

ORAL HISTORY

The (Hi)story of One Lakh Visas

Mani Shankar Aiyar, former member of the Indian Foreign Service, former Minister in the Union Cabinet and at present a member of the upper house of the Indian Parliament, was tasked with the assignment of opening India's Consulate General in Karachi in December 1978, after the Assistant High Commission had been closed down in December 1971 during the Bangladesh war. He recounts here his experiences as India's Consul General, including the decision to issue hundreds of visas every day, his interaction with the people and leadership of Pakistan, and reflections on India-Pakistan relations in those years.

Indian Foreign Affairs Journal (IFAJ): Please tell us the events, something by way of background, that preceded your appointment as India's Consul General in Karachi.

Mani Shankar Aiyar (MSA): One of the saddest days of my life was towards the end of October 1978. I was posted in Baghdad at that time and we used to listen to the All India Radio (AIR) 9 p.m. news at about 6 p.m. in Baghdad. Over AIR, I learnt that Foreign Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had announced that the Indian Consulate General in Karachi would be opening within the next couple of months. I was really saddened because one of my great ambitions in the Foreign Service had been to go to Karachi as Consul General; as I had completed just two years in Baghdad, the chances of my being sent to Karachi collapsed. However, my desire to go to Pakistan had both noble as well as disgusting material concerns. Let me dispose of the disgusting material concerns first.

A friend, C. Dasgupta, who was at that time a Counsellor in our Mission in London, had pointed out during my visit to London that since Karachi used to be the capital of Pakistan, the house where our Consul General would live in Karachi would be a mansion which no batch-mate of ours could possibly conceive of. He had heard that there was a beach near Karachi called Hawke's Bay and the Indian Government owned a cottage on that beach. So, not only would I have a mansion to live in but a country-house as well on Hawke's

Bay. Whereas most Consulates – at least then and possibly even now – are located in tiny rented niches, the Indian High Commission in Karachi was reputed to be the biggest building that we had anywhere in the world. I would then be acquiring the biggest room in that place to lord over the Consulate as it were. That too appealed to me greatly.

As for the noble part of it, I had always had a fascination with Pakistan. Like all IFS officers, I had been brought up in a very anti-Pakistan atmosphere, particularly in the debates over Kashmir which took place when I was a sixteen-year-old and Krishna Menon had delivered a nine-hour-long oration in the UN Security Council. The lessons we had on India-Pakistan relations during our probation were given by Professor Sisir Gupta in his brilliant lectures. I remember today, forty-six years on exactly, as if I am sitting at the lecture: Sisir Gupta began by saying that the central dilemma of India's foreign policy was that Pakistan, with a population of one hundred million, was obsessed with its smallness, while Indonesia, with its population of one hundred million, was obsessed with its largeness. And reconciling this or resolving this, he said, was the central dilemma of Indian foreign policy.

And then in the first year of my first posting abroad in 1965, we first had the war with Pakistan in the Rann of Kutch and then the September war of 1965. My Pakistani counterpart, the Third Secretary at that time who was later to become the Pakistan High Commissioner in Sri Lanka in the run-up to the Bangladesh War, typified from my perspective what to expect of a Pakistani diplomat – rude, uncooperative, unfriendly and seizing every opportunity to make anti-India statements. But, soon after the India-Pakistan War of September 1965 was brought to some sort of conclusion, I ran into Ahmed Kamal, who was the First Secretary in the Pakistan Embassy in Belgium. I found him a very reasonable human being and one who understood that there could be relations between countries which were not parallel to relations between two individuals. And he readily accepted my invitation to my tiny flat. I was taken aback that at that stage, when India and Pakistan were locked in mortal combat in every foreign capital, that it was possible to hold a completely civilized conversation. In fact, I learnt much more about diplomacy and diplomatic etiquette from him than I could possibly have learned elsewhere. I have regarded Ahmed Kamal as one of my great gurus in foreign policy.

I was an Under Secretary in the Economic Division of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) when in 1971 I was included in the official Indian delegation to the UN and I spent about two and a half months there – from mid-September till the end of November 1971. During that period, Mrs Indira Gandhi made her famous US visit to try to persuade Nixon and Kissinger to see good sense. But in their geopolitics China mattered, India did not; and therefore, Pakistan had to be helped.

During that period, the bulk of the officers in the Pakistan Mission to the UN, who were Bengalis, had defected. So Pakistan's Permanent Mission to the UN was reduced to two persons – Agha Shahi, a well-known Tamil, and his Third Secretary, Munir Akram. They were tasked to checkmate the Indians when they would bring up Bangladesh and happenings in East Pakistan. However, Munir Akram and I became quite good friends through all these tensions. He kept telling me that I was going to do something damaging to Pakistan in the major statement that the Indian delegation would be making in the Second Committee. I told him nothing of that sort would take place as it was an economic committee. He was unconvinced and said that he would be there to watch the proceedings.

We had the Member of Parliament Rudrapratap Singh representing India at that time, who unfortunately knew no English. So his speech not only had to be drafted in English but was also full of technical jargon because it was mostly on economic matters. Having drafted the speech for him, I rewrote it in Devnagari. He spent endless hours with me, receiving coaching on how to read English in the Devnagari script. He was full of praise for me for this.

On the big day when Rudrapratap Singh started reading the statement, I saw Munir coming into the chamber and he had in his hand a copy of Mr Singh's statement. All my training of Mr Singh began to collapse and he became totally nervous. The interpreters kept saying to us, "Please ask the delegate to speak more slowly. We don't understand and we can't translate." And all around the Second Committee people were giggling. But one chap who was taking the speech very seriously was Munir Ahmed. He was standing in the doorway. And like a truly intelligent diplomat, he knew that the anti-Pakistan remark would either be in the beginning or in the end. I had rather cleverly disguised it for the end where I talked about two types of disasters – natural disasters and man-made disasters. The reference quite obviously was to East Pakistan and I had added a few sentences about the horror that was

going on there. Munir spotted it. He came up to me, put his mouth against my ear and asked me whether he should intervene now or exercise the right of reply. If he intervened right away, the answer had to be given by Rudrapratap; whereas if he exercised the right of reply, any other Indian delegate could respond. Therefore, I earnestly requested him to exercise his right of reply. He patted me on my back and said that he would do so. I said to myself then that, at this stage of tension between India and Pakistan, if there can be humour and goodwill between two persons who are tasked for professional reasons to fight each other, then my Guru Number Two must become Munir Akram.

