

Back From The Brink Of Death

(An Incredible Story of Survival, Faith & Service)

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah
(Hilal-e-Imtiaz) (Sitara-e-Imtiaz)

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Back From The Brink of Death

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Dedication

- In the name of Allah, the Most Exalted, who granted me healing and blessed me with a new life.
- To the countless hands across Pakistan and around the world that were raised in prayer for me.
- To the selfless and tireless doctors and paramedical staff of Mayo Hospital, who left no effort undone in my treatment.
- To my entire family, my children, my wife, my friends, and all those who served, cared, and stood by me, including my colleagues, who worried for me at every moment and continued their efforts and prayers for my recovery.

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Introduction

This is not merely a story of survival. This is a testament.

It is a testament to the fragile thread upon which human existence hangs, and to the immense, unseen forces that can both sever and mend it. It is a testament to the silent, steadfast heroes who walk the halls of our hospitals, whose skill and compassion form the tangible arm of divine mercy. Most profoundly, it is a testament to the transformative, palpable power of prayer, faith, and a life dedicated to service—forces that, this narrative insists, can actively intervene in the very fabric of destiny.

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah's "Life from the Brink of Death" opens in the oppressive quiet of a pandemic lockdown in June 2020. The world had slowed, breath held. Then, on a day like any other, life shattered. A catastrophic accident on the motorway plunged a distinguished physician, a dedicated public servant, and a beloved family man into a brutal struggle between this world and the next. What followed were four days suspended at the precipice—a period detailed not through hazy memory, but through the agonizing, precise recollections of his children, his wife, and the medical teams who fought for him. We witness, in harrowing clarity, the shattered bones, the internal bleeding, the ventilator's ominous rhythm, and the clinical verdicts that leaned towards despair.

This book, however, is not a chronicle of despair. It is the meticulous documentation of a miracle in slow motion.

Dr. Jah structures his near-death experience and arduous recovery as a revelatory journey in five acts. Part One is the raw, medical thriller—the fight in the ICU, the multiple surgeries, the moments where his spirit, as recounted by those at his bedside, seemed to hover and choose.

Part Two unfolds as a poignant diary from the hospital ward, a space where physical agony is gradually alleviated by an inundation of spiritual succor. Here, we see the ecosystem of recovery: the divine, through the fervent prayers of family, friends, mystics, and even the nation's leadership; and the human, through the tireless devotion of doctors, nurses, and orderlies at Lahore's Mayo Hospital, who become avatars of a higher calling.

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Part Three marks the fragile transition from hospital to home, where recovery is measured in first steps, first prayers, and the overwhelming gratitude for simple, forgotten blessings. It is here that Dr. Jah begins to decode the ‘why’ behind his salvation, drawing connections between a life spent in service to humanity and the grace that seemingly pulled him back.

Part Four details the challenging reintegration—returning to work in a wheelchair, accepting civil honors, learning to walk again—each step a victory forged from vulnerability. Finally, Part Five transcends the personal entirely, becoming a powerful manifesto. As soon as he is able, Dr. Jah returns not to a life of cautionary convalescence, but to his mission: leading medical camps in the remotest, most punishing terrains of Pakistan—from the snow-locked valleys of Neelum and Hunza to the earthquake-ravaged villages of Mirpur and the forgotten communities of Waziristan.

This cyclical return to service is the core philosophy of the book. Dr. Jah posits that his life was spared not as a reward for past deeds, but as a reinvestment. The “Savior” in the original concept is multifaceted: it is Allah, the Ultimate Preserver; it is the medical team led by figures like Professor Asghar Naqi and Dr. Nauman Naseer; it is the power of collective prayer from all corners of the nation; and it is ultimately, the purpose of service itself, which gives life its meaning and strength.

The narrative is enriched by a chorus of voices—forewords and reflections from literary giants like Mustansar Hussain Tarar, intellectuals like Orya Maqbool Jan, and spiritual guides like Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Khan. They frame Dr. Jah’s experience not as an isolated incident, but as a universal parable of courage, faith, and resilience.

“Life from the Brink of Death” is, therefore, more than a memoir. It is a medical document, a spiritual guide, and a social treatise. It challenges the modern, secular mindset to reconsider the spaces where science and spirit converge. It is a heartfelt salute to Pakistan’s medical community and a stirring call to recognize our profound interconnectedness. Dr. Jah’s journey from the precipice of death to the heights of selfless service offers a compelling answer to a question we all might face in our darkest hours: “For what purpose was I saved?”

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The answer he provides, through every page of this unforgettable journey, is simple and profound: to serve, to love, and to bear witness to the mercy that flows, often through human hands, when faith becomes an active, living force.

Turn the page, and begin a journey that will alter your perception of crisis, recovery, and what it truly means to be given a second chance at life.

Dr. Amjad Ali Bhatti
Islamabad

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Back From the Brink of Death

Preface

The Accident, the Savior, and Life:

- This is a story of pain,
- A story born of an accident,
- A tale woven with love,
- A journey where prayers and affection lit lamps of hope in the darkest moments of despair.
- It is the story of a daughter's love for her father,
- A tribute to bonds that never fade,
- A living commentary on *"Indeed, with hardship comes ease."*
- It is a story of trust in Allah,
- A story that feels nothing short of miraculous.
- It is a story of life breaking and being restored.
- It echoes the cries of the poor, the weak, the sick, and the thirsty souls of Thar.
- It shows how destiny can change through prayer.
- It carries the strange nearness of the Angel of Death—his arrival and retreat.
- It celebrates the selflessness of Pakistani doctors and their healing hands.
- It holds within it the love of children, family, friends, companions, and countless people.
- It is a story of returning from the edge of the unseen world.

Read this story. It will move you. It will strengthen your faith. It will make you realize that miracles still happen. When one trusts Allah, He helps, He protects, and He carries His servant out of the gravest trials. When you serve His creation, He supports you, shields you from calamities, and guards you through dangers. The remembrance of Allah and the recitation of His blessed names form a protective circle around you, keeping you safe from sudden misfortunes and disasters.

After this life-threatening accident, Allah blessed me with a new life. That life belongs to Him alone, and after Him, to His creation—whose prayers pulled me back from the jaws of death, because perhaps they still needed this humble servant. Allah willing, I will continue to be a source of comfort and healing for them. I dedicate this new life once again to the service of

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humanity.

I am deeply grateful to my children—Yumna, Huzaifa, Mahnoor—my wife Asma, my entire family, the remarkable doctors of Mayo Hospital, my fellow workers in service and medical care, the donors, my Class of '86 friends, my Customs colleagues, and the countless well-wishers across Pakistan and around the world. They prayed for me, gave charity on my behalf, and cared for me from illness to recovery. May Allah bless them all.

You now hold the English edition of the book titled: "حادثة، مسیحا" اور زندگی. The accident occurred on 18 June 2020. By the grace of Allah, from recovery until today (April 2026), the work of serving suffering humanity continues across Pakistan and in several countries of the world.

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah
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A Tale of Courage and Resolve

We praise Allah and send blessings on His Messenger.
After this, I seek refuge in Allah from the accursed devil.

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most
Compassionate.

وَلَيْنِ أَذَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنَّا رَحْمَةً ثُمَّ نَزَعْنَاهَا مِنْهُ إِنَّهُ لَيَكُونُ
كَفُورًا وَّوَلَّيْنَا أَذَقْنَاهُ نِعَمًا بَعْدَ ضَرَاءٍ مَسَّئَةٍ لَيَقُولَنَّ ذَهَبَ
السَّيِّئَاتُ عَنِّي إِنَّهُ لَفَرِحٌ فَخُورٌ

(سورة: هود: 9-10)

And if We let the human taste mercy from Us and then withdraw it from him, indeed he is despairing and ungrateful. And if We give him a favour after hardship has touched him, he will surely say, 'The evils have departed from me.' Indeed, he is rejoicing and boastful."

Reflect on the first part of the verse: *Man becomes hopeless and ungrateful in hardship*. But as you read: *The Accident, the Savior and Life* page by page, you will realise that Dr. Asif Jah is not the kind of person who, when suddenly moved from comfort and good health to pain and trial, loses courage and slips into despair. People call it *willpower*, but in truth it is the power granted to the friends of Allah. It is the manifestation of *"Indeed, Allah is with the patient."* This is the strength that comes from turning to Allah.

When a person holds on to this strength, he cannot be shaken. Such people manage to pray even when they can only make ablution with a stone. Later in the book you will see how he became the living example of the saying, *"Whom Allah protects, none can harm."* Even the ventilator meant to keep him alive suddenly failed, yet he was saved by Allah's mercy.

The Holy Prophet said: *"As long as a person helps his brother, Allah helps him."*

This truth appears again and again throughout the coming pages.

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Now read the second part of the verse: *When man recovers from illness, he begins to boast.* Yet in this book, you will see Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah as a picture of gratitude. His bones were broken, but his spirit never broke. On every page you will find him thanking Allah. The Holy Prophet said: *“He who is not grateful to people is not grateful to Allah.”* A person who does not thank the one he can see, how will he thank the One he cannot see?

In Urdu literature, there is a genre called *Aap Beeti* (autobiography). By writing this book, Dr. Asif Jah has created a new genre: *Mareez Beeti*—the life story of a patient.

Dr. Muhammad Yusuf Khan

Teacher of Hadith and Director of Education
Jamia Ashrafia, Lahore

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Part One

Four Days in the Struggle Between Life and Death

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Welcome Back From the Edge of Death

“People often wonder what it would be like to witness the moments that come after death. In the case of our dear Asif Jah, he has almost seen that scene himself. He reached the threshold of death and, by the mercy of Allah, returned — because he still had many wounds to heal and much service left to offer humanity. Perhaps that is why Allah granted him more time.

The way he has described the days and nights in the hospital after the accident is astonishing. At every step you feel as if those moments are happening not to him, but to you. I welcome him back from the edge where life almost slipped away.”

Mustansar Hussain Tarar

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(1) Lockdown Life in Islamabad

From 8 February 2020 onward, my days in Islamabad were going smoothly. I would go from the mess to the office in the morning. In the evenings, I either visited patients in G-10 or, after the new Al-Meraj Habib Trust Hospital opened in Barah Kahu, I spent time there among patients, examining them and treating them. Seeing the free food distribution for the poor always lifted my spirits.

By March, as coronavirus began to spread, Barah Kahu came under a strict lockdown because a few early cases had been detected there. During this period, ration was delivered to families affected by the lockdown across the country. Jahangir distributed ration door to door in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Many people reached out through social media as well, and they too were provided ration and financial help.

As COVID cases increased, the lockdown grew even stricter. The OPDs of government hospitals shut down. Private hospitals also stopped accepting general patients. Alhamdulillah, even during these conditions, all our centres continued examining and treating patients. In Barah Kahu, alongside Dr. Ramsha, I also kept seeing patients. Whenever I travelled to Lahore on Fridays, I examined patients there too. COVID patients also came in. We treated them with full precautions and PPE gowns.

