

The story of Tehmina Durrani: Philanthropist, author and spouse of PM Shehbaz Sharif

After assuming the office of Prime Minister, Shehbaz Sharif shifted to the PM's house in Islamabad. But would his spouse, Tehmina Durrani, accompany him on this journey of a lavish lifestyle, considering her status as a leading human rights activist and a philanthropist, is still to be seen. Tehmina Durrani, born into one of Pakistan's most influential families, was raised in the privileged milieu of Lahore high society and educated at the same school as Benazir Bhutto. She is a philanthropist, human rights activist, artist and celebrated author of four books. She married Shehbaz Sharif in 2003.

Despite her privileged upbringing, Tehmina Durrani is not known for her exuberant lifestyle. But her service, alongside Abdul Satar Edhi, was

transformational and life-changing for her. The influence of Edhi spurred her into social work and inspired her to establish the "Tehmina Durrani Foundation", with a mission to further Edhi's way of "humanitarianism" and his vision of Pakistan as a Social Welfare State.

In her quest to keep in touch with the problems of a common man, Ms Durrani moved in with the Edhi family and spent three years serving at Edhi Homes in Mithadar, Sorab Goth, and Kharadar Karachi. She became Edhi's apprentice and got his permission to author his autobiography, titled 'A Mirror to the Blind'. These years shadowing Edhi were a thesis for the dissertation of the book. These years were perhaps her most transformational as they laid the seeds for her further work and her spiritual quest for truth.

In a recent interview, after Shehbaz Sharif assumed the office of Prime Minister, Ms Durrani said that she was committed to playing her role, along with her husband, for the betterment of the people. She advised people to hold patience and trust in the leadership and competence of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. She expressed her husband's commitment to making Pakistan a great nation.

Ms Durrani also hoped that those who hold public offices, including politicians and government servants, would work for the betterment of the people rather than looking after their desires. She expressed her plans that as the spouse of the Prime Minister, she would stand by her husband through thick and thin and vowed to raise the lower and middle class of the country. —The Business Report



Pakistani e-commerce startup 'Bazaar' raises \$70 million in funding

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan e-commerce startup 'Bazaar' raised \$70 million in funding and scored the nation's second-largest funding round. The investment list is led by global investment giants like Dragoneer Investment Group and Tiger Global Management.

Bazaar is a Pakistani e-commerce startup that attempts to digitize Pakistan's retail with e-commerce, fintech and last-mile supply chain solutions. It was founded by two high-school friends less than two years ago and now operates in 21 cities across Pakistan, covering 30% of the population. It aims to build an "operating system for traditional retail" in Pakistan. This collaboration between Bazaar and the investment giants also marks the

first investment by Dragoneer in Pakistan. Apart from Tiger Global Management and Dragoneer, the list of investors in 'Bazaar' includes Indus Valley Capital, Defy Partners, Acrew Capital, Wavemaker Partners, B&Y Venture Partners and Zayn Capital. The reach of the company is now expanding as is shown on its website which says that the company has reached 500 towns. Saad Jangda, one of the founders of Bazaar, thanked everyone who became part of their journey including investors, suppliers and customers. "We will continue our mission to build an incredible institution for and from Pakistan and double down on building the best in class team and culture," Saad said. —APP



Pakistan pavilion wins silver award for Best Interior Design at Expo 2020

DUBAI: The Pakistan pavilion at the Dubai Expo 2020 won a silver award out of 192 pavilions for the best interior design.

An international jury convened to choose the best pavilion out of the 192 pavilions and chose Pakistan as the second best after Japan who secured the top spot. The proud news for the whole of Pakistan was announced on Twitter by the Adviser to the Prime Minister of Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood.

In a tweet, Mr Dawood said that an international jury was called to select the best Pavilion at Expo 2020 and Pakistan got Silver Award for interior de-

sign out of 192 Pavilions. "The response we received was overwhelming, and [the Pakistan] Pavilion already crossed 1M visitors mark which exceeded our expectations," Abdul Razak further wrote in the tweet.

He also praised the Ministry of Commerce, the Pakistan Trade Development Authority (TDAP), the Pakistan Embassy in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Pakistan's ambassador to the UAE. Pakistan Pavilion has proven to be a huge success in the Expo 2020 Dubai. The pavilion has been praised by thousands of people and has hosted more than a million visitors since its inauguration. —APP

Abida Parveen, Salim-Sulaiman's 'O Mere Maula' featuring Pankaj Tripathi will leave you teary-eyed

ISLAMABAD: Ahead of Eid, legendary Pakistani singer Abida Parveen and Indian composer duo Salim-Sulaiman have released O Mere Maula, a special cross-border Ramazan collaboration featuring Pankaj Tripathi.

The song, that released on April 9, has already surpassed 300,000 views on YouTube. Salim-Sulaiman share in its description, "Celebrating the spirit of Eid, year after year, with popular songs like Bismillah, Allahu Akbar and Astagfirullah, we present to you O Mere Maula, featuring the legend Abida Parveen."

The video begins with a glimpse of Mumbai, Islamabad and Toronto, to highlight where all the artists involved are spread across. Connected through screens as they serenade, they appear in synch, not only vocally but in spirit as they spread a religious and humanitarian message. The song also incorporates Quranic

verses as it revitalises the need for zakat, even when one is tight on cash and struggling to feed their own. The video pans back and forth between the singers and the narrative, that revolves around a family that sells flutes to make ends meet. A single father, played by Tripathi, is seen raising his son and daughter with

The cross-border collaboration celebrates the spirit of giving in the Holy month of Ramazan

values otherwise lacking in society today.