Just as the war ended on 16 December 1971 at 5 p.m., I was called into Sukhamoy Chakravarty's room in the Planning Commission. It was to rush relief supplies into liberated Bangladesh in order to persuade them to take back the millions of refugees who had taken refuge in India. I was thrilled beyond measure to be involved in this. In consequence, I took the first economic cooperation delegation to Bangladesh as the Secretary of the delegation in January 1972.

When we started going around, we found many houses abandoned by those who had to flee to Pakistan. In one of the abandoned houses, I found a UN identity card, similar to the one I had been sporting with such pride a month earlier, of a Pakistani diplomat, which was lying on the floor. It became for me a symbol of the utter defeat of Pakistan. One couldn't help but feel extremely proud to be an Indian, and in those circumstances to be involved in one of the biggest achievements of independent India, which was to be in Dhaka. The whole of my batch and immediate peer group were appointed in that highest-level mission. The High Commissioner was Subimal Dutt. His number two was Mani Dixit. The others included Dr Arjun Sengupta, who was in the Ministry of Commerce, in his first diplomatic posting abroad. Chandrashekhar Dasgupta was one of the Counsellors and the First Secretaries included Satinder K. Lambah and Arundhati Ghose. It was like reading out a list of the most distinguished Foreign Service officers of my generation. It was a very elevating experience.

But what was disturbing to hear were reports of how the Indian armed forces were beginning to be seen with resentment within a few weeks of liberation as some kind of an occupation force. On my very first morning in Dhaka, I had breakfast at the Intercontinental, which is now the Hilton. I found Sydney Scharnberg of the *New York Times* there. Sydney had been

more responsible than any of us at communicating to the West about what was happening in East Pakistan. (He became very famous later on when he authored the book, that was also filmed, *The Killing Fields*, about events in Cambodia.) He said to me, “You guys have lost it. You are claiming that you have liberated Bangladesh. And no one is giving to them the credit that the Mukti Bahini deserves. Rather, you are just alienating these people by being arrogant.” That made a profound impression on my mind, although most other Indians dismissed this as American interference in our affairs (“How can the Indian forces be arrogant? In any case the Bangladeshis love us, etc”).

When Indira Gandhi went to Dhaka in March and declared that the Indian Army was going to be pulled out by the end of that month, it was a fine example of a conquering army withdrawing with no conditions attached. Simultaneously, she announced that she had invited Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to meet her at Simla. It was the nobility of Indian civilization at its peak being displayed before the world. Indira Gandhi was signalling that the West had been completely wrong in thinking that she would follow up the conquest of East Pakistan with the conquest of West Pakistan. I was a great votary of the Simla Conference.

All of us know what happened thereafter. But a series of these incidents had made me want to go to Pakistan and make what contribution I could to the success of the India-Pakistan relationship. I was hoping that the Pakistanis would prove as affable as Ahmed Kamal and Munir Akram had been.

IFAJ: So, you eventually went to Pakistan. We have heard about you often emphasizing the common cultural bonds between the people of the two countries. But what were the atmospherics like when you arrived in Karachi?

MSA: Before I went to Karachi, I was asked by my Ambassador K.S. Bajpai to stop over first in Islamabad to be briefed by him. While I was in Islamabad, I received a call from a Cambridge friend, Khurshid Mahmood Kasuri, who was in my college exactly in the same year, whom destiny had fingered to become the Foreign Minister of Pakistan many decades later. Khurshid insisted that I must fly to Karachi via Lahore and he would be at the airport to pick me up. Ambassador Bajpai readily agreed to that and I told Khurshid that I would visit Lahore on one condition – you have to take me to the place where I was born. He asked where that was. I said, “I don’t know, but my parents have told me it is No. 44 Lakshmi Mansions.” He said, “It is nearby; you come.”

At Lahore, Khurshid drove me straight to Lakshmi Mansions, door number 44. He said, "This is Dr. Malik, who was staying with us in London." He pressed the bell and Dr. Malik opened the door. And on being introduced that I was the true owner of the house, he embraced me. I asked to see his bedroom because I wanted to see where my mother cuddled me when I was an infant there.

Dr. Malik is still in that house and every time I go to Lahore I visit him. I am received like a king there. And he spreads the news that Aiyar Saheb has come here. As a result, the Residents Welfare Association people come to see me.

When in 2005 I went to Pakistan as India's Minister of Petroleum for the proposed Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline, the Resident Welfare Association decided to hold a reception in my honour. They asked me to send photographs of my parents and ourselves. I was able to find a photograph of my parents taken just after Partition. Also, I found a photograph of all four of us children with our parents, again taken soon after Partition. There was a big report about it in the press. I met a Parsi girl there at the reception who told me that she had got married and then divorced and returned to Lakshmi Mansions. I asked her date of birth and she said, December 1940. So I said, "The first time we met was in May 1941, when I was about a month old and I was in my pram; and you were a big girl. You must have come and seen me, and who knows, I might have kissed you then." This was the human relationship.

On my first day in Karachi, I landed at 1 p.m. When I went to my office, I found the whole place in a mess as for thirteen years India House had been abandoned. We got in the contractors to repair the place. Everybody, from the Consul General to the chaprasi, about five of us, were sitting in one room and between us there was one telephone. That afternoon, 14 December 1978, the phone rang. The Deputy Commissioner of Sukkur was on the line. He said he had a serious problem. Our Minister of Information and Broadcasting, L.K. Advani, had visited Pakistan the previous month, and it had been agreed then that one of the Hindu Sants, who had lived in Sukkur till the 1965 War and then gone to Raipur, could return to meet his Hindu followers there. He said, the problem now is that the Hindu Sant's Muslim Murids wish to meet him. He wanted my permission for that. So I began my Consular career in Karachi by grandly authorizing Muslim Murids to meet a Hindu Sant! What a vindication that was of my gut feeling that the Pakistanis are really a very nice people!

The following evening, I was invited to dinner by a friend of Ambassador Bajpai's to acquaint me with various people. I found myself sitting next to somebody who was rather taciturn. I asked him, "Have you been to India, Sir?" He glumly said, "Yes." "Where did you go?" "Meerut." "How long were you there?" "Two and a half years." It was only then that it dawned on me with horror that he had been a Prisoner of War (PoW). The embarrassment must have shown on my face. He then beamed, patted me on the knee, and said, "If you are free for dinner tomorrow, my wife and I would like to invite you and your wife to join us at the Sindh Club. As Muslim Pakistanis we can't sign for alcohol, but if you will sign for the booze, there is an excellent port laid out in the basement. I, of course, will pay for it." A former PoW asking me to dinner! Of course, I accepted.