➤ 17 June 2020

On the evening of 17 June 2020, around four o'clock, I left the office and headed straight to our hospital in Barah Kahu. I offered Asr on the way. It was drizzling lightly. Naheeda immediately handed me a protective gown. I examined the patients while Saqib gave them the prescribed medicines. Soon after, the food service for the poor, our daily Dastarkhan was set up.

After offering Maghrib, I asked permission to leave and returned to the mess for a short rest. I offered Isha at Bilal Mosque. I met Maulana Zulfiqar Ahmad there. He expressed sorrow over the passing of our senior colleague Zahid Khokhar

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and offered fateha for the departed soul. After dinner at the mess, I went out for a walk, listened to the news, and then prepared to sleep.

➤ 18 June 2020

On 18 June 2020, I woke up early. I offered the Tahajjud prayer and prayed for the well-being of my children, my family, and the safety of the country. I then offered Fajr at Bilal Mosque. While walking on the mess rooftop, I completed my tasbeeh as well.

Today I had planned to go to Lahore, but I kept debating with myself whether to go or not. Because normally I used to go to Lahore on Friday and today was Thursday. Still, I packed my bag. I told myself that if I didn't go, the bag would simply come back with me. I handled the usual office work and offered Zuhr in the hall downstairs.

Around three in the afternoon, I called Qamar, the new driver, and told him to get ready because we were going to Lahore, even though my heart felt heavy. Because of the ongoing corona situation, my colleagues were also worried about my health. My colleagues in Pakistan Customs, Jameel Nasir and Tahir Qureshi, even called from Karachi and said, "Sir, after the passing of respected Zahid Khokhar, we're really concerned about you. May Allah protect you, but please be careful." Besides them, Abdul Wadood Khan had also seen a dream, which will be mentioned later.

At 3:30, we left the Customs House. I held my prayer beads, Tasbeeh in my hand. The journey was going well. When we reached Kallar Kahar, we stopped to offer the Asr prayer. After resting briefly, we resumed the journey. The weather outside was pleasant, with light rain and cool air. After about an hour and a half of driving, we reached Sukheki. It was almost time for Maghrib.

I told Qamar that we would offer the prayer further ahead. About 20 to 25 kilometers from Sukheki, near Sheikhpura, there is a small rest area. While traveling from Islamabad, I would often offer Fajr there. The Maghrib call to prayer had been announced, and the congregational prayer was already offered. Since seven or eight people had gathered, we arranged our own congregation.

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There wasn't even the slightest hint of what was about to happen just a few minutes later. After the prayer, we resumed our journey.

➤ And Then the Accident Happened

Barely ten or fifteen minutes had passed when, according to the driver Qamar, clouds of smoke appeared ahead. Visibility dropped to zero. He couldn't figure out how to move the car forward. In that confusion he tried to steer the car to the right, but vehicles coming from behind hit us with full force. The cars behind us also crashed into one another. It was a scene of devastation. People were screaming and crying. Cars were crushed and entangled with each other.

Qamar had been thrown to one side. I was outside the car on the other side, running my hand over my leg. But I remember nothing. When did the accident happen? How did it happen? How did the cars collide? It felt as if some unseen power put me to sleep, lifted me out of the vehicle, and placed me safely outside. Motorway and Rescue 1122 teams arrived. The first image I recall after the accident is lying on the floor of the Rescue 1122 ambulance while an inspector held my phone and asked who should be informed. I asked him to call Ashfaq. A call came from home within minutes as well. The 1122 inspector told my family that a very serious accident had occurred. He also informed us that we were heading to Jinnah Hospital. Within minutes, news of the accident reached Lahore, Islamabad, Sargodha, Faisalabad and across the country. When the video of the crash went viral on social media, prayers began pouring in from everywhere from Pakistan and abroad. Relatives from Sargodha, Faisalabad, and Islamabad rushed to Lahore that same night. Asma, Yumna, Mahnoor, and Huzaifa cried endlessly and prayed for my health and life.

➤ From Jinnah Hospital to Mayo Hospital

By the grace of Allah, I reached Jinnah Hospital from the accident site quite quickly. Ashfaq, Professor Yar Muhammad, Huzaifa, Faheem and Yumna were already there with me. Prof. Yar Muhammad and family immediately decided to shift me to Mayo Hospital. My ankle was soaked in blood, yet neither the Rescue team nor the staff at Jinnah Hospital had thought to bandage it.

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The ambulance drove at high speed and brought us to Mayo Hospital within half an hour. Shortly afterward, my class fellow and Vice Chancellor of King Edward Medical University, Professor Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, also arrived. He immediately called Professor Rana Arshad, Head of Orthopedic Surgery.

A body scan was done, and thankfully the results showed no major internal injury. My dear friend Dr. Tahir also arrived within minutes and stayed there.

➤ Return from the Higher Realm

My left ankle bones were completely separated from muscles and ligaments torn. The entire foot was soaked in blood. The orthopaedic surgeon decided for immediate surgery of the ankle. There was an urgent need for blood, local news channel 'City 42' flashed the news immediately and requested for the blood donation. My blood group B (negative) is very rare. People began arriving at Mayo Hospital. Aslam Marwat, along with Saeed and his wife, reached Lahore from Peshawar within a few hours to donate blood. Shahid Zaidi also arrived with four bottles of B-negative blood.

Everything was ready inside the operation theatre. The anaesthesia team thought that since the patient was conscious, they would give spinal anaesthesia. But the moment the injection was administered into the lower back, a sudden shock occurred. Rana Arshad's team rushed out, saying, "The patient has collapsed."

Thanks to Allah, Dr. Yar Muhammad, who was like a younger brother, was inside the Operation Theatre. According to him, not only did the patient go into shock, but the ECG on the monitor also went completely flat. For a moment it felt as if the world had gone dark. Dr. Yar Muhammad and the other doctors immediately jumped onto the operating table and began CPR with great urgency. The pressure on the ribs was so intense that they cracked and broke. But the doctors did not care, because saving the life mattered more than any broken ribs.

Yar Muhammad's eyes stayed fixed on the monitor. One minute passed. Then another. The ECG line remained flat. Tears welled in Yar Muhammad's eyes, but his hands kept working without pause. The other doctors were also giving their full

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strength. It was a battle being fought as destiny had written.

After three minutes, faint signs of heart activity appeared. The ECG showed a slight curve. Outside, Yumna, Huzaifa, Nauman, Dr. Shehroz, Awais, Munir and all family members were standing anxiously. They had no idea about the storm that had just passed inside.

After four minutes, the pulse returned. The heart began to beat again. Life came back. Allah bestowed His mercy and restored my life.

Rana Arshad's team came back into the theatre. The Angel of Death must have turned away. Within a few hours, Allah granted a second life.

➤ **The story of life's Threads Breaking and Rejoining, in
Dr. Adnan's
Words**

After the accident of 18 June 2020, I was shifted from Services Hospital to Mayo Hospital. At Mayo, Dr Khalid Masood Gondal, Dr Yasin and Dr Yar Muhammad were already there. I was first taken to the Surgical Tower where tests were done. A FAST scan was carried out and the report showed no internal bleeding or damage to viscera. After that, I was taken to the Orthopedic Operation Theatre for immediate ankle surgery. Professor Rana Arshad and his team were ready to join the shattered bones of my foot. Dr. Adnan, the senior registrar of anaesthesia, spoke to me, asked how I felt and reassured me, though I remember very little. What follows is the story in Dr. Adnan's own words.

Dr. Adnan narrates:

"On the night of 18 June 2020, I was on my routine duty. Suddenly my phone started ringing again and again. I was told a high-profile protocol patient was being brought in. Professor Rana Arshad reached the Orthopedic Operation Theatre. Soon after, Professor Khalid Masood Gondal arrived as well, followed by Professor Yar Muhammad and Professor Yasin. Our department head, Professor Dr. Zahra, also kept calling.

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I examined the patient. His ankle was badly injured and soaked in blood, but he was conscious. I asked about his condition and offered reassurance. From his overall state, it seemed that apart from the ankle injury, nothing serious was going on. So, after consultation, we decided to proceed immediately with ankle surgery. Spinal anaesthesia seemed enough since the patient was fully conscious.

With Allah's name on my lips, I administered spinal anesthesia. But the moment the needle went in, the patient's condition started to deteriorate. His pulse began to fade. First it slowed, then stopped. The cardiac monitor showed a flat ECG line. A wave of fear passed through the room. Everything went into emergency mode. I called my anaesthesia team. We began all possible efforts to save his life.

First, we intubated him to restore breathing and placed him on the ventilator. CPR began right away. Dr. Yar Muhammad and the other doctors joined in. After two to three minutes of CPR, there was a faint sign of heart movement. During CPR, the ribs cracked under pressure, but no one cared about ribs at that moment — saving his life was all that mattered. When the pulse returned, we removed the endotracheal tube and placed him on the ventilator support. The next half hour was extremely critical. We watched the monitor every second. His breathing had returned but the heart rate was very high. After an hour, his condition finally began to stabilise.

Only then did Professor Rana Arshad and his team proceed with the ankle surgery. They aligned the bones, inserted the surgical pins and completed the dressing. Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah was kept on the ventilator afterward. The entire night went into saving his life. We thanked Allah

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for giving us the chance to protect someone's life."

Dr. Adnan told this story almost two years after the accident. I have included it here because it reminds us that only Allah gives life and protects it. The prayers of family, children, friends, poor patients, the helpless and the disaster-stricken became a shield. Allah rewrote destiny and granted a new life. After the accident of 18 June 2020, the work of serving and treating the needy increased many folds. With Allah's grace, this service to serve the humanity in distress continues across Pakistan and in many countries of the world, and with His will, it will continue until the last breath.

➤ **Surgery on a Hanging, Shattered and Crushed Ankle Bones**

Once the anaesthetists gave general anaesthesia, Prof. Rana Arshad skilfully brought together the hanging, shattered and crushed bones of the ankle. Pins were inserted, and the first stage of the surgery was completed. On the instruction of Prof. Khalid Masood Gondal, I was immediately shifted to the ICU of the Surgical Tower. Dr. Tahir was also present in Mayo Hospital. He kept updating the Group '86 classmates and Dr. Junaid Asghar with every development. There was panic in the Group '86 chat. Everyone was worried, sharing their opinions and praying.

Dr. Junaid Asghar immediately contacted Prof. Khalid Masood Gondal. From Thursday night till Sunday afternoon, I have no memory of what happened. I remained unconscious the whole time. But my family tells me that when I finally regained consciousness, the first thing I did was ask for paper and wrote that I wanted to offer my prayers. After that, I wrote Asma's name.

Although the ankle surgery was done, my condition in the ICU began to worsen. Asma, Yumna, Mahnoor and Huzaifa spent the entire night awake and restless. There was constant running around. My condition in the ICU was deteriorating. My pulse was unstable. Dr. Tahir raised the alarm again. My blood pressure was rising. Drowsiness was increasing. There were disturbances on the ECG as well.

Ashfaq called Prof. Nadeem Hayat Malik, the former head of the Punjab Institute of Cardiology. He rushed to the hospital. As

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soon as he arrived, he called Prof. Nauman Naseer. They examined me and prescribed medication.

