and published by Lightstone Publishers. The event brought together admirers, family members and friends of the late scholar, former editor of Daily Jang and intellectual Syed Muhammad Taqi, to commemorate his work and legacy.

In his book, Syed Muhammad Taqi examines the ethical dilemmas and moral crises facing modern civilization, arguing that humanity's failure to uphold fundamental values prevents the evolution of a truly noble and humanitarian society. He wrote, "The modern age is faced with a serious societal crisis and conflicting intellectual approaches, due to which fundamental civilizational values are in conflict." The evening also featured a distinguished panel of speakers.



China's Rise - Lessons for Pakistan

The Pakistan Institute of International Affairs (PIIA) held a lecture titled "China's Transformation: Lessons for Developing Countries", delivered by eminent banker, academic and Federal Banking Ombudsman of Pakistan, Sirajuddin Aziz, recently.

Mr. Aziz, an avid "China watcher" with extensive experience in China's banking sector, traced the historical and economic evolution of the country, highlighting how consistency in economic policy has been the cornerstone of China's global ascent.

He credited visionary leadership Mao Zedong's founding of the People's Republic in 1949, and Deng Xiaoping's reforms like "One Country, Two Systems" and Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for transforming China into an export powerhouse. Drawing a parallel to Pakistan, Mr. Aziz emphasized the dire need for a long-term, bipartisan economic policy, consistently implemented regardless of political shifts. "We debate budgets, but never economic policy," he pointedly remarked.

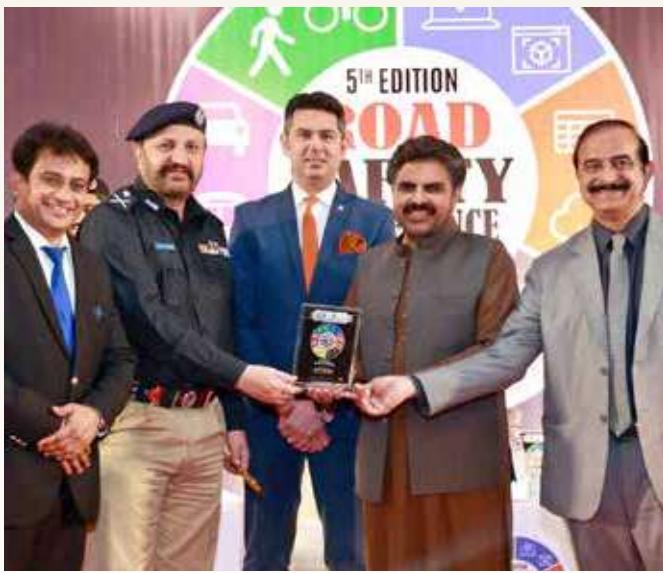
PIIA Chairperson Dr Masuma Hasan also addressed the gathering, reaffirming the significance of Sino-Pak bilateral relations rooted in mutual respect and long-standing cooperation.



Road Safety Conference

A'Road Safety Conference' was held recently at a local hotel in Karachi, organized by Youth Parliament in collaboration with Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Government of Sindh

Provincial Minister for Energy, Planning & Development Syed Nasir Hussain Shah stated that the primary cause of



the rising number of traffic accidents in Karachi is over-speeding. He emphasized that public awareness, law enforcement and youth participation are key to controlling this dangerous trend.

In his opening remarks, Chairman of Youth Parliament, Rizwan Jaffar expressed concern over the rising death toll from road accidents in Karachi, emphasising the need for a local train system and improved public transportation in the city.

Additional IG Police Karachi, Javed Alam Odho, said that the use of modern technology has become essential for improving the urban traffic system. Efforts are underway to enhance the effectiveness of smart traffic signals, camera monitoring, and instant penalty systems.

Addressing the conference, DIG Traffic Karachi, Peer Muhammad Shah, said that underage driving, violations of traffic laws, and driving without a license are major factors contributing to accidents.

Shields were distributed among participants who showed outstanding performance, while votes of thanks were delivered by Mr. Abdul Aleem Lashari, Secretary of Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Government of Sindh.