I didn't have a car. So somebody who had introduced himself to me as Brig. Jimmy Akhtar Aziz offered to drop me back at Hindustan Court which we had patched up to somehow live in. He asked on the way, "What happened to Brigadier Kapur, who was fighting me in the Lahore sector?" I was intrigued by this reference. He said, "I was commanding the Pakistan unit in the Lahore sector on our side of the Ichhogil Canal in the 1965 war. Fiddling with the wireless set, I hit upon the wavelength on which the Indian commander was giving instructions for preparations for the next day. Any other army man would have listened to what these instructions were. But I could recognize Kapur's voice. He was my main competitor at the Military Academy in Dehradun. I broke into the wavelength and said, "*Saale* Kapur, I beat you in everything at the Academy and tomorrow I am going to beat you again." Can you imagine, this was during a war between the two countries!

IFAJ: Much has been said and written about your visa policy. Issuing, say, hundreds of visas a day was something unprecedented. How did it all begin? Was it your personal initiative? What was the Pakistani response to this?

MSA: The first couple of months were taken up in refurbishing and rebuilding the place because when the Consulate was abandoned in 1971 it was an Assistant High Commission, after having ceased to be the High Commission during the 1965 War. Although we had vast property capable of accommodating a huge staff and spread over several parts of the city, huge repairs had to be undertaken. No other work was possible besides this. But I found that we were under tremendous pressure to open the visa office as soon as possible. It seemed to me symptomatic of Karachi that *The Sun* newspaper at the beginning of February 1979 on its front page had a banner headline saying

“Supreme Court Confirms Hanging of Bhutto” and on the right of that, “Visa Office to Open: Aiyar”. Clearly these were the two main preoccupations of Pakistanis: whether Bhutto would survive and whether the visa office would really open.

I was getting increasingly worried about how we were going to handle the massive mob that would arrive on the day the visa office opened. I was one day sitting in my office and wondering how we were going to do this when one of my security guards, Kutty, came into my room. He said, “There is a heartbreaking scene outside. A man is beating his chest, tearing his hair, and crying that his father is dying in India and he wants a visa to visit him. I can’t bear this anymore. Can you meet him, Sir?” I said, “OK, bring him in.” It was an exception as we had not started the visa office. I found the man in a terrible condition. He was clutching a telegram and proffered it to me. I took a quick look at it and told him, “If you tell me from where you got this telegram, I will give you a visa.” He said, “*Kya baat kar rahe hain Saheb? Kyun aap aisa poochh rahe hain?*” (“What are you talking about, Sir? Why are you asking such a question?”) I said, “You are saying that your father is serious but this telegram says your mother is serious.” Then he revealed that a Sindhi Hindu man outside was selling the telegrams and had taken five rupees from him - but given him the wrong telegram! This, I concluded, was a ridiculous way for us to handle emergency cases.

We then promptly thought of handling emergency cases through a separate window with the letters KE (Karachi Emergency). We said that anybody who applied for a KE visa would without any further enquiry be granted it but on condition that he/she reached India within one week of the issue of the visa; and instead of going to three places, he/she could go to only one place. Also, he/she would not be given another visa for at least the next twelve months. And so in one stroke I finished all the past practices of affidavits being submitted – as if the Government of India could prosecute a Pakistani liar in a Pakistani court! All these rules were designed to enable Sindhi Hindus to have a special line to the Consulate. I am very proud of having brought secularism to the Consulate General of India by opening the KE window.

About a year later, the Home Ministry in Delhi woke up and my Ambassador received a letter from the Home Secretary saying, how dare your Consul General decide what the procedures are for issuing these visas? I must say that my Ambassador backed me and we were allowed to continue with this practice.

Then there was another family. Within a day or two of my arrival they begged me to be taken off the black list. I was amazed to find that every person in that family, from a ninety-year-old grandmother to a baby, was blacklisted. I asked the person, “Why had they all been blacklisted?” more than once, the reason for it, but he wouldn’t tell. One day he invited me *tete-a-tete* to a rather liquid dinner. I availed of the opportunity to prod him on this matter. He said he would tell everything provided I did not reveal this to anybody. I agreed.

He said, “Before Partition, my father had a family in Bombay but we used to do a lot of business with Karachi. So he got himself a mistress in Karachi. Partition came as a huge boon to him. He left his family in Bombay and shifted to Karachi. When his mistress died, he called his family over to Karachi. Having installed them in Karachi he continued his business and frequently visited Bombay, where he acquired a mistress again.

“But he made the mistake of introducing her to a Muslim colonel in the Indian Army. The colonel took up the mistress every time my father went to Karachi, but she would insist on going back to my father every time he returned from Karachi. This made the colonel extremely jealous. Then came the 1965 war. The colonel denounced my father as a spy and all members of his family were blacklisted. There is nothing more to it than that.”

I was extremely sceptical of this way of handling things. My office got mobbed massively for days, with long queues in the hope of getting a visa. One day I decided to go among them to find out what they were worried about. I found they were worried that the visa office would be open only for a week or two and then shut down. If they didn’t get a visa this time after thirteen years of waiting, they were never going to get it. I also saw an aged woman sitting on the ground and sobbing her heart out. I walked up to her and asked, “What happened?” She said, “For the last two days I have been in the queue. I could not bear my hunger, so I went to the station for food. But when I returned they said that I had lost my place as I was not here and that I would have to join the queue again.” All this persuaded me to do something to project a humanitarian image of the Indian Consulate.

IFAJ: How did the Consulate prepare itself for the task of issuing literally hundreds of visas daily? It must have involved lots of planning and organizational work.

MSA: We decided that every 300 persons would be given a specific date on which to apply and this would be stamped in advance on the visa form. If, for

example, we were issuing the form on 1 March, the first 300 forms would be marked for 2 March and the next 300 for 3 March, and so on. Then we organized ourselves in such a way that visa seekers would arrive in the morning. We arranged a shed and benches for them to sit on. One by one, starting at 9 a.m., they would go to the window assigned to them and hand in their form and move. The whole process took a few seconds and by about 10 a.m. we would have cleared everybody. The applicants would have to come again at 4 p.m. Then we would start distributing the visas and everybody would be cleared by 5 p.m.