➤ **Blood in the Abdomen and an Emergency Surgery**

By noon, body scan was done and it showed that the abdomen was filled with blood. There was some internal bleeding that could not be detached on the first scan. Orders were given at once to take me for immediate surgery. Several bottles of blood had already been used the previous night. The question now was: where would more blood come from as it was very difficult to arrange for rare blood group, B (negative). The children panicked. They ran in every direction, made calls and tried everything, but nothing was working. Then Allah sent help. Yumna's classmate arrived to donate blood. My nephew Abu Bakr's blood group also matched.

The surgical team, led by Professor Khalid Masood Gondal, Dr. Asghar Naqi, was ready. General anesthesia was administered. As soon as the incision was made, a fountain of blood gushed out. Dr. Yasin and Dr. Asghar Naqi and Associate Professor Dr. Yasin held the bleeding arteries and clamped them. The surgery took two to three hours.

Outside, the entire family was restless and terrified. Yumna, Huzaifa and Mahnoor were fighting for breath. They tried to console one another but were breaking down in private, begging Allah for mercy. Dr. Naveed, Munir bhai, Nasir and Masood were all present. No one understood what was happening. Huzaifa was reciting the Holy Qur'an while crying and pleading: "O Allah, please protect my father." Yumna was sitting on the stairs, crying uncontrollably. Asma was in a state of shock. A strange, heavy sadness had taken over. No one knew what to do. Everyone was trying to give each other false comfort.

Blood was arranged, but then another challenge appeared: sutures. Huzaifa searched the entire Lahore city. Yumna's friend Khansa somehow managed to find the required sutures from somewhere. Inside the operation theatre, the entire surgical team was repairing the bleeding vessels. Professor Gondal also joined them. He said, "Since we're here, let's also remove the excess abdominal fat." The doctors removed an entire layer of fat. The surgeons continued with complete focus, care and patience. They

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finished the repair, closed the abdomen and completed the operation.

➤ And the Ventilator Blew Out

Because of the previous experience, they again put me on a ventilator and shifted me to the ICU late at night. Dr. Tahir kept updating Junaid Asghar at every moment. Junaid kept calling Yumna every few minutes. Officers from the office of the Chief Collector Customs had also arrived. Everyone was in touch with Yumna. She was anxious, distressed and crying. She prayed for her father and kept telling Junaid uncle again and again: "Please pray for my father. Allah willing, he will be fine." Dr. Junaid kept comforting her.

Only a short while had passed in the ICU when another ordeal unfolded. Yumna, Dr. Shehroz and Awais were sitting there when Dr. Tahir suddenly said he could smell something burning. Just moments later, the ventilator burst with a loud pop. Panic spread in the ward. The backup ventilator also failed to work. Breathing rate dropped sharply. I was barely able to breathe. Dr. Tahir ran around looking for help but not a single doctor could be found.

A nurse showed great courage. She switched off the ventilator of another patient in the ICU who was in stable condition and connected it to me. In this way, Allah saved my life once again. My breathing and pulse began to return to normal. Only then was there a little sense of relief.

➤ First Ablution and Prayer

When I opened my eyes, the first thing I asked for was to offer prayer. Awais helped me perform ablution, and in a semi-conscious state, I offered the prayer through gestures. Awais later told me that as soon as I completed the prayer, a miracle happened. Before the prayer, my breathing rate had been no more than three or four breaths per minute, but after finishing the prayer, it rose to 13–14 breaths per minute.

The next three days were spent on the ventilator. Dr. Zahra and Dr. Farukh from the anesthesia team continuously monitored my condition. When the time came to remove the ventilator, Dr. Farukh said she would not leave until it was safely done, no matter how long it took. The kind-hearted professor sat

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by my bedside for four hours, waiting until my breathing stabilized and my heart rate returned to normal. She then removed the ventilator herself and congratulated Yumna for regaining my health before going home late at night. During this time, relatives and friends kept arriving from Sargodha, Faisalabad, Islamabad, Peshawar and other remote areas of Pakistan.

➤ I am in Islamabad.

I felt as if I was in Islamabad and all the doctors had come from Lahore to Islamabad to treat me. The three days spent on the ventilator were extremely heavy on the family. Colleagues from Customs and friends were worried in their own ways. Senior Customs colleagues Yasin Tahir, Ramzan Bhatti, Muhammad Siddique, Riaz Malik, Syed Ahmed Alam, Tauseef Qureshi, and Dr. Arsalan kept praying continuously. Activities within the Class of '86 group also remained active. On the instructions of Member Customs Tariq Huda, Chief Collector Customs Faiz stayed in contact as well. The most distressed were Yumna and Huzaifa and Mahnoor along with their mother. Their father was on a ventilator. My condition kept fluctuating. At times the doctors became concerned, and at other times they offered reassurance.

➤ The prayers of Yumna, Huzaifa, Mahnoor, Asma, and the entire family

Yumna showed remarkable strength. She was looking after her father while also witnessing the constant ups and downs of his condition. Aslam Marwat, Abdul Rauf, Suhail Fida, Suhail Khan, and Hanif Abid from Multan were all present there. Aslam Marwat kept moving around in a state of hope and fear, quietly reciting prayers under his breath. Hanif Abid wanted to come in and say something in my ears, but Yumna did not allow it. He kept praying for my health.

At times the eyes would open, and then unconsciousness would take over again. Sometimes breathing continued, sometimes it became labored. Asma was shocked and stunned when she found me on the ventilator. Mahnoor, sitting home, cried and pleaded before Allah, speaking to Him directly. While conversing with Allah, she felt that her prayer had been heard, and she would find peace and solace. For her father's recovery, the little girl observed fasts for three consecutive days.

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Friends, well-wishers, and loved ones were all anxious and praying. KKN workers, along with Marwa, the driving spirit of Khatm-e-Nabuwwat, spoke to Mahnoor at length, encouraging and strengthening her resolve. Mahnoor later shared that the way Marwa comforted her and lifted her spirits was something she would never forget. Marwa's mother also prayed with tears, while her father, the well-known columnist Nawaz Mirani, was praying for my health as well.

Ashfaq informed us that prayers were being offered at all centers across the country, and charity was being distributed. Prayers were also continuing in the Rohingya Muslim camps. When the ventilator was removed, the condition began to improve. Prayers were resumed, and recognition of people gradually returned.

➤ **Reassurance and prayers from Maulana Yusuf Khan.**

I spoke to Maulana Yusuf Khan on the telephone. Maulana Yusuf is a Quranic scholar, a Sheikh-ul-Hadith, and a teacher at Jamia Ashrafia. He had recently suffered from COVID. I had sent him my special syrup during his illness, and by the grace of Allah he is now recovering well. I told him that during illness the most painful thing is being unable to go to the mosque for prayers. Maulana comforted me by narrating a blessed Hadith of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, that a person who offers prayers through gestures during illness is granted the reward of congregational prayer by Allah Almighty.

For many years, I have shared a bond of love and respect with Maulana Fazlur Rahim, the Mohtamim of Jamia Ashrafia. He continues to call and offer prayers. He informed that prayers are being offered for Asif Mahmood Jah in the Friday congregation and after every prayer.

➤ **Prayers and fasting of Brigadier Afzal Rana.**

From the very first day of the accident after regaining consciousness, I have been receiving phone calls and messages from Brigadier Afzal Rana, a pious, Quranic, and spiritual scholar from Islamabad. He remains in regular contact with Ashfaq, morning and evening. He knows the art of conversation well. He is a God-fearing and devout person who observes fasts regularly on Mondays and Thursdays. He has been continuously praying

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for my recovery and has also asked his close associates in the Two Holy Mosques in Makkah and Madinah to pray for my health.

Since learning of the incident, the kind-hearted and virtuous lover of the Prophet ﷺ from 92 News, Mian Hanif, has arranged for prayers in Makkah Mukarramah and Madinah Munawwarah. Brigadier Ziaullah was the first to send a bouquet of flowers after the incident, and since then his prayer-filled and affectionate messages have continued.

Prayer messages are also continuously coming in various groups, including the KE Class, '86 Group, Senior Tax Officers Group, Pakistan Customs Officers Group, 107th NMC, 6th SMC, 20th CTP, KE Alumni, and many others. Friends are offering prayers, expressing concern, and asking Allah Almighty to grant Asif Mahmood Jah more time and healing. Yumna, Huzaifa, Mahnoor, and Asma are praying at every moment and with every breath.

➤ The Entire Family Shifted from Sargodha to Lahore.

From Sargodha, my brothers Munir, Naveed, Masood-ur-Rasool, and Nasir are also praying. Dr. Naveed closed his clinic and home in Sargodha and shifted to Lahore with his family. My parents' prayers have been reaching me continuously. May Allah keep them safe and spare them from any sorrow in their old age. My mother has the strength of a mountain. She places her full hope in Allah that her son will recover, so she is not overly worried. My father, on the other hand, becomes anxious every other day. The first time I spoke to him after the incident, he initially burst into tears out of overwhelming emotions, but when I told him I was fine, he felt reassured. He said he had prayed to Allah for only one thing: "O Allah! Just as You helped the people of Bani Israel to emerge from the cave because of their good deeds, O Allah! For the sake of my son's good deeds, his journeys in Thar, Awaran, and the disaster-affected regions, save him. Grant him healing. Give my Asif more time."

It seems that Allah has heard my father's supplications and prayers. Asma shared that she, too, prayed to Allah in the same way: "O Allah! Just as You delivered the people of Bani Israel from the cave because of their good deeds, do the same for my crown,

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my husband. For the sake of his good deeds, his thousands of kilometers of journeys across the deserts of Thar and the far-flung regions of the country for the suffering humanity, grant him life. Give him a new life.”

➤ **Profound devotion of Professor Dr. Yar Muhammad**

From the very first day of the incident, Professor Dr. Yar Muhammad, a professor of Emergency Medicine, visited the ward daily to look after and monitor my health. At times, he would make rounds three times in a single day. Even after leaving the ward, he maintained the routine of visiting the house daily after I discharged from the hospital. When the stitches on the abdomen started causing discomfort, he, with the advice of Professor Gondal and Dr. Asghar Naqi, had them removed. Thanks to Professor Gondal and Dr. Asghar Naqi, all the doctors in the ward provided treatment with utmost attention and dedication. This included Dr. Shery, Aqeel Ashraf (a devoted admirer of Imran Khan), senior registrar, Dr. Abdul Hafeez, and others. Since I was in the Surgical Tower ward, where other patients were also admitted, a separate corner was arranged for me, and only one other patient shared the adjacent corner. Ashfaq and Anwar had set up screens, creating an almost private section.

At the beginning of the accident and during the course of treatment, there was also discussion among friends and well-wishers about shifting from Mayo Hospital, arguing that proper treatment is often not available in public hospitals. Senior custom officers also contacted Yumna, suggesting that your father could be moved to any good private hospital. The concern of COVID-19 risk was also raised. However, my brave daughter, with full confidence, decided, “Uncle Mayo Hospital is my father’s hospital and also my hospital. We are all satisfied here.” Alhamdulillah, the treatment proceeded well. Regarding the fear of COVID, my father had always taught us to rely on Allah. Allah will take care of all.” Indeed, the way Allah saved my father’s life gives us hope that He will also protect him and us from COVID, InshaAllah. The daughter’s decision, Alhamdulillah, proved right. I regained full recovery in Mayo Hospital.

