



Society Newsletter

Winter 2022



The Pakistan Society UK Committee and guests at the Annual Dinner

Message from Sir William Blackburne, Chairman

It has been quite a year. In the UK we have witnessed the death of our Queen and the accession of King Charles, the political turbulence caused by the fall of the Johnson ministry, the explosive seven-week Truss ministry and the scarcely calmer waters of the Sunak ministry. The year ends in a flurry of strikes to add to the misery caused by a health service barely able to cope, levels of inflation not witnessed for 30 years and sky-high energy prices. In Pakistan life has been even more unsettled with the terrible floods, unseen in past history for their scale and devastation, bitter political dramas with a hugely contested change of government followed by

select three things at this difficult time that lift the spirit and quicken one's step they would be these. First, the ability of the British public to unite in celebration of the Queen's 70th jubilee and later her unforgettable funeral. Second, the stoicism of the people of Pakistan in the face of unprecedented suffering wrought by the floods. Third, the joy of seeing England and Pakistan playing test cricket on Pakistani soil once more, quite irrespective of the results. The Pakistan Society flourishes through all of this. As 2022 ends, I and the other members of the Society's committee wish you all every good wish for a much better 2023.



The Pakistan Society 67th Annual Dinner

The 67th Annual Dinner of The Pakistan Society was held on Tuesday 24th May, 2022. This special evening this year was celebrating the 75th anniversary of Pakistan's independence.

As befitting a celebration of 75 years of Pakistan's independence, the dinner was a delightful evening all round. We enjoyed excellent speeches from our

Commonwealth; and from our guests of honour Prof. Abdul Bari Khan, founder and Chief Executive Officer of the rapidly growing Indus Hospital & Health Network, and Ms Sania Sufi, Chief Executive UK, The Citizens Foundation. We were also delighted to award the The Pakistan Society Jinnah Medal to Mrs Shama Husain, for her many years of dedicated contribution to the Society.

A final highlight of the evening was the unveiling of The Markhor, in commemoration of HRH Duke of Edinburgh's patronage of the Pakistan Society.





Tour of the South Asia Galleries

On Thursday 17th November, society members enjoyed an escorted tour of the South Asia Galleries, viewing various artefacts & textiles as well as an inclusive insight into the Study room, viewing a collection of paintings & manuscripts from the Mughal, Sikhs & the British in connection to Lahore.



'Conversations with my father - forty years on a daughter responds' Moneeza Hashmi in conversation with Victoria Schofield

On Tuesday 20th September, Society members enjoyed an excellent evening at the High Commission, learning about the intriguing newly published book "Conversations with my father – forty years on a daughter responds", by Moneeza Hashmi, the younger daughter of the much admired and iconic poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz.

“In this book I have shared the letters Faiz Sahib wrote to me over the years and to my children. I have lived with the regret of not being able to have connected with my father during the time he was with us. And so I thought of telling him all that I should have shared with him then and since. It is a completely different profile of the great poet, of a father and grandfather which has never before been presented from a public platform...it is indeed a labour of love keeping in mind that Faiz sahib is revered by so many across the world and that I must be careful about how I word my part.”



The Many Strands of Pakistani Art, 1947-Present

On Wednesday 11th May the Society enjoyed a fascinating online talk featuring Professor Emeritus Salima Hashmi in conversation with Dr Samina Iqbal, two respected doyens of Pakistani art history. Their discussion selectively provided a survey of Pakistani art history from 1947 to the current times, and aimed to trace the roots of dynamic contemporary art in Pakistan and its deep connection with the work of precursor artists like Abdur Rahman Chughtai, Allah Buksh, and the Lahore Art Circle. The works of these artists reflect the simultaneous development of tradition and modernity.

The discussion also included various socio-political frameworks and events that proved catalysts to the women’s art movement in the 90’s, and the rise of non-figurative art. It further analyzed Zahoorul Akhlaq’s contribution to fostering the neo-miniaturist movement, which produced world-renowned artists like Shazia Sikander, Rashid Rana, and Imran Qureshi.



'Live Screening of the 1998 film 'Jinnah' and conversation with Director Jamil Dehlavi

On Saturday 20th August the Society held a screening of the 1998 film Jinnah at the Khalil Lecture Theatre followed by the film director Jamil Dehlavi in conversation with Mahmood Masood. The talk covered Jamil's career as an independent film maker with references to his other notable films.

Jamil has had a lengthy and varied career in film making here and abroad. Starting with Towers of Silence, his first experimental feature film which he wrote, produced and directed, and which won the Grand Prize for best experimental film at the Festival of the Americas, the conversation will cover a number of his memorable films including his latest work Blood Money, a short thriller based on a true story. He is however best known in Pakistan for his epic film Jinnah which he also wrote, produced and directed. The film starred screen legend Sir Christopher Lee, James Fox, Maria Aitken and the acclaimed Bollywood superstar Shashi Kapoor.