Empowering the Women of Gilgit-Baltistan



Dawood Global Foundation launched LADIES-FUND Skardu, championing women empowerment across Pakistan. The Skardu chapter, set against the breathtaking backdrop of the northern mountains, brought together inspiring female leaders and change-makers from across Gilgit-Baltistan in a powerful roundtable introduction and networking event. The event welcomed passionate women from a variety of fields, unified by a shared vision: to elevate the role of women in society, recognize their contributions, and create opportunities for growth and leadership. Some of the notable women attending included Chief Guest, Princess Skardu Nazia Batool and Bushra Rehman (Senior Civil Judge)

The roundtable included introductions, discussion of upcoming initiatives, and potential impact projects focusing on skill development, entrepreneurship, and cultural preservation. The event also set the stage for future philanthropic initiatives, talent spotlights, and training workshops for tribal and local women.

Canadian-Pakistani Film Released

The Canadian-Pakistani film by writer/director Fawzia Mirza, 'The Queen Of My Dreams' was released across US cinemas in June. Starring Amrit Kaur as Azra, a Canadian born grad student of Pakistani descent who is at odds with her conservative Pakistan-born mother, played by Nimra Bucha and Hamza Haq. The Queen of my Dreams is a love letter to mothers and daughters. Following a family tragedy in Pakistan, Azra is launched into a Pakistani-inspired journey through memories real and imagined, from her mother's youth in 1969 Karachi to her own coming of age in Canada in 1999.

Pakistani-Canadian actress Meher Jaffri who features in a double role in the film



said, "I was drawn to Fawzia's script because of the love letter to Karachi that is etched into the story and instantly connected with the two characters she approached me for – one set in the Karachi of the 90s' I grew up in and had my own coming-of-age in, and the other set in the almost mythical Karachi of the 60s' that we hear about from our parents."

Shot on location in Canada and Pakistan, the film involves cast and crew from Canada and Pakistan. Besides acting in the film, Meher Jaffri also served as the Casting Director (Pakistan) through her production company Bodhi Works. The film premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2023 and has since had a successful run on the international festival circuit at BFI London and SXSW amongst others, and racked up two Canadian Screen Academy and Directors Guild of Canada awards. It has already been released in the UK and Canada.

Showcasing Home Chefs

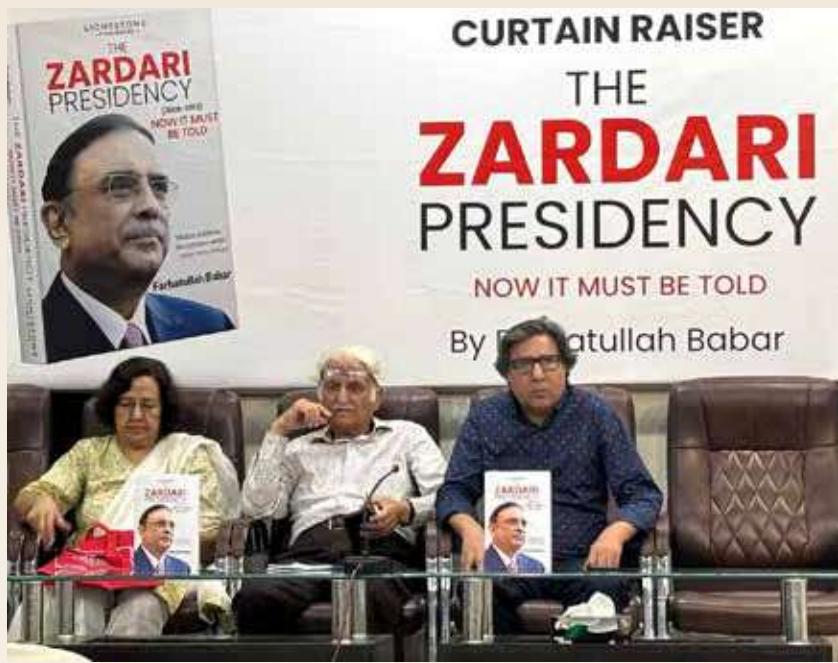
Biz Today, in collaboration with Memon Zaiqa, hosted a vibrant "Mango Tango Gala", featuring 25 home chefs who presented a delightful array of mango infused dishes, including Mango Dahi Bhalle, Mango Pani Puri, Mango Khaosey, and Mango Burfi. The event celebrated the creativity of home based culinary talent, giving them a platform to showcase their skills and innovations using Pakistan's Favourite summer fruit.