On the fourth day on the directive of Professor Gondal at the ward, a COVID test was conducted. When the sample was taken, there was slight concern that the result might be positive, but

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Alhamdulillah, after four days, the report came as negative. When shared in the group, Junaid Asghar specially congratulated, “Alhamdulillah! The COVID test is negative.”

➤ Dr. Junaid Asghar and Dr. Tahir Iqbal

From the very beginning of the accident and throughout the stay in the ward, and continuing at home, two doctors stood out for their constant care, attention, and support: Dr. Tahir Iqbal and Dr. Junaid Asghar. They not only kept a constant check on every moment but also encouraged Yumna, my loving daughter, providing reassurance and guidance. Dr. Tahir, especially during the most critical times, remained present every moment, supporting not just the family but also exchanging ideas with other doctors to ensure the best possible treatment. Whenever he noticed anything significant, he immediately informed Dr. Junaid, activating the Consultant group to discuss treatment adjustments or modifications as needed.

The moment Dr. Junaid Asghar heard about the accident, he began coordinating right away. He arranged for Dr. Samia Dar to visit the home to reassure Asma, and even sent funds to cover any urgent requirements. Asma, a deeply faithful person, responded with gratitude, asking only for prayers for the children’s father. Dr. Junaid also kept the Class 86 group and Consultant group updated with minute-by-minute news. Colleagues and renowned doctors from around the world contributed their advice, which guided the treatment process and the team of my doctors. Alongside technical guidance, messages of prayers and goodwill from classmates and colleagues continued to arrive.

Most importantly, Dr. Junaid maintained direct contact with Yumna. Whenever she sensed worry, she would message him, and he would immediately respond. He would call, reassure, and explain everything in detail, helping her remain calm. Yumna shared that Dr. Junaid would spend hours explaining the minute details, offering comfort, and going into technical details in a way that helped her feel assured and confident about her father’s care.

➤ The Story of the First Three Days After the Accident, in Huzaifa’s Words

On Thursday night, we transferred Baba from Jinnah Hospital to Mayo Hospital. Late at night, his ankle surgery was performed,

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which gave us some relief—it seemed there was no major issue. My eyes were heavy, but my heart was at ease, believing that Allah had blessed us and it was only the ankle that needed attention and immediate surgery.

On Friday afternoon, Baba's condition worsened again. Dr. Asghar Naqi advised an urgent scan. The scan revealed internal bleeding in the abdomen. Immediate arrangements were made for blood. That night, blood transfusions were organized. Many donors had returned, and there was a frantic search for compatible blood. Hundreds of calls were made, cross-checking blood groups. Abu Bakr's B-negative was arranged, Munir Bhai's O-negative was secured, and even a stranger donated blood. Slowly, two or three bottles were also arranged.

I will never forget the scene of taking Baba to the operating theater. The doors suddenly closed, everyone outside froze. Those two hours of anxious wait with tears outside the Operation Theatre were like living through a silent storm of fear, prayers, and fragile hope. After three hours, Dr. Sherry emerged from the doctors' room in tears. I asked him what happened; he could only say, "Chachu's condition is critical. Oh Allah, save Baba." Another blood procurement came through. The path from the blood bank to the surgical tower, normally two minutes, took hours. By the time the blood reached the operating theater, our legs felt numb. In front of the theater, Sherry, Awais, Shani, Taya Abu Munir—all were crying. I was on the verge of screams, praying desperately for Baba to be given a chance.

Meanwhile, the surgeons requested sutures to close the abdomen. We searched every pharmacy, even reaching Lohari, with Yumna's friend running tirelessly to find them. Finally, the surgeons completed the suturing and closed the abdomen. The three hours from surgery to ICU felt like the Day of Judgment. Professor Khalid Masood Gondal came out first; seeing him gave us some reassurance. Sheroz rushed to him to enquire about Baba's health and he said, "Alhamdulillah! Surgery went well, but continued prayers are needed."

After successful surgery, Baba arrived in ICU on a ventilator, still in danger. No one else was allowed near him. Yumna and I sat beside him. Baba, normally talkative, was restrained by tubes and machinery, unconscious. Every moment felt like an eternity.

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When Mamma saw Baba, she screamed. Seeing her, Baba opened his eyes—life returned to us. He could not speak but wrote “Namaz” and then “Asma” on a paper—he had not forgotten prayer even in near-death.

Another crisis followed: Dr. Tahir noticed a burning smell—within minutes, the ventilator malfunctioned. Baba’s breathing became labored. Panic ensued. The nurse, without waiting for Dr. Tahir, decided to act and moved a ventilator from another patient whose condition was stable. Baba’s breathing got stabilized, and he began regaining consciousness. His first gestures were to perform ablution, and with guidance, he prayed. His condition gradually improved, and four days later, we could breathe in relief.

During those four days, Yumna, Mahnoor, Mamma, Naveed Bhai, Awais, Sherry, Taya Abu Munir, and all other family members, Baba’s friends, Ashfaq, Khawaja Farooq, and Aslam Marwat never rested or blinked. Those days passed like a lifetime. Once Baba opened his eyes, we felt able to see him again in stable condition. For the previous 22 years, Baba had always been our anchor, but during those four days, it seemed we might lose him.

Those days were filled with prayers like: “O Allah! Grant Baba another chance for our sake, preserve his life for his good deeds.” Gradually, Baba stabilized. Even the doctors’ faces brightened. Professors Khalid Masood Gondal, Asghar Naqi, Yaar Muhammad, Nauman Naseer, Dr. Farukh, and Dr. Zahra visited twice daily, offering reassurance and instructions. When Baba was finally shifted from ICU to the ward, we exhaled in relief and thanked Allah countless times for His mercy.

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Part Two

A Diary of Days Spent in the Hospital

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Service to Humanity, Prayers, and Miracles

Miracles come into being through prayers, and prayers are earned through one's good character and service to humanity. This is a sequence that can be seen scattered across every society in the world. Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah's life is a living reflection of this very order, for over many years he has been gathering treasures of prayers from people across the length and breadth of Pakistan as well as from abroad. It is for this reason that, in light of the saying of the Leader of the Prophets ﷺ that nothing changes destiny except prayer and nothing increases one's lifespan except righteousness (Tirmidhi, Mishkat), Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah's survival from a life-threatening accident is nothing short of a miracle. It had to be so, for there are countless hands that rise daily in prayer for the doctor, and innumerable sinners like myself who look with admiration at his virtuous and pure life.

What Dr. Sahib has written about the accident that occurred on the motorway, his miraculous survival, and the journey from treatment to complete recovery, offers deep satisfaction to the reader. The distinctive quality of this book lies in the way it weaves, throughout its pages, firm faith in Allah, the blessings of prayer, the kindness of friends, and the pain of medical treatment, so beautifully that it reads like a tale. Such writing becomes possible only when a person can creatively perceive the impact of external events on inner life. Great writers, poets, and prose authors have written much, and this indeed is a rare experience that is not granted to everyone. Yet, whoever is granted it carries a moral obligation to pass it on to others. Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah has not only fulfilled this obligation, but has also placed a seal of affirmation before people on the truth of that very sequence in the miracle of returning from death: that miracles are born of prayers, and prayers arise from good character and service to humanity.

Orya Maqbool Jan

(2)

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A Diary of Days Spent in the Hospital

What was written in the previous pages was penned after returning home from the hospital and recovering. Asma, Yumna, Huzaifa, Dr. Yar Muhammad, Dr. Tahir, and Dr. Junaid Asghar also narrated, each in their own way, the story of the days following the accident. I have tried to recount their accounts in my own words. Immediately after the accident I was conscious, but I remember nothing of what happened on Thursday night before the ankle surgery. How the threads of life were about to snap and then were tied again. How Yar Muhammad, along with other doctors, performed CPR and set the heart beating again. How, in the process, ribs were broken. How an abdominal surgery was performed. How many days were spent on the ventilator. All of this was told to me by my children and the doctors.

The account narrated in the earlier pages is based on what my children and friends narrated to me. Alongside this, when my condition began to improve in the hospital, I started writing a diary of the days spent there. After returning home as well, instead of writing down my feelings and experiences, I recorded them. At home, there were long sittings with the children, especially at night. Mahnoor would record these sessions, and then Mubashir Shah would listen to the recordings and type them out. The pages that follow contain the story of the days spent in the hospital and, thereafter, at home.

➤ Condition Deteriorated in the ICU

In the ICU, Ashfaq and Huzaifa had restricted visitors from coming in. For two days my condition remained stable, but one day vomiting suddenly started. A bluish yellow substance began to come out. Continuous vomiting left me completely exhausted and dehydrated. The vomiting continued throughout the day. Dr. Asghar Naqi arrived with his team and inquired about my condition. When he was informed about the continuous vomiting, he immediately ordered the insertion of an Nasogastric (NG) tube into the stomach. The senior registrar inserted the NG tube in his presence. As soon as the tube reached the stomach, a large amount of material and air was released at once. The NG bag was filled with air and vomited material. My condition improved immediately. It felt as if a huge burden had been lifted from my body. The stomach felt completely light. The severe state caused

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by constant vomiting suddenly began to move toward recovery. Although an NG tube has its own discomfort and tension.

➤ In the Gujranwala Ward

When my condition improved, Dr. Asghar Naqi ordered that I be shifted to the ward. The next day I was moved to the ward. As soon as I was transferred to the Gujranwala Ward, East Surgical, Vice Chancellor Khalid Masood Gondal arrived with his team, and the ward's senior registrar and other doctors began to give full attention. Every moment, every instant, one doctor or another would come to check on me. Bed No. 1 was given to me in a corner of the ward. There were a few other patients in the ward, but my section was kept completely separate.

In the third and last week of June, the coronavirus was at its peak across the country. Hospitals were full of patients, and people were afraid to come to hospitals. The entire family had come from Sargodha, Islamabad, and Faisalabad. Everyone was making rounds of the hospital. There was a constant fear that someone might catch coronavirus. Because of this, many close friends and acquaintances did not have the courage to come to the hospital. They stayed at home, offering their prayers.

➤ Implementation of COVID SOPs

By the grace of Allah, all family members, friends, well-wishers, and companions in care and treatment remained present at the hospital around the clock, and all of them stayed safe from COVID. However, the credit for this goes entirely to the whole team, especially Huzaifa, Yumna, Ashfaq, and Anwar, who ensured strict and complete implementation of all COVID-19 prevention SOPs.

As a rule, no one was allowed to meet me at all. If someone did come to see me, they would greet from a distance while strictly observing social distancing and wearing a mask. Anwar, dressed like a commando, maintained firm control over visitors. He kept a register outside where visitors signed their attendance and recorded their remarks. No one was allowed to meet without wearing a mask.