It became headlines in the evening newspapers that the Indian Consulate had issued so many visas, this number of visas, etc. That's when Sadruddin Hashwani, the richest hotelier in Islamabad who now lives in exile in Dubai, said to me that I was doing a very wrong thing. My activity to win the goodwill of the Mohajirs in Karachi was going to alert the authorities who would crack down on them. I said, "I am doing my job to unite the divided families of both sides. What the Pakistani authorities think of it is their business, but I am not going to stop it."

So we arrived at 99,990 visas within six months of opening the office. To issue the last ten visas, I called in the journalists and asked them to distribute the 100,000th visa. And we handed over a tin of Darjeeling tea as a prize to the recipient of the 100,000th visa. At that time, I experienced the most touching event of my diplomatic career and even of my political career: the visa seekers spontaneously burst into slogans – *Hindustan Consul-Khana Zindabad; Yahan Koi Rishwat Nahin, Koi Pabandi Nahin; Consul General Sahib Zindabad* (Three cheers to the Indian Consulate; Here there is no bribe-seeking, no restrictions; Three cheers to the Consul General). This gave me my perspective on Pakistan.

IFAJ: Pakistan politics was passing through a tumultuous period then. Would you like to recall your perception of Pakistan politics then, in particular the hanging of Z.A. Bhutto?

MSA: After the Supreme Court confirmation of the hanging of Bhutto in early February, two of the judges, Dorab Patel and Fakhruddin Ebrahim, came to live in Karachi. I spent quite a lot of time with them. They both felt that while it was not an open-and-shut case of innocence or guilt, Bhutto's personal involvement in the assassination was not proved under section 304, so he should not be given the maximum punishment. But Zia dismissed the appeals

that were pouring into the Presidential Palace from politicians all around the world as the work of “a trade union of politicians”. So it did look as if Bhutto was going to be hanged. But the widespread expectation was that Zia would not dare hang Bhutto because if he did, the country would erupt.

In those days, a lot of working-class Pakistanis were hanging around the Consulate for the repair works. There was among them a tailor wearing a golf cap. Bhutto had made this cap the trade mark of the PPP, so much so that when he went to the Shaheed Memorial in Dhaka, he wore a golf cap because it made him look a bit like Chairman Mao. I called the tailor aside and asked him if he was from the PPP. With great pride, he said, “Don’t you see my cap?” Then I asked if Bhutto were hanged, what would happen? He replied that the streets of Karachi would run with blood.

On the night of 3 April, General Malhotra, Chief of the Indian Army Staff, was to transit through Karachi by Kenya Airlines on his way back from Nairobi to Delhi. As per protocol, I was at the airport during his transit but was very angry that nobody senior from the Pakistan Army was present. I thought this was a deliberate insult to us. Only the next morning I realized why the Army brass was not present – they were all busy hanging Bhutto!

It was horrible to be so close to the event. Immediately after the hanging, nothing was happening. Then a rumour started that on the fortieth day, the day of the *Chehlum*, the masses would rise because now they were in mourning. I asked the tailor what was happening. He replied that their leaders were not doing anything. I asked, “Does the public make leaders or do the leaders make the public?” Looking completely broken, he said, “I don’t know anything, Sahib.” I asked him, “Then, with what courage are you wearing the cap?” He took off the cap and folded it, saying, “Nobody has asked me to take it off.”

These events summed up for me the reality of Pakistan, which was so different from what the diplomatic corps were saying.

Khushwant Singh arrived on the day of the *Chehlum*. We were at the airport to receive him. He wished to go around the city, not to my office, all curious to see Karachi in flames of protest. I told him nothing was happening but he would not believe me. So, we got into my car and started driving around the city. Everywhere it was calm. But when we arrived at the Bagh-e-Jinnah, where boys were playing cricket, the truth dawned on Khushwant that there was going to be no people’s revolution; Zia was in charge!

It was clear that the doomsday scenarios depicted by the media, particularly the Indian media and our Foreign Office, were flawed. They showed that India perceived Pakistan through a prism of its own wishful thinking. So I decided then and there that it was none of my business to deal with the India-Pakistan interstate relationship. My duty as Consul General was to write about Pakistan from within about what is Pakistan society, who are the Pakistanis, what is this nation called Pakistan, how do they perceive themselves.

IFAJ: Do you think there is an image problem; and in Karachi you found a different Pakistan?

MSA: Karachi was an excellent place. I tried to pick up as much Urdu as I could in order to interact with people there. There was simply no restriction put on me that I could perceive. I went everywhere only in my official car and my flag flying. Often people ask: weren't you followed? Perhaps I was, but I made it a strict policy never to look back. If my driver said to me, as he sometimes did, that the police are following you, I'd tell him to look in front and not behind. I decided to deal with Pakistanis as human beings, largely because of the way they dealt with me during my first few weeks there. They never treated me with any kind of hostility.

Then an Indian Oil Corporation delegation arrived to do a deal with Pakistan. A lunch was hosted at the Beach Luxury Hotel. I was a bit surprised when I got a call there from Shirur, our Administrative Attaché, that a mob was in front of our office, protesting against the anti-Muslim riots that had taken place a couple of days earlier in Nadiad (West Bengal). He was seeking my instructions what to do. I said, "I am coming there straightaway." There was one gate of the office premises we always kept locked. So I said, "Shirur, go there and don't unlock the gate till you see my car." Then I rang my wife, who is always calm and cool-headed in a crisis. She said, "Don't tell this to the driver (who was a Pakistani) and take off the flag from the car." But it was really unfair not to tell the driver who was completely loyal to me. That was the only time when I removed the flag from my car.

When I got into the office premises through the other gate, I found there was mayhem because several protestors had succeeded in getting into the premises. They were smashing the furniture in the lobby. They gheraoed one of the smallest and thinnest staff members and were getting ready to smash his head with a chair when I reached there. But the chair smashed against the skull of a protester and so my staff member was saved.

I walked up to the DSP, Martin D'Souza, to get the ringleaders to talk to me inside the Consulate. I took the leaders to my office on the third floor and offered tea and coffee. One by one, they told me their grievances. One of them said his name was Rajiv and he was studying medicine at the Karachi University. He said, "I am a Hindu. Nobody in this country troubles me. Why are Indians troubling the Muslims of India?" I didn't know how to respond to him. Fortunately, just then my phone rang. Martin was on the other side, saying that the mob was uncontrollable as they had learnt that their leaders were having coffee inside. I told Martin to handle the situation somehow and then told Rajiv that I would really like to talk to him more. The mob outside started shouting slogans against Prime Minister Morarji Desai.