Aisha Fayyaz Khanani, CEO of Memon Zaiqa, said, "Such events empower home chefs and provide them with a platform to shine. "Biz Today focuses on promoting grassroots talent across culinary and creative industries.



Book Launch of “The Zardari Presidency 2008-2013. Now It Must Be Told”

A Curtain Raiser was held at the I H Burney Conference Hall of the Karachi Press Club to announce the publication of 'The Zardari Presidency 2008-2013. Now It Must Be Told', written by Farhatullah Babar, former Spokesperson of President Zardari. Ameena Saiyid, managing director of Lightstone Publishers, who published the book, Farhatullah Babar and Fazil Jamili, president of The Karachi Press Club spoke on the occasion. Farhatullah Babar said Mr Zardari did not know that he was writing this book which is based on his detailed diaries from the time that he was the Spokesperson. He said Mr. Zardari was neither a villain nor an angel, he was a human being. Mr Babar gave a detailed description of the entire book to a riveted audience who asked many questions.



KATI Pays Tribute to Armed Forces



The Korangi Association of Trade & Industry (KATI) organized a Flag Hoisting Ceremony at its premises to celebrate the recent success of Pakistan's armed forces in repelling Indian aggression. The event was held as a mark of national pride and solidarity, reflecting the patriotic spirit of the business community.

KATI was proudly represented by its senior leadership, including Mr. Zubair Chhaya, Acting Patron-in-Chief; Mr. Junaid Naqi, President, Mr. Ejaz Ahmed Shaikh SVP, Syed Tariq Hussain VP KATI and Zahid Hameed, Chairman CSR. They were joined by several esteemed guests from allied trade bodies and the KATI Executive Committee.

The ceremony was graced by Rear Admiral Faisal Amin HI(M), Commander Coast, Pakistan Navy, who attended as the Chief Guest.

An Evening of Music

A Mystic Music group "Chahaar Darvesh" presented an event at Arts Council Karachi's auditorium which was a blend of music, spirituality and community. The event was an enjoyable experience for the audience present on the occasion with mystical sounds and performances. The performers Ameer Ali, Abdul Ahad Khan, Anina Fida and Maria Saud brought a depth of emotion and spirituality to the evening with their confident and musical renditions. The event was organised and conducted by Shakil Jafri and Shazleen Vahidy who from the opening notes to the final performance created a seamless and enjoyable experience for the full house auditorium.





A New Era of Transit Hospitality

The iconic Airport Hotel Karachi has officially entered a new era of revitalization and strategic growth under the ownership of PIA Holdings, marking its transition from direct management by Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). This milestone was celebrated during a special media briefing held at the hotel on Thursday, attended by members of the media of Karachi Editors Club. The event was addressed by Muhammad Asim, General Manager of Airport Hotel, along with Mubasher Mir, President of the Karachi Editors Club.

Management explained that the hotel had once flourished, particularly from 1984 to 1990, due to high volumes of international transit passengers. However, changing travel trends, particularly the growth of Islam-

abad as a transit hub, led to a decline. In response, the current leadership has repositioned the hotel to focus on commercial and corporate clientele.

Azeem Qureshi, a renowned hotelier and tourism promoter who was present at the event, emphasized the vast untapped potential of tourism in Pakistan. "Tourism has the power to uplift Pakistan's economy, as seen in countries like Turkey. It's not only the government's responsibility; the public also plays a vital role in welcoming and supporting tourists," he noted.

This transformation under Chairman and CEO PIA Holdings and Hotel Management is part of a broader national strategy to restructure public-sector enterprises for greater efficiency, profitability, and service excellence.

A Glamorous Entry on Zamzama



The Launch of Kaif Salon at Zamzama saw a mix of celebrities, media, and corporate invitees on the red carpet. Guests were treated to live demos, refreshments as they explored the state-of-the-art facility. The salon's team of stylists presented mini-makeovers and consultations.

Sateesh Linjara whose dedication shaped this space into more than a salon. Sateesh said, "We are here to redefine self-care by merging craftsmanship with couture."