➤ Mega Ward Rounds by Professors and Consultants, and Dr. Yumna

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Every morning, Professor Asghar Naqi conducted ward rounds sharp at eight o'clock. As soon as he arrived, after exchanging greetings, he would take the report from Yumna. Yumna had prepared a separate ward card for me. She recorded my vital signs every hour and presented them in detail during the morning rounds. She also briefed the team about laboratory tests and medications.

Around ten o'clock every day, the Vice Chancellor Khalid Masood Gondal, Professor Yar Muhammad, Professor Nauman Naseer, Dr. Salman, the pulmonologist, Professors Farukh and Zahra from Anaesthesia, along with the entire East Surgical team, would arrive for the ward round. Dr. Asghar Naqi would give a comprehensive briefing. Mr. Gondal would also ask Yumna questions and review previous lab reports. New reports were ordered daily.

The accident had affected almost all internal organs. During CPR, ribs had been fractured. The pancreas was also affected. There were issues with the spine, and later scans revealed a mild fracture in the vertebrae as well. Breathing remained difficult. Professor Nauman Naseer was particularly concerned about rising blood pressure and had prescribed separate medication for it.

Mr. Gondal would say every day, "Dr. Asif, it is your kind heart, upright character, the prayers of your elderly father, and the prayers of the thirsty people of Thar that have saved you." Dr. Farukh and Dr. Zahra would also say the same, that Allah had granted me three lives within a single week.

Mr. Gondal explained that a treatment protocol had been devised whereby the team held meetings after rounds. In light of the current condition and lab reports, they discussed possible changes in treatment. All reports and findings were shared on the *Asif Jah Consultants* WhatsApp group, and through mutual consultation, a new treatment strategy was decided.

May Allah bless Dr. Junaid Asghar, who remained in constant contact morning and evening. He would receive minute-by-minute updates from my daughter Yumna. Dr. Tahir would brief him separately as well. Along with consoling Yumna, Dr. Junaid

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continued to guide her throughout. May Allah reward Dr. Junaid Asghar and all my friends who took care of me at every moment.

While staying in the ward, laboratory tests were conducted daily. About 30 percent of the tests were done in the hospital laboratory. For the remaining tests, Ali Haider would sometimes go to Chughtai Lab and at other times to Shaukat Khanum Lab.

➤ **Mahnoor's Magic Stone**

Both hands and arms have been pierced by countless needles hundreds of times. My hands and arms are bruised and battered. Drips are attached as well. By the grace of Allah, since being shifted to the ICU, I have become regular in offering my prayers.

Mahnoor brought for me a stone and named it the “*Magic Stone*.” I strike my hand on it to perform *tayammum* (dry ablution for prayers), then determine the direction of the Kaaba and offer my prayers through gestures. Praying through gestures is a strange experience. For someone who, from the time he became conscious, has always gone to the mosque to offer congregational prayers, and who did not stop going to the mosque even during the days of COVID, suddenly have to suspend everything, lie on a bed, perform *tayammum*, and pray through gestures is deeply painful.

Many days have passed. The call to prayer from the mosque is no longer heard. May Allah Almighty grant me the ability to return soon to the mosque and offer prayers regularly once again.

➤ **Days and Nights in the Ward**

The world of the ward is strange, and its days and nights feel the same. Inside the ward, one cannot tell whether it is morning or evening. There is almost no connection with the outside world. A patient shifted from the ICU becomes, in a way, a prisoner. Drips are attached to both hands. A monitor stands on one side. A urinary catheter is in place, along with a pamper. On top of all this, there is the NG tube. In such conditions, a patient can easily fall into depression. Yet, with the doctors' constant attention, thorough treatment, and the compassionate and caring attitude of the attendants, the patient's condition gradually improves.

In the ward, drips are administered every morning and evening. Doctors and nurses on night duty leave after the morning

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ward round. At eight o'clock, new nurses and doctors arrive. Days pass in the East Surgical Ward bound by drips and tubes. The biggest issue is cleanliness. The ward workers are poor people. Unless they are treated kindly, they hardly come near, although according to protocol they do respond to the patient. Ashfaq and Huzaifa take care of them. Manga and Apa of the East Surgical Ward are experts at their work. Early in the morning, Apa empties the urine bag and informs the staff nurse whether it contained 500 ml or 1000 ml of urine. Changing the pamper is quite a demanding task and requires at least two people. In the ICU, Ashfaq had already trained some helpers, and occasionally they come here as well. Huzaifa and Nauman assist alongside them. Manga and his colleagues clean very thoroughly. Huzaifa and Nauman sanitize all parts of the body carefully so that no impurity remains.

After surgery, cleanliness is extremely important for a patient. Moreover, when one has to remain on the bed most of the time, cleaning and protecting the back becomes essential; otherwise, life-threatening bedsores can develop and make life miserable. Overall, days and nights are passing well in the East Surgical Ward of the Surgical Tower.

My greatest wish is to recover as soon as possible and be able to go to the mosque and offer congregational prayers. But for now, this is not possible. From feet to neck, various tubes and drips are attached. Who knows when I will be freed from all this. Sometimes, thinking about it all leads to depression. Nights pass restlessly, and in the morning, Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal and Dr. Asghar Naqi say that I did not get proper sleep at night. Getting adequate rest and sleeping deeply for five to six hours is essential for a patient's recovery.

➤ The Effect of Prayers and the Doctors' Regular Care and Attention

As the days pass, my condition continues to improve. Medications and drips are gradually being reduced. It seems that the prayers offered across the country and in the holy shrines, along with the cries, pleas, and prayers of my children and family, are showing their effect. Professors Farukh and Zahra remark during every round that, "Dr. Asif, you have been given a new life through the power of prayers."

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Dr. Nauman Naseer also joins the rounds. I had no prior connection with him, yet whenever he comes, he greets with love and respect. One day he said I needed an Echocardiography. I assumed it would require going to another ward. However, he pulled out a portable Echo machine from his pocket, performed the echo instantly, and upon seeing the findings, reassured me that the ECHO was completely normal. I thanked Allah. Dr. Nauman said, “Dr. Asif, Ma Sha Allah, your name is well known. The good deeds you have done—through them, Allah has granted you a new life.”

Professors Farukh and Zahra of the Anaesthesia Department are experts in their field. In any hospital, the Anaesthesia Department holds the central role, akin to the backbone of surgical procedures. Every day they come to the ward to check on me and maintain constant communication with my daughter Yumna.

One night, at three o'clock, my condition worsened. Yumna posted in the group chat, and Dr. Farukh immediately checked. She reviewed the ECG report, reassured Yumna, and confirmed that I was fine. The work of anaesthetists primarily involves administering anaesthesia and safely bringing patients out of the operating theatre, but Dr. Farukh and Dr. Zahra, as heads of their unit, continued to check on me daily—from the ICU days until my stay in the ward—inquiring about my wellbeing and offering prayers.

Dr. Zahra also shared a personal connection: she had administered anaesthesia to my wife Asma during her Cesarean operation to give birth to Yumna and Huzaifa in Ganga Ram Hospital. This continuous attention, care, and reassurance from the doctors, combined with the prayers of loved ones, has been a source of immense comfort and strength during recovery.

➤ **“Auntie, Save Me!”**

The world of the ward is a strange one. In a ward, you find people speaking different languages, both young and old. One young patient is both a headache for the ward and its source of liveliness. He has suffered a firearm injury and spends the entire night groaning, crying out, “Auntie, save my life. Give me some water.” He keeps saying that he will marry only that one girl.

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There are also patients who have been kept NPO, meaning they are not allowed anything to eat or drink from night until morning. They have an NG tube inserted into their stomach. They keep trying to pull the tube out with their hands. Their desire to drink water is intense, but the doctors have strictly forbidden it. In frustration, they hurl abuses and say that they will die right there from this illness.

The cries of the patients and the constant movement of their relatives keep the ward alive with a restless kind of bustle.

➤ **Class of '86 Colleagues: Dr. Tahir and Dr. Junaid Asghar**

In the Class of '86 group, my doctor friends and classmates were overjoyed at my recovery and were sending prayers. Among them, Junaid Asghar is more than just a colleague—he is a true companion. He was constantly concerned, maintaining regular contact with both Yumna and Dr. Tahir.

Dr. Tahir, however, was not fully satisfied with the treatment and would engage in long, detailed discussions about it. Dr. Arshad Rana and his team also came to assist. They applied a POP (plaster of Paris) on my ankle, creating a window for the wound dressing, and explained how to care for the bandage. They emphasized that I would need to start walking.

After a total body scan and receiving its report, Dr. Rana guided me through the first attempts to stand. Thirteen days later, I managed to place my first step on the ground, then lifted the other, continuing cautiously. The external part of the pin that had been inserted was removed during this time.

Dr. Irfan was also part of my care. Alhamdulillah, he provides guidance with prescriptions that inspire confidence, is kind-hearted, and deeply humane. He regularly contributes to charitable causes and takes an active interest in our work. Alhamdulillah, in Sargodha, in the cardiology center we established, he also performs cardiac surgeries and provides excellent care to patients.

➤ **Arrival of Maulana Akram Tufani and His Prayers**

Maulana Akram Tufani, the founder and driving spirit of Rahmat-ul-Alameen Cardiac Center, visited and offered his

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prayers. Maulana Tufani is a remarkable and spirited personality. Although he belongs to the 85 cohort, Alhamdulillah, he is fully alert and active, walking around with ease. He continues his Tablighi activities, traveling across the country to uphold the banner of the Finality of Prophethood.

Through his efforts, the cardiology center in Sargodha was established, initially seeming like the dream of an old man. With his determination, he collected millions of rupees and turned that vision into a successful center. The center now offers Angioplasty, Angiography, and even cardiac surgery. Dr. Irfan has performed successful bypass operations, and the total body scan program is about to commence. People from Sargodha, Faisalabad, and other cities are visiting for consultations.

From Faisalabad, the Ijaz family came to visit. From Mianwali, the young orthopedic surgeon Dr. Qudratullah Niazi also visited with his wife. He shares a deep bond of love and respect with us and has accompanied us on multiple service and medical missions. Late at night, our classmate and humanitarian, Dr. Samia Dar, also visited. She had warm conversations with Yumna and Asma, noting that all our Class of '86 friends had been worried. Now that my health has improved, everyone has breathed a sigh of relief and thanked Allah. I said that by the blessings of prayers from friends and parents, Allah has granted me renewed life and health.

(Maulana Akram Tufani, may Allah have mercy on him, passed away on Sunday, December 26, 2021. The people of Sargodha bid farewell to him with great honor and respect, and millions attended his funeral.)

➤ Entering the Dark Chamber

A total body scan was done in radiology. It is quite a strange experience—when the scan begins, it feels as if one is stepping into a dark alley. Entering that dark space requires courage, even if only for a few moments. I remember in Lahore, we had a director, Humayun Khan Sikandari. I took him for a scan at Shaukat Khanum Hospital, where we had already paid the fees. The moment Sikandari Sahib entered the dark chamber, he started screaming, “*I am dying, get me out!*” We tried two or three times to complete his scan, but it never happened.