If you missed one of the talks you can still view the recording on our website:

<https://www.thepakistansociety.org.uk/events/event-video/>



We are busy planning events for the first quarter of 2023 and our Annual Dinner around the middle of the year.

<https://www.thepakistansociety.org.uk/events/forthcoming-events/>



NEWS

Celebrating Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee

Who could not have been heartened by the extraordinary spirit of celebration that marked the late Queen's platinum jubilee? The doom-mongers were forecasting that the event would be low-key and greeted largely by indifference. How wrong they were, as the street parties and lighted beacons and general merry-making showed. There are some (myself included!) who remember the death and funeral of King George in 1952 and the excitement and pageantry of the Coronation in 1953. The sight, 70 years later, of a frail but ever-smiling Queen on the balcony of Buckingham Palace on that June day and the chance to sample her mischievous sense of humour as she reached into her handbag for the marmalade sandwich will remain happy memories for as long as we live.

Sir William Blackburne, Chairman

The Passing of the Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Little did we realise as we witnessed the joy of the jubilee that our beloved Queen would be no longer with us only three months later. Even now, as I write at the year end, I find it hard to say "God save the King". Such was the impact on our lives, most of it unspoken because it was taken for granted, of the long reign of our Queen and the shock when it suddenly ended. There is so much about the days leading up to the funeral and, of course, the funeral itself that will remain unforgettable: the lying-in-state, the ceaseless flow of people wishing to pay their last respects, the solemnity of the funeral in Westminster's great Abbey and the committal at the Chapel in Windsor, the crisp magnificence of the attendant military, the step-perfect coffin-bearers, the silent crowds and the haunting skirl of the pipes and drums. I offer two thoughts: the first is the fact that the Queen's passing was mourned across the world and that she was in many ways as much the Queen in Pakistan (and in other countries) as she

Windsor by the words 'Elizabeth II 1926-2022'. No more is needed.

Sir William Blackburne, Chairman

Professor Iftikhar H. Mailk awarded at the UBL 10th Literature & Arts Awards

Many congratulations to Prof. Iftikhar H. Malik, who has been awarded at the UBL 10th Literature & Arts Awards for his English Non-Fiction book 'The Silk Road And Beyond'. The awards ceremony was held in Karachi and was hosted by Khalid Malik and Yasra Rizvi .

Prof. Iftikhar H.Malik is also a long time life member of The Pakistan Society UK, and gave an excellent to the members about this brilliant book soon after it was published.

<https://www.biztoday.news/2022/11/19/ubl-celebrates-10th-literature-and-arts-awards/?fbclid=IwAR1sEdp1DMVXKH-K6SnalurYhP2rDp9SqJyYnH2XTNcSdjFI-1TxGmul0k4>

A Historic Year for Cricket

It has been a thrilling year in cricket with England vs Pakistan in the T20 World Cup final and the England team having its first test tour of Pakistan in 17 years. Whilst Pakistani fans may be disappointed in the overall results, it cannot be denied that this was a year of fantastic cricket. Check out some of the compiled articles below for more insight:

England enter Pakistan Stronghold with a place in history at stake -
<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2022/dec/15/england-enter-pakistan-stronghold-with-a-place-in-history-at-stake-cricket>

Pakistan v England: Tourists win third Test to secure historic 3-0 sweep in Karachi - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/cricket/64035655>

Pakistan v England: Special tour makes it feel like cricket has come home -
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/cricket/63955845>

Justice Ayesha among BBC's 100 most influential women of 2022

The first women judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, Justice Ayesha Malik, has been listed as one of the 100 most influential and inspiring women of 2022 by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

The list also reflects the role of women at the heart of conflict around the world in 2022.

The BBC highlighted that Justice Ayesha has authored judgements protecting the rights of women, including her “landmark judgement which banned the so-called two-finger test of rape victims” which was performed during the examination of sexual assault cases.

“Alongside her role on the Supreme Court, Malik also conducts training for judges around the world and has inaugurated conferences for women judges in Pakistan, encouraging the debate around including the gender perspective in the justice system”.

Justice Ayesha was sworn in in January, in a landmark occasion for the nation.

Later talking to the media, the former chief justice of Pakistan Gulzar Ahmed said that he would not take credit for Justice Ayesha’s elevation as the apex court judge. “She deserved to be a judge of the Supreme Court.”

Other women on the BBC’s list include singer Billie Eilish, Ukraine’s First Lady Olena Zelenska, actresses Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Selma Blair, the ‘tsarina of Russian pop’ Alla Pugacheva, Iranian climber Elnaz Rekabi, record-breaking triple jump athlete Yulimar Rojas, and Ghanaian author Nana Darko Sekyiamah.


<https://pakobserver.net/justice-ayesha-among-bbcs-100-most-influential-women-of-2022/>

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