It is in complete violation of diplomatic protocol to talk to any protester within the Consulate in this manner. The normal procedure is that one among the mob is allowed to bring a petition and a junior officer goes to collect the petition at the gate. The police are immediately sent for and they secure the premises, and the mob is allowed to demonstrate several yards away. But I broke protocol and showed the protesters that we too deplored the anti-Muslim riots.

Towards the end of my tenure another incident happened in Moradabad on the day of Eid where the police opened fire and many people were killed. Naturally there was severe outrage and endless petitioners came to the Consulate. But everyone was asked to come to my office to hand over the petition personally to me. They used to take photographs and sometimes give them to the press to prove their solidarity with the Muslim community. One day the Mayor of Hyderabad, a friend of mine who was a Maulana, asked if he could also bring his *wafad* (delegation), to which I readily consented. So they, all nine people, came and explained in Urdu their outrage over Moradabad and handed me a petition. Then the Maulana looked around and asked if he could take a photograph. I agreed and he called in his photographer. The Maulana held out the petition as I posed to be reaching out to collect it. I then added, "*Maulana sahib, gustakhi mu'aaf, lekin aise mauke par muskurate nahin hain*" ("Apologies, but on such occasions one does not smile"). The whole delegation guffawed. The tension was broken.

My Ambassador in Islamabad, K. Natwar Singh, also came to Karachi. He did not fall back on some standard diplomatic procedure but without further ado accepted my technique. When the huge delegation to meet him,

some 20 of them, reached my office, a Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Pakistan supporter grabbed the floor and in mellifluous Urdu began orating about the atrocities inflicted by India on her minorities, but when he claimed that India had massacred 90 lakh Muslims, the meeting dissolved in chaos with his colleagues protesting against his needless exaggeration. Someone even suggested introspecting into their own Sunni-Shi'a riots. We parted cordially. The human touch. Many times we went up to the main gate and opened it ourselves to invite the petitioners to come inside. In my view, this is the way one ought to handle protests and demonstrators in a neighbouring country.

Let me give you another example of how we should handle things like this. Sanjay Gandhi had been killed in an air accident. We were amazed to find the Middle East News Agency (MENA) carried a story in *Jasarat*, a Jama'at-e-Islami mouthpiece, which said that a quarrel had broken out between the widowed daughter-in-law (Sanjay Gandhi's wife) and her mother-in-law (Indira Gandhi) and the daughter-in-law was being badly treated in the house. An editorial in the newspaper thundered: if this is the manner in which the widowed daughter-in-law is treated in the first family of India, you can imagine what the plight of Hindu women is. I rang up Salahuddin, the editor, and expressed my willingness to meet him in his office, to which he agreed. I reached his office and expressed the wish to meet all the staff also. Amused by my request, he called all his staff, around twenty people. Then I said, "I read your editorial and to reply to that issue I have come here. Motilal Nehru had one son whose name was Jawaharlal. He married a Kashmiri Hindu. They had one daughter by the name of Indira Priyadarshini. In 1942, she married a Parsi named Feroze Gandhi. They had two children; Rajiv married a Christian; Sanjay married a Sikh lady. This is what Indira Gandhi's family background is. So how can you generalize from Indira Gandhi's family problems to all Hindu women?" They were amazed to hear this and burst into spontaneous applause. It shows that they are like us. We should neither talk down to them nor talk at them; we must talk to them reasonably as human beings to human beings.

IFAJ: Pakistan was then under the dictatorship of General Zia and there was the opposition Movement for the Restoration of Democracy. Did you interact with MRD leaders and activists? How did the Pakistani politicians look at Indian democracy?

MSA: By about September, about four-five months after Bhutto's hanging, the National Assembly of Pakistan was dissolved and full military dictatorship

was imposed by Zia-ul-Haq. Several politicians finding no work to do in Islamabad, therefore, came to Karachi. I started meeting them and it became a daily affair. I had no inhibition about meeting any person from any party. And I used to accept any invitation from anywhere. My social calendar was jam-packed. I used to have long conversations about Pakistan but curiously they never asked much about India and we rarely discussed India-Pakistan relations. They were content to talk about the Pakistan problem: how to consolidate the nationhood of Pakistan; how to build Pakistan in the image of India as a democracy. Amidst all these engagements, I, as usual, was looking after the visa affairs.

I was getting recognized gradually as I used to go everywhere and was flashed in the newspapers frequently. We had also cultivated a huge number of journalists. The Press Club of Pakistan was alone in being an island of democracy where they could say anything about Zia; and amusing filthy jokes were made and circulated there about Zia.

The most prominent politician I met at that time was Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, later PM; he was briefly Bhutto's closest aide (accompanied him to the Simla Conference); he is no more. Mustafa had called us to a party and that was my first acquaintance with him. I walked up to him and asked, "What are you demanding?" He replied, "Democracy."

"Within Pakistan or without Pakistan?"

"Within if possible, without if necessary".

"What do you have against Zia? He is allowing you to have this party."

"Yes, he allows me to have this party, but, you know, Consul General, before he took over I used to have thirty-six brands of whiskey and now I have only six".

That gave me a hint of what democracy they were looking for. They lived well in beautiful houses and entertained extremely well.

I came across a letter in *The Dawn* newspaper written by one Mushtaq Cheema. He wrote that he had been appointed by the Government of Pakistan as the District Magistrate of Gurdaspur on the eve of Partition. Radcliffe's Partition plan came only on 17 August – two days later, so Gurdaspur had simultaneously two District Magistrates – one appointed by the Government of India and one appointed by the Pakistan Government. The first question he asked was whether I had known his counterpart, Kishori Lal, a name I did

not recognise. He wanted me to convey his good wishes to Kishori Lal. I didn't know how to locate Kishori Lal, even whether he was alive or not. Then he asked me that if I came across Kishori Lal or members of his family I must convey his good wishes. He then went on to narrate a story which still reverberates in my mind.