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Now, Alhamdulillah, my health is improving. Whenever someone asks, I respond with Alhamdulillah and Masha'Allah. The doctors also say that Allah granted me recovery after such a severe accident due to the blessings of prayers. I am deeply grateful to my paramedics and all the hospital staff who took care of me. May Allah bless them all abundantly.

➤ Prayers and Asking from Allah Again

Rana Arshad is an excellent surgeon. He shares traditional remedies and constantly encourages patients, saying, *"You have to stand on your own."* Masha'Allah, he treats patients with full dedication. He emphasizes that physiotherapy is essential for the body, keeping bones and joints strong and healthy. In his view, the local practice in our village of repeatedly **mutthiyan bharna**¹ is an excellent form of physiotherapy.

Dr. Arshad advised me to firmly instill in my mind, *"I have to walk. I have to restore myself as I was before."* Once fear is removed, walking becomes possible. Asma visits every evening, and Mahnoor prays at home before coming quietly to the hospital at night. She sits silently. Asma tells me daily, *"We all prayed and asked Allah to give you back to us."*

Ejaz Sikka Sahib also came, with whom I have had a long-standing relationship, and offered prayers. A donor from Attock gave charity for healing. Every day, breakfast is arranged in the ward: Rafiq brings breakfast early in the morning. Separate meals are brought for doctors, patients, and staff nurses. Since arriving here, the ward has been lively because of our presence. Early in the morning, Ashfaq also arrives, and Ali Haider stays awake all night.

Alhamdulillah, the body scan report has arrived, showing no significant fractures or injuries. Praise be to Allah.

➤ A Prayerful Message from the Prime Minister of Pakistan

¹ *Mutthiyan bharna* means a traditional hands-on technique in which one person firmly presses or kneads another person's legs or other body parts, providing physical relief and relaxation.

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A heartfelt message arrived from the Honorable Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, praying that Allah grants you a speedy and complete recovery. Receiving the Prime Minister's message brought back memories of an incident in 2013, when Mr. Imran Khan fell from the stage during a public gathering and was injured. We went to Shaukat Khanum Hospital with our doctor friends and stayed there for several hours, not leaving until we met him. May Allah bless the Prime Minister with a long life and good health, enabling him to successfully lead Pakistan according to his vision of a state modeled on Madinah.

Patients continue to arrive in the East Surgical Ward due to injuries and illnesses from gunfire and other causes. My lungs were affected by the accident, and for this, Yumna performs spirometry tests every morning and evening. Dr. Asghar Naqi comes early in the morning and encourages me to blow as many balloons as possible. Yumna arranged all the balloons around the bed, each decorated with "Happy Birthday." Mahnoor observed three days of fasting for my recovery and broke her fast in the hospital with us.

It has been two weeks since arriving at the hospital, and I have not heard the call to prayer. Last night, in a dream, I saw the Prophet's Mosque. I prayed to Allah to grant me a speedy recovery so that I may return to the mosque and perform prayers in congregation.

➤ The Hookah for Lung Expansion

The world of the ward is peculiar—there is no sense of morning or evening. New patients keep arriving through the night, filling the ward with cries, groans, and wails. Patients often quarrel, curse each other, sigh heavily, and sob. Those scheduled for surgery in the morning have feeding tubes inserted and repeatedly call out for a sip of water, pleading loudly.

The East Surgical Tower has its own colorful characters. Babu and Aapa are always on hand to maintain cleanliness. Manga assists with restroom needs and entertains with his witty remarks. The staff nurses play a crucial role in managing the ward. Sabiha, a Christian nurse, shows me pictures and videos of her children, Joshua and Jason.

During the injury, my lungs were also affected, so balloons

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were provided for breathing exercises. Huzaila reminds me daily to inflate the balloons, which are then arranged around my bed. Manga suggested using a hookah, claiming it helps expand the lungs. He named the spirometry exercises “hookah.” Aapa, Manga, Usama, and Babu are all experts at their craft. As my health improves, the pressure on my daughter Yumna eases. She mentioned that today, after 12 days, she finally got some sleep.

➤ The Best Dish in the World

At the moment, I have an NG tube inserted. I feel very thirsty but cannot drink water. The doctors suggested keeping an ice cube in my mouth. They also mentioned an ice cream called an “ice lolly” that I could have. Ali somehow managed to bring one. When I put it in my mouth, it felt like the best dish in the world. It was truly delightful. Ali had brought two, but Huzaila hid the second one and, despite my requests, did not give it to me. Yumna and Huzaila ensure that all doctors’ instructions are strictly followed. Two days later, as soon as the NG tube was removed, my appetite returned with full force. I feel very hungry every morning and evening. I have always had the habit of having breakfast early in the morning. After Fajr prayer, breakfast is served. Ali Haider comes at 5 a.m. bringing tea, broth, and other things from home. After Fajr, I go through my rounds of tasbeeh (prayers of glorification). It is through these names that Allah granted me new life. Along with the traditional tasbeeh, I continue the recitations of Allah’s names as taught by Professor Ahmad Rafiq.

The head of the East Surgical Ward is Dr. Asghar Naqi. He is an excellent doctor and a remarkable surgeon, and under his supervision, my treatment is progressing. In addition, Dr. Nauman, Dr. Zahra, and Dr. Farukh also visit daily.

➤ Dr. Aqeel, the Admirer of Imran Khan

The daily ward rounds are headed by Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal. Alongside him are Dr. Farukh and Dr. Zahra from Anesthesia, Dr. Nauman from Cardiology, Dr. Asghar Naqi, and all the other doctors of the ward. Whenever Dr. Gondal comes, he reassures me and is pleased to see my health improving. Today, as I was sitting, he was very happy to see me.

Dr. Aqeel Ashraf is the registrar, and he is a huge admirer of

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Imran Khan. Whenever he comes, the conversation inevitably turns to Imran Khan. I told Dr. Aqeel that for the past three decades, I have remembered Imran in my prayers, and, Alhamdulillah, he has acknowledged it. Once, when FBR officers visited a full gathering, I asked a question, and Imran Khan said, "Asif, I have known you for the past thirty years. I am aware of your honesty, and the work you have done for Shaukat Khanum is commendable."

Since my arrival in the ward, breakfast has been provided daily, which is shared among the underprivileged as well as the doctors. Dr. Hafeez, the house surgeon, is assigned with Dr. Asghar Naqi to stay close to me. Dr. Hafeez is an excellent doctor and stays by my side like a shadow. Though Yumna, Nauman, and Huzaifa are also present, he repeatedly checks in and reassures me of his presence.

While talking about Prime Minister Imran Khan, I told Dr. Aqeel that since Imran Khan's government came into power, no major scandal has occurred.

➤ Zindagi Arrives from Chitral

Zindagi has also arrived from Chitral. Zindagi (Life) is our Chitral representative, overseeing our projects there. Whatever tasks are assigned to him, he completes them without delay. Whenever Rana Sahib or his representative comes, they deliver the same message: Rana Sahib says, "Now you have to get up and find the courage to walk."

In the ward during the morning, there is such silence that it's hard to tell if any patients are present, but at night, the cries and moans of the patients are so intense that it feels like it is morning. Some patients are given medicine and fall asleep, while those awaiting surgery remain awake, groaning in pain, asking for water, and trying to remove their NG tubes.

It is heartening to see that, thanks to the generosity of various kind-hearted individuals, breakfast, lunch, and dinner are delivered to the ward, served to patients with dignity and respect.

➤ Relying on Allah

When calamity strikes and worries overwhelm, a person's only refuge is Allah. Prayer to Allah is the sole source of healing from

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sickness. A person puts in all his efforts, uses every ability he has, trying in every possible way to avert disaster or overcome illness. When an accident occurs, doctors do their utmost to save the patient's life.

When my accident happened, all the consultants gathered to provide treatment. The doctors worked diligently and with great care, but the gift of new life came through prayers, by the grace of Allah. Mahnoor would say that she kept praying to Allah at all times. Alongside her, Asma, Yumna, Nauman, Huzaifa, Naveed, my parents—all were praying to Allah for my health. From Balochistan, Chitral, Thar, Nowshera, Mardan, Swat, wherever our centers for treatment and service exist, prayers were offered. People fasted in devotion. Allah's grace was ever-present, and He extended His mercy.

It is by Allah's favour that I was given new life. My condition would fluctuate, sometimes improving, sometimes worsening. Allah granted me this life again to witness the happiness of my children. The time He has given is meant for serving His creation, feeding the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, and helping the needy. Insha'Allah, I will dedicate as much time as possible to these acts of service to the humanity.

➤ The Excellence of the Mayo Hospital's Great Doctors

Illness comes from Allah, and only Allah is the One who grants healing. The pain and suffering I endured came by His will, and He alone removed it. The accident happened, I faced the pain, underwent surgery, stayed in the hospital, and went through various difficult procedures during the operations. By Allah's mercy, my life was saved, and I was granted a new lease of life.

Patient care is extremely important, and it involves the efforts of family members as well. The role of doctors, however, is even greater. Alhamdulillah, my children, family, and attendants all gathered together. The team of doctors arrived late at night. The first operation was on my ankle, which required significant effort to manage blood supply. My children rushed around looking for donors, and Allah arranged for people to come from Peshawar to donate blood. Later, it was discovered that blood had collected in my abdomen, the ventilator failed, and a second ventilator had to be installed to restore breathing. I spent three to four days in ICU.

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Dr. Asghar's entire team took excellent care of me. Professor Dr. Farukh, Professor Dr. Zahra, Professor Dr. Nauman, Dr. Nasir, and the Vice Chancellor of King Edward Medical University, Khalid Masood Gondal, were always present during rounds. They held meetings to review if any issues arose the previous night. Dr. Junaid Asghar, my class fellow, is a man of great heart, blessed in wealth. The water projects we are working on began with him. When we started work in Thar, the first two wells were built with Junaid's funds. Later, both he and his daughter contributed further, and within a year, Allah allowed Thar to bloom into a flourishing land.

My daughter Yumna stayed with me, while Huzaifa and Nauman were also constantly by my side. Mahnoor stayed home praying for me. Dr. Naveed, along with his whole family, shifted to Lahore and remained present morning and evening. Yumna, Nauman, Huzaifa, Abu Bakr, and Mahnoor stayed with me all day to ensure that any need I had was immediately attended to.

➤ Days, Nights and Prayers in the Gujranwala Ward

Alhamdulillah! Days and nights are passing in the ward, and my health is gradually improving. Prayers continue from all over the country. I am also able to talk to my parents. My father becomes worried, but my mother's courage is remarkable. He says that every two days my condition seems to improve due to his prayers.

My family—father, mother, Nauman, Abu Bakr, Dr. Naveed, sister-in-law Rubina, elder sister Shehnaz, Nighat, Naveera, and others—have all shifted from Sargodha and set up a base here. The ward is full of patients. Our charitable work has started in the hospital also. Huzaifa and Asma distribute juice and fruits among the patients. Some patients are completely quiet, while others curse and behave rudely toward the staff. Yet the nurses and staff patiently endure everything and provide treatment with full dedication.

Professor Rana Arshad came today and reassured me that the bones in my ankle are very well aligned. He checked the wounds and helped with the dressing. My old school friend and class fellow, Khawaja Umar Farooq, came from Gujranwala. Seeing him for the first time after the accident, I said I still have

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so many things to do, and prayed that Allah grant me life.