Rakshanda Khan Unveils Her Book of Poetry

The literary and cultural circles of Karachi were present at the launch of "Mera Masla Mohabbat", inaugurated by Mayor Murtaza Wahab.

The ceremony was presided over by the celebrated poet Anwar Shaoor, while Dr. Ambreen Haseeb Amber served as the host.

People who expressed their views on the book, including Dr. Fatima Hasan, Khalida Uzma, Khalilullah Farooqi and Mishal Khan. The evening was a celebration of poetic expression, feminine perspective, and the enduring power of words.





STARTING FROM: 19TH JULY, 2025

EVERYDAY | 7:00 PM

WRITER: SEEMA SHIEKH | DIRECTOR: IRFAN ASLAM

PRODUCER: GOLD BRIDGE MEDIA & MD PRODUCTIONS

CAST: BILAL QURESHI, SUKAINA KHAN, ASAD MALIK, SADAF SIDDIKI, ZAIN AFZAL, AHSAN AFZAL KHAN, ALI JOSH, RASHID FAROOQI, AYESHA KHAN, ARSALAN BUTT, ZEBA ALI & OTHERS.



Sonya Hussyn



Aariz Abbas, Javed Sheikh & Anaya Abbas



Mohsin Feroze, Masarrat Misbah, Samina Peerzada & Saqib Malik



Rafay Rashdi



Yashma Gill

Premiere of Horror Film Deemak

The highly anticipated Pakistani horror film Deemak, directed by Rafay Rashdi, held its premiere drawing in celebrities, film critics and media. The star studded show was attended by Deemak's lead cast members Sonya Hussyn and Faysal Quraishi, veterans Samina Peerzada, Javed Sheikh youngsters Aariz and Anaya Abbas.



Rafay Rashdi & Mr and Mrs Adnan Shah Tipu with guest



Sana Hussyn



Samina Peerzada



Shamoon Abbasi



Sultana Siddiqui & Syed Murad Ali



Yasir Nawaz & Nida Yasir



Mr and Mrs Osama Tahir



Yasir Hussain, Faysal Quraishi, Sonya Hussyn & Syed Murad Ali



Aijaz Aslam, Shahzad Nawaz & Faisal Qureshi with guests



Hasan Ahmed & Sunita Marshall



Deepak Perwani



Adnan Jilani, Javed Sheikh & Hasan Rizvi



Zara Noor Abbas & Asad Siddiqui



Mr and Mrs Ahmad Hassan



Junaid Khan



Andreas Wegner
German Deputy Head of Mission



Shazleen Vahidy



Mehr, Rameen, Noor, Ammara, Tara & Sharifa



Sherezad Rahim, Tani Rabbani & Nadya Mistry



Cake Cutting Ceremony

Mango Party

Ladies Fund Head Tara Uzra Dawood held a mango party at the Buraq Centre recently. The party was attended by entrepreneurs, businessmen and media. The theme of the day was yellow.



Khursheed Hyder



Samina Aslam



Jimmy Engineer



Shamaeel Ansari



Zain, Wajihah, Asad, Rameen & Bilal



Sadaf, Tara, Ruhi, Mariam, Deepak & guests



Tayyab & Amelia Dewan



Madeha Khan & Huma T Dawood



Saad Qadri, Haseeb Khan, Tara & Aman



Dina Patel



Wajiha Ashraf Zain



Zainab Rafiq & Mahnaz Habib



Umaina Khan



Natasha Baig



Khursheed Hyder, Shahnaz Wazir Ali, Rubina Ashraf, Sultana Siddiqui, Amin Hashwani, Karamat Ali & Hina Bayat



Shunaid Qureshi, Nasir Shah & Sultana Siddiqui

The Premiere of Hundan

The premiere of Hundan at PIFF 2025 had celebrities, media and cultural figures celebrating Pakistan's first Burushaski language feature film. An emotional story set in Hunza, blending folklore with a powerful message on nature and preservation.



Taha Saleem & S.T Mustafa



Sabeen, Munaf & Ayman



Asad Zaman



Shahnaz Wazir Ali & Naushaba

Erum Fawad



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EGYPT WILL TEST HIM.

THE CONQUEROR RETURNS!

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