On 17 August, Mushtaq came to know that Gurdaspur was to be in India. He said that he was then given an assignment as a refugee rehabilitation officer to set up camps on the other side of the Ravi River to make arrangements for Muslim refugees fleeing India. During the rehabilitation, he saw a *jatha* (procession) of Muslim refugees coming absolutely with no possessions from the Indian side. Generally, every refugee would carry something or the other. So, Mushtaq treated this lot with some contempt, wondering why they had not had the self-respect to insist on keeping at least some of their possessions. Then he saw a Sikh *jatha* coming from the other side. It had one very old Sikh with a long flowing white beard. Suddenly, a little Muslim boy darted up to him, grabbed his beard and tugged it so hard he winced. The old man looked at everyone for help but not one of them was willing to make the least move to protect him, because having arrived at the very bank of liberation, they were not going to jeopardize this success. The Muslim refugees who crossed from the other side had allowed all their possessions to be taken provided only they could save their lives.

This was the inhumane level at which Partition was experienced and lived. So, for us to think of Pakistanis as mad fanatics, deeply communal, and hating all Hindus is to be very far divorced from the reality of Pakistan, certainly the reality of Sind as it is now.

I also became friends with Sayyed Akhlaq Hussain, who was originally from UP. He was the Chief Secretary of East Pakistan, but was so angered by Pakistan's atrocities in East Pakistan that he registered his protest. He was then repatriated to West Pakistan and his career was severely crippled. When I met him he was Chairman of the Sind Sugar Corporation. He had a big sugar mill at Thatta, which I visited one day. He said that there were many Hindu farmers there. He introduced me to one of them. I asked him whether his entire family had remained here. He said that many of his relatives left for India but it was his compulsion to stay here. I asked him what was the compulsion. He said, "*Yahan mere chand ekad hain* (Here I have a few acres)." I asked how many. "Oh, nothing much," he replied, "some 600 acres"! I congratulated him on his wisdom in not becoming an Indian.

Mir Hazar Khan Bijarani, a prominent young Sindhi politician in the PPP, now a minister in Zardari's government, invited me to visit his home district of Jacobabad in Upper Sind. I had heard that the elected district panchayat head was a Hindu. I was intrigued. Hazar Khan Bijarani also told me that he lived in a village called Karimpur which had a Hindu temple but no mosque. I asked him in amusement, "Are you not afraid of the Hindu majority in that area?" He replied, "Why should I be afraid? They are all my brothers." I asked him how much land he owned. He said, around 6000 acres. He then asked me how much land I owned. I said my family had something around '25'. He said, "You must be a king to have 25,000 acres." This was the feudal atmosphere in Pakistan.

Mohammad Ayub Khuhro, who was really the founder of Pakistan as the first Chief Minister of Sind, was alive when I was there. His daughter, Hamida, the historian, is my closest Pakistani friend and has attended all my daughters' weddings. Khuhro was the man who visited London to persuade Jinnah to come back to India. He was the head of the movement largely because at 21 he fought an election against Shahnawaz Bhutto, Zulfie's father, from Larkana and defeated him. So, Bhutto and Khuhro were at daggers drawn ever since. When I asked Khuhro about the Pakistan movement, he said, "The ICS people gave us Pakistan." Smiling, he added, "The British District Magistrate of Karachi was so pro-Muslim League that he stuffed the ballot boxes in the 1945 election." The first assembly in India to pass a Pakistan resolution was the Sind Assembly and Khuhro was behind it. And here was Khuhro telling me the District Magistrate stuffed the ballot boxes to give the Muslim League a majority!

But Khuhro had conceptualized Pakistan as a mirror of India – a large minority with Muslims as the majority. But the kind of ethnic cleansing witnessed at the time came as a complete shock to him. Nobody expected it – not the British after ruling the country for three hundred years, not the Congress Party leading the freedom movement for seventy to eighty years, not the Muslim League which was asking for Pakistan. When Khuhro saw this horror of ethnic cleansing, he along with Sri Prakasa, the High Commissioner of India in Karachi, drove in a car to every corner of Sind trying to persuade the Hindu communities to continue staying in Sind. Khuhro felt he had achieved a measure of success except that he made the mistake of having gathered a large number of Hindus together and brought them for safety to Karachi. On Bandar Road, which is now called Jinnah Road, there

was a Gurudwara where he gave them refuge. He claimed Liaquat Ali Khan had unleashed mobs on these refugees on 6 January 1948, massacring most and driving out the rest. His disenchantment was compounded when Jinnah announced that Urdu alone would be the official language of Pakistan. The alienation of Sind, and indeed several other parts of Pakistan, began from then and eventually culminated in Bangladesh.

There was a carpentry shop built alongside the railway tracks, just below the railway bridge, where we had to go from time to time because furniture was being made for our Consulate. Every time I went there, they regaled me with stories about how the Indian Air Force was trying to bomb the railway line in 1971 and how some of the bombs fell by mistake upon their shops. They talked without animus. Everyone had a vivid memory of the IAF successfully bombing the refineries around Karachi because they burnt for several days, and there was no darkness because of the flames.

IFAJ: Did you find Pakistan a country with a fractured polity and an identity crisis?

MSA: I remember Senator Iqbal Haider telling me, “I hate that bastard (referring to Zia-ul-Haq). But if you invade us, I am a patriotic Pakistani.” I also served in Belgium, a tiny country squeezed between Germany and France. The German generals who started World War I thought that with one shove of the German army the Belgians would knuckle under, but they stood up and fought. I told Foreign Secretary Ram Sathe that every single Foreign Service probationer should have his first posting in Belgium so that they may learn how to deal with Pakistan. Belgium too is a country that was created on the ground of religion. They were the Catholic provinces that seceded from the Protestant provinces of Holland and from 1835 till today they battle among themselves, Wallons and Flamands, all the time. Yet, when it came to war they united. Similarly, if the Indian Army crosses the boundary, every Pakistani becomes a Pakistani, and after they repulse the Indian Army they would go back to quarrelling among themselves. Don’t think that because they quarrel with each other, they are a weak and divided country.

Before going to Karachi I assumed that I would have to spend my life there arguing about Kashmir. So I bought a shelf-full of books on Kashmir but nobody raised this issue with me during those three years. The kind of obscene jokes that started circulating when Zia-ul-Haq raised the Kashmir issue in the UN, I can’t recount here. It seemed to me then that there is a vast

constituency that seeks a reasonable relationship with India and it permeates beyond the people. For me, the biggest proof of that was when my faithful driver Sattar failed to turn up in time one day. I had a major engagement that morning. So when he arrived late, I pounced upon him. He excused himself and said that he had to go to the police station in the morning. His brother had been arrested for showing Hindi movies in his Colony the previous night. Sattar went to the police and the thanedar sneered, "*Arre, tum ho kaun?*" ("Who the Hell are you?") Sattar rose to his full six feet and declared that he was none other than the driver of the Indian Consul General. At that, the police officer immediately allowed him to take his brother out. That was the power and influence of the Indian Consul General!