From the very first day, Ashfaq has been present morning and evening, attending to everyone and coordinating tasks. He receives phone calls from all over the country while running errands and bringing medicines. May Allah bless him.

In the ward, there is a young patient whose appendix has burst. His uncle stays with him morning and evening, attending to his every need.

➤ **Dr. Nauman Naseer and Professor Asghar Naqi**

The young Professor Dr. Nauman Naseer is a cardiology professor and the brother of Dr. Rizwan Naseer, DG Rescue 1122. He visits the ward repeatedly, prescribing medicines for blood pressure and checking on the patient's condition. I salute all the doctors. Whenever any issue arises, Yumna calls, and Dr. Nauman responds immediately.

The ward is an amazing world—when the air conditioner runs, the atmosphere becomes pleasant; when it's off, it feels stifling. Sleep is difficult to get, but once it comes, it brings comfort. Early in the morning, Professor Dr. Asghar Naqi is the first to arrive.

My treating doctors openly say that Allah has given me three lives. First, He saved me from such a dangerous accident. Second, after the operation, when the ventilator went off, my life was spared again thanks to my parents and the prayers of thirsty people in Thar. At home, doctors including Dr. Naveed, Yumna, Nauman, and others have been caring for me 24/7. Yumna takes care of me with confidence and courage, consulting with the doctors. Dr. Tahir keeps track of every moment and informs Dr. Junaid. After that, the treatment plan is discussed in the Asif Jah Consultants WhatsApp group.

I can never forget the care and concern my classmates and friends have shown; their support is something I will be grateful for my entire life.

➤ **Hands and Arms Pierced with Needles**

Both my hands and arms are pierced with needles, with marks from cannulas everywhere. Cannulas are replaced every two days. Blood is drawn several times daily, and injections are given.

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Initially, I also had a CVP line in my neck, which has now been removed. I thank Allah for His mercy, as the treatment I am receiving is excellent, and my health is steadily improving.

I salute the great doctors who, under the leadership of Vice Chancellor Khalid Masood Gondal, are overseeing my care. Among them are notably Dr. Asghar Naqi, Dr. Nauman Naseer, Dr. Farukh, Professor Dr. Zahra, Professor Yar Muhammad, as well as the East Surgical ward doctors and senior registrars. The paramedical staff are also attentive. Vice Chancellor, Professor Gondal visits daily, offers prayers, and explains how my treatment is being carried out. Initially, all consultants monitor daily symptoms, then discuss recommendations on the “Asif Jah Consultants WhatsApp Group,” after which the treatment plan is finalized.

➤ Tissue or Issue

One morning someone mentioned that it was raining outside, so I asked them to open the window in order to see the outside scene. After two weeks, I finally saw the outside world and the trees. The sight of the swaying trees and the cool breeze lifted my spirits. Alhamdulillah, I have resumed my prayers. Mahnoor brought me a stone, which I use for tayyammum to perform my prayers.

Sometimes amusing situations arise in the hospital. A young doctor once came and asked Yumna if there was any “issue.” She handed him a tissue box. Surprised, he said, “I asked if there’s any issue.” Yumna replied, “No, there’s no issue.”

Every day, the CVP line pressure is checked with a scale. By 6 a.m., the ward is already lively. The ICU attendant, who took great care of me there, comes to the ward every morning before heading to the ICU and asks, “Doctor, how are you?” The dresser arrives early with his trolley, greets me, and always says, “Friend, how are you?”—his usual line—then removes the old dressing and applies a fresh one.

➤ Ashfaq, Service, and the Care Workers

My “cheetas” never sleep even for a moment; they include Ashfaq, Ali Haider, Anwar, Taufiq, Rafiq, and Parvez. On Friday, I asked Ashfaq to arrange a meal for the doctors in the Gujranwala ward. He ordered food from the hostel, and it turned

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out to be excellent. All the doctors ate to their fill, and the staff and nurses also enjoyed the food.

During breakfast, I had some fried toasts, which upset my stomach and caused vomiting. Then Dr. Naqi instructed to insert an NG tube. As soon as it was in, the contents of my stomach quickly emptied, and air escaped. The bag filled immediately, and my condition stabilized at once.

During rounds, my daughter Dr. Yumna, who recently finished her house job, reports on all my night history. Vice Chancellor, Professor Gondal and Dr. Asghar Naqi ask her for updates. I thanked Allah that my daughter became a doctor and fulfilled her calling.

In the Surgical Tower, our breakfast has become quite famous. Early in the morning, Rafiq arrives carrying bundles of breakfast. Ashfaq receives hundreds of calls daily. People come to meet me, but he allows very few to actually meet. Another member of our “cheeta” team, Anwar Qadri, is always outside. Dressed in commando attire, he controls visitors. No one is allowed to meet, and mobile phones are restricted. One day, a conversation on a mobile was interrupted when Gondal Sahib arrived and scolded, saying mobile use at that moment was not good for my health.

➤ Return of Yumna’s Smile

Alhamdulillah! As my health gradually improves, Yumna’s smile has returned. For fifteen days, my daughter had no sense of relief, constantly worried about her father’s condition. My parents are also happy. Alhamdulillah! With the dedicated attention of the doctors, my condition is steadily improving, and the wounds on my abdomen are healing. The stream of prayers and supplications to Allah continues. All communication with the outside world has been cut off—mobile, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp are all off—but prayers from across the country keep reaching us. Early in the morning, after prayers, Ali Haider brings the newspaper. One day, when Professor Dr. Abrar Ashraf visited while I was reading it, he joked that reading a newspaper means I am now able to handle tension and need to be discharged from the hospital.

➤ Professor Dr. Amir Aziz and Madam Sumaira Nazir

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Immediately after the accident, Professor Amir Aziz sent a bag of B-negative blood from Surgimed Hospital. During this time, Madam Sumaira Nazir, our senior colleague, kept calling as well. Ten days later, I spoke to her. In an emotional tone, she said, “Asif, you gave us quite a scare. We prayed day and night for you.” She further shared that her son, Ahmad Mahmood—an accomplished barrister—stayed with me all night. Upon hearing the news, he immediately came to the Surgical Tower with a friend, donated blood, stayed the entire night, and kept updating his mother.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman of Nasrutt ul Haq also offered daily prayers for my health. In the East Surgical Ward, two notable figures are Usama, the dresser, and Haji Sahib, the senior dresser. They regularly report that COVID patients are decreasing and the COVID ward is emptying. Dr. Tahir visits daily for personal discussions, accompanied by Dr. Irfan, a cardiac surgeon. The next day, Specialist Dr. Sohail visited and mentioned that since the day of the accident, my mother has been checking on me daily and praying for my recovery. Alhamdulillah, the blessings of Allah and the prayers from people, even in Masjid al-Nabawi, have contributed to my healing.

Even while in the hospital, I have begun planning for wells, medical treatment, and community service projects. Phuphi Zarina from Sharqpur came from Sargodha to offer prayers, and my younger sister, Nighat, arrived with her daughter Nowera. Shafiq Bhai also came with Ahmad for patient care visits.

➤ Much Work Remains

There is still a lot to be done—building homes for people, creating more drinking water wells for both humans and animals, and feeding the hungry. Many wells have already been dug, but the thirst of Thar’s people and animals remains to be quenched. This work has been ongoing for more than a decade, yet there is still much to accomplish.

From the very first day of the accident, my daughter Yumna has cared for me with dedication, love, attention, and insight. Despite knowing everything, she managed herself, took care of her mother, consoled Huzaifa and Mahnoor, and assisted the doctors. She stayed awake all night, and during morning rounds confidently updated all consultants about my condition.

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➤ Mayo Hospital: Baba's Hospital and Mine

After the accident, some senior customs officers and a few doctors proposed to Yumna that they could transfer her father to Shaukat Khanum Hospital or some other private facility. Yumna firmly replied that she wanted treatment at Mayo Hospital. "This is my father's hospital," she said. "I am satisfied with the care here. My father is receiving proper treatment at Mayo Hospital."

The personality of Professor Dr. Nauman Naseer, a cardiology professor, made a strong impression. He treats patients with great love and respect. On visiting, he would say, "You are a very well-known person. It is through the prayers of others that Allah has granted you life."

Mayo Hospital is also the hospital where I did my house job after completing my medical education at King Edward Medical College. Recently, following government regulations, I even donated a vehicle to King Edward Medical University.

Day by day, my condition is improving. This morning, for the first time in thirteen days, I saw the sunlight. Alhamdulillah, Allah has blessed me with these moments in life once again.

Huzaifa, Abu Bakr, and Nauman stay on duty throughout the night. When Abu Bakr goes to pray, Huzaifa remains seated, not moving until my father instructs otherwise. During prayer times, I tell him, "Son, go pray," and afterward he returns to his duties. He assists with everything—from changing diapers to handling the urine bag—supporting all aspects of care.

Alhamdulillah, patient care continues uninterrupted. If any patient faces an issue, it is resolved promptly with the help of the doctors.

➤ Salute to the Doctors of Mayo Hospital

The doctors of Pakistan are truly remarkable. They are second to none. Every field in Pakistan has outstanding and rare medical professionals. May Allah keep all these doctors safe and healthy. My greetings to all of them.

Mahnoor observed three days of fasts for my recovery. She is my devoted, spiritual daughter and continuously prays for me. Mahnoor also sent messages to many of my friends about my illness. Even the Prime Minister received a message and responded with a loving note: "Asif, get well soon. My prayers for you."

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Prayers are pouring in from across the country, and my health is steadily improving. Even the smallest discomfort is reported by Yumna in our group, and the doctors respond immediately with instructions that are promptly followed. Daily prayers from my parents continue without interruption.

Qamar, the driver, has fully recovered and safely returned home. He had also undergone abdominal surgery and was admitted with me in the Gujranwala ward. Huzaifa provided him with a blood transfusion, and Ashfaq took care of him in every possible way.

One young patient who had ingested a bullet cried out all night, pleading with his aunt to save him. He even said he would marry the girl whose relatives had shot him. Several new patients arrived at the hospital today, adding to the bustling ward atmosphere.

➤ **Asif Jah Consultants WhatsApp Group**

Immediately after the accident, my dear brother Professor Khalid Masood Gondal created a WhatsApp group of the distinguished professors and doctors of Miwa Hospital to oversee my treatment. Throughout my stay in the hospital and even after returning home, this group provided ongoing guidance and consultation regarding my care. Alhamdulillah, with the advice of these great doctors, my treatment continued effectively, and Allah granted me life and restored my health.

In the Asif Jah Consultants group, alongside Professor Khalid Masood Gondal, were surgery professors Dr. Asghar Naqi, Dr. Yar Muhammad, Dr. Muhammad Yaseen; anesthesia professors Dr. Zahra and Dr. Farukh; chest medicine specialist Salman Ayaz; neurology professor Dr. Ahsan Nauman; cardiology professor Dr. Nauman Naseer; Dr. Junaid Asghar from Saudi Arabia; my beloved daughter Dr. Yumna; and several other doctors.