Despite that, the son is seen pocketing some of the money earned through the sales before reporting to his father. Tripathi catches him red handed, lashing out in anguish at the apparent betrayal. But in a fortunate turn of events, it is revealed that the

boy was only trying to save some money to feed a bunch of people in need. He also involves his sister in the deed, and is spotted by his father, who then joins him too. Listeners touched by the track are hailing "Sufi queen Abida Parveen" in its comments section, as well as the composer duo. Kalpana Bhagat writes, "Abida Parveen ma'am, you are like mother earth to us. Whenever we hear your voice, we feel better." A user named Muskan adds, "The word Maula brings peace itself." An Indian user named Jashobanta Das comments, "Didn't understand most of the words but the story portrayed is very heart touching and the music is immensely soulful." Another adds, "No one can beat Abida Ji when it comes to Sufi kalaam! No one!" Parveen garnered immense praise earlier this year with her Coke Studio number Tu Jhoom opposite Naseebo Laal. —APP



It's party time

Spending Ramazan away from home and learning to survive without my mother's scrumptious treats has allowed me to see firsthand the way other people spend this month



With the holy month of Ramazan upon us, I took the ample amount of free time my university had thankfully provided me with, to reminisce about my previous experiences with this most spiritual of Islamic months.

For as long as I can remember, Ramazan was spent primarily at home, treating myself to my mother's signature dishes — both for sehri and iftar. While we would occasionally dine out or visit a friend's or relative's house for iftar, or host one ourselves, these weren't usually on the cards. Spending pretty much the entire month at home had become something of a routine, and since this was a way of life for me, I assumed, rather naively, that this was the way of life for everyone.

The year and a half I have spent at the university has introduced me to a number of new things which I was not previously aware of. It has taught me a lot, and spending the month of Ramazan in the varsity hostel has proved to be an added learning experience for me. Not only am I spending my first ever Ramazan away from home, dealing with having to survive without my mother's scrumptious treats, it has also allowed me to see firsthand the way other people spend this month.

Firstly, the different traditions and cultures inform the way they spend the month of Ramazan. Some of these things come as a sort of a culture shock. The

way people from different areas and socio-economic backgrounds fast, is foremost among these. Another thing that I was not expecting was to receive an onslaught of invitations from people to have iftar with them. One segment of these was my hostel friends who wanted a break from the monotonous food at the facility and decided to break their fast at one of the numerous expensive restaurants in Islamabad. Even more numerous were the invitations (for iftar parties) from my day scholar friends. It seemed it was practically impossible for them to spend even a single day without either hosting or attending an iftar. The same goes for sehri parties, though to a lesser extent.

While not a daily occurrence, it is still quite a regular sight to see boarders break the curfew and spend the night out to catch a sehri party at someone's disposal. A couple of days into Ramazan and my social media was bombarded with stories and posts of my friends attending iftar and sehri parties — the likes of which I was also receiving invitations to.

This is what truly surprised me as these were the very same people who till only some time back would scarcely partake in such activities. While the trend of iftar parties has existed for a long time, it seems that the past two years of Covid-induced lockdowns have made people go almost overboard with the concept.

Hadiqa Kiani opens up on how Bilquis Edhi helped her adopt her son

It's a sad day for the nation. Bilquis Edhi, known to be the mother of orphans, is no more amongst us. The right-hand woman and other half of the late Abdul Sattar Edhi, has joined her partner after decades of philanthropic work in heaven. The Edhis did not only assume to be the caretakers of hundreds of abandoned babies but also gave them a home full of love and care during their lifetime. As she breathed her last in Karachi on Friday evening, singer and actor Hadiqa Kiani took to her social media handles to grieve the painful demise of the mother who bestowed her with a son.

The Raqeeb Se actor, directly impacted by Edhi's contributions, penned a heartfelt note to remember the "vesel" that brought her to her son, Naaday Ali. The 49-year-old actor, who thought of the late humanitarian as her own mother, shared pictures with Bilquis and her then, baby son on Instagram. "Mrs Bilquis Edhi was a woman unlike any other," read the caption.

She further added, "She took the world's burden on her back and stood up to simply help the world become a better place. I believe that Allah (SWT) made her vessel of aid to people in need. He also made her the vessel, my source, to bring me to my son, Naaday Ali. She trusted me with being a mother and I, like so many others touched by Mrs Edhi's grace, will forever be grateful. I pray for her peace and I pray her legacy carries on."

Model turned event planner Frieiha Altaf commented on Kiani's post to share a memory from the time when she introduced baby Naaday Ali to the entertainment fraternity, a celebration that was attended by Bilquis as

well. "I remember the day at PC when I came to your celebration to introduce your son to the world. I was so proud of you. She was there. She gave you and many others the best gift in the world. She gave hope & life to many families. May she rest in peace & inspire many!" wrote Altaf as she sent prayers for the departed soul.

Bilquis, a recipient of the Mother Teresa Memorial Award for Social Justice and Hilal-i-Imtiaz, died on Friday in Karachi from a cardiovascular disease she was under treatment for since the last few days. was reported to be in a stable condition on Thursday after she was rushed to the hospital earlier this week when her blood