When Morarji Desai's government fell, I had come to Delhi for consultations and I was in Parliament House that morning. In the gallery, I heard George Fernandes' sterling defence of the Morarji government. Then I had to rush to the airport for my flight to Karachi. On reaching Karachi, I learnt that the Morarji government had fallen because even Fernandes had voted against him. From the airport, I went straight to the Sindh Club, where Pir Mahfooz, who was one of the most colourful Zamindars of Sind, was waiting for me. As I walked in, he staggered up to me and said, "Buckingham Palace, yaar! You people run your Parliament as if it were Westminster. A vote goes against your government and the Prime Minister resigns! Here we would have called out our Army and (re)taken the oath as the government."

They had admiration for Indians and Indian democracy. They also had admiration for our economic policies of the time. In this era of liberalization and globalization, I love to recall a Pakistani telling me, "You make the worst car in the world, but you make it." That was a proud moment for me.

That was the atmosphere in which I was learning whatever I could learn about Pakistan. I would go to meet people who were regarded by the establishment as subversive but always in my own car with the flag flying. One day, a Malayali came to see me. He introduced himself as B.M. Kutty and Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo's private secretary. I was surprised. Why would the great Baluch revolutionary have a Malayali stenographer? He said that Mir Saheb wanted to see me and he had arranged a car waiting on the other side of the road. I said, "I will go to see Mir Saheb, but in my car with the flag flying. You are welcome to sit with me, or you can show us the way. If the Government of Pakistan doesn't want me to meet him, they can stop me."

That was the beginning of a series of endless conversations with Bizenjo about the history of Pakistan and about Baluchistan, the subversion charges against him, his jail-going, etc. He spoke only in Urdu. He had studied at the Aligarh Muslim University. He had made a speech in the Pakistan National Assembly in December 1947 opposing Pakistan and standing up for Baluch rights. He shared the original text, in English translation, with me.

I come now to the most significant event of my stay, 25 December 1980, a holiday to celebrate Jinnah's birthday. I was at home and in the afternoon we were to go sightseeing around Karachi with my brother-in-law who had come to my place. Then my doorbell rang and I opened the door to find a young man standing at the door. He introduced himself as "Shaheed", obviously a pseudonym. I took him inside. He told me he was a great admirer of mine as I had shown myself to be a friend of the Pakistani people. He was a member of the PPP and used the name 'Shaheed' (martyr) after Shaheed Bhutto. He wanted me to be the chief guest at Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's birth anniversary on 4 January. I explained to him that I was accredited to Zia-ul-Haq. How could I attend such a function? I conveyed my best wishes to the party and expressed my feeling that political differences should not be settled through violence.

By that time, Benazir Bhutto had started the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD). Everybody was expecting that this tide would bring them back to political life. As the subject of our discussion progressed, Shaheed asked me if the MRD would succeed. I said, "Frankly, No." He said, "It is a people's movement. Why will it not succeed?" I said, "It won't succeed because you are not making it an all-party movement. Benazir has not allowed the Jama'at-e-Islami to join it. If you don't allow it to be an all-party movement, then the parties that are left out will be co-opted by Zia to give civilian legitimacy to his government. Secondly, you should have a one-point programme – the restoration of democracy, not the five-six points Benazir is talking about. She seems to have forgotten that the very parties that are joining hands with her in this Movement are those who banded together to overthrow her father. So, on matters of policy and substance, there will be continuing differences, as there are bound to be in any democracy among different political parties." I then escorted him out and more or less forgot all about it.

Then, a few months later, at the beginning of March 1981, a PIA plane flying from Karachi to Peshawar was hijacked in mid-air. There was tremendous drama with the flying of the plane from one place to another and

ultimately it arrived in Damascus. By then, several days had passed and there was a huge public outcry in Pakistan about freeing the hostages. Finally, the government of Zia was obliged to release a fairly long list of PPP political prisoners to fly them out to London in exchange for the hostages being released. Once the hostage drama was over, the Zia government resorted to a heavy crackdown on all political parties. The first to be arrested was Benazir. My wife woke me up at midnight to see Benazir's house, next door to ours, surrounded by police. I was witness to how Benazir was taken away by the police.

Almost a month after her arrest, one morning I was in my bath getting ready for office, when my wife walked in with a newspaper. The front-page story that she read out said that a diplomat in Karachi had been grossly interfering in the internal affairs of Pakistan; a PPP activist called Shaheed had called on him on 25 December and was given advice on how to run the MRD successfully; that the MRD should be an all-party-one-point programme; the police and intelligence had recovered documentation showing that after leaving the diplomat's house, Shaheed directly went to the Karachi Central Jail where he met Sami Muneer. Sami Muneer was the youngest brother of one of my closest friends in Karachi. They were a business family from Karnataka. Sami was constantly in and out of my house before being arrested. When the police raided Benazir's house, they had recovered a letter written from the Karachi Central Jail by Sami to Benazir, which said in part: "Shaheed had just come to see me. He came straight from India Lodge. He was told that your MRD will be a complete failure because you are departing from two essential principles for success. You must make it an all-party and one-point programme. I request you to listen to his sound advice; he is an intelligent and mature man and comes from a great democracy. Yours sincerely, Sami."

My heart jumped into my mouth. I thought that I was going to be declared *persona non grata*. I had made hundreds of friends in Karachi and now I would be kicked out of that country. All would feel, "This slimy Hindu Indian has betrayed all of us." I would not be given the opportunity to explain to them that this was a gross misunderstanding.

I had to attend a Russian Consulate programme in the morning. However, except for one person, the Russian Consul-General, no one else had spotted this story, to my utter surprise. Nobody even asked me who could be the person concerned. Suddenly, the Pakistanis declared Santosh Kumar in

Islamabad to be *persona non grata*. The explanation leaked out was that Santosh Kumar and his wife had visited us in Karachi and then went back via Lahore by train; they stopped off in Multan because Santosh is originally a Multani. He was spotted by the intelligence slipping out of the pantry door of the hotel to go and meet a communist in Multan. They dusted out this old story to show they meant business. But left me untouched. Poor Santosh.

Subsequently, when I came back to India and the entire episode blew over, I asked people in the know why I was let off. The answer I got was – I think it is an important lesson for Foreign Service officers to learn – that when I first arrived in Karachi they were extremely suspicious as to what I was up to because I was constantly going around, meeting everybody. They would go and interrogate those persons and finally they found that I was merely attempting to understand Pakistan and had no ulterior motive beyond that. They also noted that I never looked back when I was being followed. When the police were posted outside my house after the Moradabad Idgah incident, I invited them to live inside the house instead of dirtying the pavement outside India Lodge. By all this, they had come to the conclusion that I was the best friend that Pakistan had ever found in the Indian Foreign Service. If they declared me *persona non grata*, they would be depriving themselves of the best possible asset they could have in the Foreign Service. At the same time, they had to demonstrate their outrage, so they picked up some old file and poor Santosh's name was on it and they threw him out.

IFAJ: How to deal with Pakistan and whom to deal with? It is an often asked question. Some issues continue to go in a roundabout way; say, for example, the continuance of Indian Consulate or their claim over Jinnah House. Are you saying that a deft and delicate approach is always required to deal with Pakistan? If so, what kind of care and caution did you take into account while performing your diplomatic assignment in Karachi?

MSA: The agreement was that they would get Jinnah House. It may not have been a sensible offer to make. When we went back on that agreement, certainly as they perceived it, it was a slight to them. But don't forget that after they were told in 1980, after Mrs Gandhi coming to power for the second time, that they could not have Jinnah House, our Consulate remained in Karachi until 1993 or 1994. It was not immediately closed down. Internally, it was a tense moment for the Pakistanis because of the hanging of their most popular leader but I was having lots of cultural programmes in the auditorium and on

the lawns. It was the most popular social rendezvous centre of Pakistan. Various courtesies were shown to me even during those tense days. Hussain Haroon, who is now Pakistan's Permanent Representative in New York, told Natwar, "How Mani does this I don't know, but the people he calls to the table hate each other." However, they made polite conversation. I was completely neutral and I never interfered in their internal affairs.

Once I took Sati Lambah to Shikarpur. It is the home village of Allah Bux Soomro, who was the last Congress-supported Chief Minister of Sind. After being overthrown, he was assassinated in his *tonga* in Larkana by the Hurs under Pir Pagara. It was widely believed that Ayub Khuhro was the one who persuaded Pir Pagara to set his Hurs on Soomro, his principal political rival. Khuhro had to spend three years in jail on a charge of murder but when he came back he was a hero and so could push through the Pakistan Resolution in the Sind Assembly and become the first Chief Minister of Sind in Pakistan.

We arrived in Larkana and had lunch with the Khuhro family and then we drove on to Shikarpur and had dinner with the Soomro family and spent the night over there. The elite of Karachi were simply stunned that anyone could have lunch with the Khuhros and dine with the Soomros the same day. But then, I was not party to the quarrel and both of them knew it. I think it is wise for diplomats not to become party in these quarrels; and if there are problems, they should know both sides. Maula Bux Soomro, the Commerce Minister of Zia, recounted to us in the family Shikarpur home with great enthusiasm that on the floor of the House (after Zia had taken over) somebody rhetorically asked, "Who can be against Pakistan?" And Maula Bux rose to say, "I and my family were against Pakistan then - and we are still against Pakistan now."

Elahi Bux Soomro, Maula Bux's son, who was eventually elected as the Speaker, was a great friend of mine. He told me a hilarious story about democracy in Pakistan. He was driving in Shikarpur District when the police DSP appeared, stopped him and told him that the police had been ordered to take him to Sukkur Central Jail. The DSP did not know the reason for the arrest. The jailor also did not know; but he had orders to keep all three registers of murder, dacoity and rape open: it would be decided later which one to fill in. Elahi Bux remained in jail until Bhutto decided to appoint him Deputy High Commissioner in London.

This is the way things were happening there. I think we should understand that we cannot determine what and who runs the government in Pakistan or

how the government will change. We have just to deal with whoever is in the government and leave it to the people of Pakistan to pressurize them as best they can to keep these people on track.

IFAJ: It is a somewhat refreshing understanding of Pakistan. How did you convey your ideas and insights about Pakistani reality to the Indian political leadership?

MSA: Having lived through the worst years of the Zia regime and having as much fun as I have recounted, I came back to India in the beginning of January 1982. Narasimha Rao, then Foreign Minister, was a bit astonished that Agha Shahi, his Pakistani counterpart, simply invited himself to come and they fetched up just before the Beating Retreat ceremony. We were all there at the airport to receive him. He brought a huge contingent of journalists with him. We took them to the Beating Retreat ceremony and there was a dinner at Hyderabad House. The discussions were to take place from next day onwards. After the dinner, Narasimha Rao asked us to stay behind and took us to one of the drawing rooms. He opened the proceedings by asking what these people were doing here. Many explanations were given and I asked for the floor. I said, "They are here, Sir, because the Pakistan Army has through its guns the authority to rule over Pakistan but does not have the legitimacy to rule. It cannot get legitimacy from its own people, who resent military rule; therefore, the only other path to legitimization is that their rulers show that they can do business with India. So they are here on Zia-ul-Haq's behalf to come to some understanding if possible with India." I suggested that instead of our saying No to dealing with the military regime we should deal with any regime which was extending its hand to us. Therefore, the question often asked about whom do we talk to is irrelevant. We should just deal with them but when we deal with them we get the backing of the peace constituencies.

There are enemy countries, but I don't think Pakistan is one of them. And there was a huge constituency to which the Consulate can cater, that is what I was doing there, nothing but by issuing visas. But issuing visas with humanitarian considerations – as some people do need to go urgently – and others should be treated with dignity. There should be efficiency and courtesy in the service provided. It was enough to make a huge impact on Pakistanis.

Therefore, thank you, Pakistan. I think my three years in Pakistan taught me not only more about Pakistan and more about India-Pakistan relations

than I could have learnt otherwise, they also taught me about life, about the relationship between states, and the role of diplomacy in nation-building.

IFAJ: Thank you very much, Sir, for sharing with us such a wonderful account of your diplomatic career and insight on Indo-Pak relations that would be of much interest to the academia and policymakers.

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