During my stay in the hospital and even after returning home, detailed consultations about my treatment were conducted through the group. Treatment plans were formulated and prescribed accordingly. The doctors were so active and responsive that whenever my daughter Yumna, who was with me around the clock, posted about my condition at any hour of the night, a response would come immediately. Doctors would arrive, conduct check-ups, and reassure us.

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One night, I experienced severe discomfort. At 3 a.m., Yumna posted in the group, and Dr. Farukh responded instantly. Cardiologists arrived, performed an ECG, and reassured us before leaving. May Allah reward all these doctors abundantly.

For the interest of readers, some posts from the group are shared to show how devotedly and diligently all Mayo Hospital consultants managed my care. After returning home, I thanked all the doctors for their invaluable support and attention.

➤ **Asif Jah Consultants WhatsApp Group: Messages and Gratitude**

Prof. Salman Ayaz, Pulmonologist:

“Assalam-o-Alaikum. Though it's not a quantitative culture, colistin can still be added for 7 days, as neutrophils remain high after 5 days of vancomycin. Thanks.”

Prof. Nouman Naseer:

“Did he get his metoprolol 25mg dose tonight?”
“Okay, then continue amiodarone. Insha Allah, he will feel better.”

➤ **Message of Thanks from me:**

My dear fellow doctors, consultants, clinicians, emergency medicine experts, and class fellows of '86, Assalamu Alaikum.

It gives me immense pleasure to write in this group after being shifted from the hospital. I take this opportunity to sincerely thank you all for your concern, care, planning, and consultation regarding my treatment at different stages. Your guidance and constant communication with my family over the past week have been invaluable.

I have learned that videoconferencing sessions, board meetings, and treatment plans were conducted with the consultation of all consultants in the group. After regaining consciousness, I could see a team of consultants, led by the Vice Chancellor, overseeing my care daily and discussing management plans. I can confidently say that Pakistani doctors, whether working here or abroad, are among the best and most dedicated.

When I fully recover, Inshallah, I plan to write a book sharing

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my experiences, highlighting the clinical acumen and dedication of all of you. My family and I are deeply indebted to you. Salute to all of you. Please continue to pray for my complete recovery.

Profound regards,
Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah

➤ **Responses and Guidance from Consultants:**

Prof. Khalid Masood Gondal, VC KEMU:

“Alhamdulillah! Welcome back, our honorable pride, a noble soul. May Allah bless you with complete and safe recovery in this world and the hereafter. Amin, sum amin.”

Treatment Discussions:

- Triple antibiotics were suggested by ID and intensive care consultants: Colistin, Meropenem, and Vancomycin.
- Renal protection, hydration, and repeat blood cultures were advised.
- Monitoring of vancomycin trough levels, dose adjustments of beta-blockers, and careful management of potential drug interactions were recommended.
- Frequent updates and active monitoring were maintained, including vital signs, SpO₂ checks, and wound care.

Updates from Various Professors:

- **Prof. Yar Muhammad:** Reports on morning vitals, urine output, comfort level, and advice to continue prescribed medications.
- **Prof. Asghar Naqi:** Alhamdulillah updates and guidance on medication doses.
- **Prof. Salman Ayaz:** Nebulization recommendations, edema monitoring, lab value improvements, and discussion on antibiotics.
- **Prof. Khalid Masood Gondal:** Encouragement, clinical assessments, and advice on shifting to oral antibiotics where possible.

➤ **Messages of Support and Congratulations:**

- **Prof. Zahra:** May Allah bless you with a full, safe, and

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sound recovery.

- **Prof. Rana Arshad, Prof. Nouman Naseer, Dr. Junaid Asghar, Prof. Farrukh:** Alhamdulillah, Masha'Allah, heartiest congratulations on your recovery.
- **Special Note:** Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah was recommended for Pakistan's second-highest civilian award, Hilal-i-Imtiaz.

➤ **Final Gratitude from me:**

Alhamdulillah, my family and I are profoundly grateful for your expertise, prompt responses, and the emotional support provided to my daughter, Dr. Yumna, and to our entire family. You have been a source of immense hope during this challenging period. Million salutes to all Pakistani doctors for their relentless dedication to saving lives. May Allah bless you with strength and courage to continue helping humanity in distress.

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah, Dr. Yumna, and Family

➤ **Arrival of Baba Sharif**

Baba Sharif also came to meet with Ataullah. He is an interesting character at the mosque—humble and devoted to the poor and needy. He has been serving the mosque for many years, and last year he was even sent for Umrah as a reward for his services. People used to say that he never cared about money, yet Masha'Allah, he performed Umrah.

At the hospital, Ashfaq has established strict order, not allowing anyone unnecessary entry while efficiently managing all tasks. He is fulfilling his responsibilities admirably. Maulana Fazlur Rahim of Jamia Ashrafia also prayed for my health, and through his prayers, Allah blessed me with great mercy and restored my health fully.

➤ **The End of Coronavirus is Near**

Haji Sahib gives daily updates about coronavirus. Alhamdulillah, he reports that the number of COVID patients is decreasing. At Mayo Hospital, even the last patient has recovered, signaling relief from the pandemic. Allah has shown special mercy on Pakistan. While cases are gradually declining here, neighboring India still reports thousands of deaths and new cases daily.

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There was a serious concern that staying in the hospital might expose us to the virus. Dr. Junaid called to inform that the coronavirus test was negative. Alhamdulillah, Allah has granted health and protection from COVID.

As recovery progresses, Asma's face is brightening with joy. Whenever she visits, she expresses gratitude to Allah, saying that through prayers, He has returned you to us. Seeing the first rays of the sun through the Surgical Tower window brought immense delight. Previously, mornings passed into evenings and then into nights without notice.

Prayers are now being performed, Alhamdulillah, even if through gestures. I remind the children to pray as well. Today, East Surgical Ward was bustling with new patients—some groaning in pain, others alternately cursing themselves or their adversaries. Meanwhile, the patient who had ingested pills remained quiet, still unconscious after undergoing surgery in the morning.

➤ **“The Accident, the Savior, and Life”**

The purpose of writing the book *“The Accident, the Savior, and Life”* is to pay tribute to Pakistani doctors who treated me. I was severely injured in an accident. Pakistani doctors made every possible effort to save me, and by the grace of Allah, I am standing on my own feet today.

Allah protected me and brought me out of the car safely. Looking at the wreckage, no one could imagine that any passenger could have survived the crash. The car was so badly crushed that it seemed certain its occupants would have lost their lives. It felt as if someone gently lifted me out of the vehicle. Today, by the will of Allah, I am alive, present before you, and able to speak to you.

➤ **“Ventilator Malfunction and Prayers”**

My entire ankle was drenched in blood. So much blood had flowed that Yumna, my daughter, feared the worst—she thought amputation might be necessary. When the anesthetic was administered for the operation, I went into shock. Only after a struggle did my breathing stabilize enough for the surgery to proceed. During the abdominal surgery, Dr. Tahir mentioned that

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I was extremely weak. I was placed on a ventilator in the ICU.

Soon after, Dr. Tahir noticed a burning smell, as if something was on fire. Then another crisis struck—the ventilator suddenly exploded and stopped working. The first ventilator failed, the second could not be attached either. Only the courage of a nurse helped; she used a ventilator from a patient in a more stable condition, which helped stabilize me somewhat.

My family later told me that when I first regained consciousness, my only concern was to perform ablution—I wanted to pray. This was a moment when medical skill alone could not suffice; prayers became essential. By Allah’s grace, prayers began immediately after the accident. My family had arrived from across the country, and people everywhere were praying. Dr. Tahir continuously updated Dr. Junaid about my condition, and Dr. Rizwan Butt also began calling in support. Customs officers came too.

Yumna faced everyone with immense courage. She went through all the service and care duties, shedding tears only in private, never in front of me. Her devotion and patience were remarkable.

➤ **“Today is Your Health Day”**

The next day, Dr. Rana Arshad called me to his office. He checked my ankle movement and was very pleased because it had returned completely to normal. I greatly admire Rana Arshad Sahib—his philosophy and words are simple, yet profoundly insightful.

A 20-year-old boy came to his office that day. The boy had been to several places before, but Rana Arshad Sahib diagnosed his condition with just one question: “Does anyone in your household have TB?” The boy’s mother replied that his uncle did.

Rana Arshad Sahib told me that given the condition of my ankle after the accident, it seemed unlikely that it would ever return to normal. “We took Allah’s name during the operation, and by His grace, everything worked out,” he said. He added, “Dr. Asif Jah, today is your Health Day. Allah has granted you a new life and protected you from permanent disability. Your ankle movement has returned. This is a great blessing from Allah.”

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He even showed me a photograph of my ankle drenched in blood during the accident, saying, “See how far it has come.” I share this to remind everyone to have faith in Allah. Trust in Him—He can resolve the greatest problems. When you act with sincere intention, Allah’s help accompanies you. Pain, suffering, and illness come from Allah, and only He is the ultimate healer.

This was a major accident. Looking at the condition of the vehicles involved, one can hardly imagine anyone surviving. During the operation, complications arose, yet Allah protected me. Alhamdulillah, I am now recovered and sharing this with you all. May it strengthen your faith—Allah exists, He is a power, and even today, He can perform miracles. Trust Him, keep your connection with Allah, and do not let materialism make you forget Him.

➤ **30th June 2020**

Today is 30th June. Ever since I started my career, 30th June used to pass in the office late into the night. From 30th June 1993 to 30th June 2019, every year the focus was on ensuring revenue targets were met. People were persuaded and encouraged to contribute as much as possible, and actions were taken wherever necessary to recover dues.

But today, 30th June 2020, I spend the day on a hospital bed. This is the Gujranwala Surgical Ward, and Alhamdulillah, treatment is ongoing. Allah has been very kind, and my health is gradually improving. A plastic POP cast is on my ankle, and there is still some swelling. InshaAllah, the swelling will reduce gradually, and the POP will be removed in due course.

➤ **Haji Sahib and Memories of Makkah and Madinah**

In the ward, along with Usama, Haji Ataullah Sahib, an experienced dresser, was present. He has spent his life serving at Mayo Hospital. Even in our times, he was active and deeply respected. Haji Sahib is a devout man and has performed Hajj multiple times. He speaks about Makkah and Madinah with great devotion.

We had long conversations, and he expressed how he constantly remembers Makkah, how Madinah is always on his mind, and how he longs to reach Madinah soon and merge with

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its blessed soil. Even I can see the minarets of Masjid Nabawi in my mind, and my heart yearns to visit the Roza-e-Rasool as soon as my health is restored, to stand before the Kaaba and engrave it in my heart.

I gave Haji Sahib my Hajj travel books, *"Allah, Kaaba and the Servant" and "Guests of Rabb-e-Rahman". He received them with joy, held them close to his eyes, and kissed them reverently.

➤ Messages of Love, Audio, and Video SMS

As soon as the news of the June 18, 2020 accident spread, prayers for health and life began across Pakistan and worldwide, especially from the Holy Mosques in Makkah and Madinah. Family members and relatives from Sargodha, Faisalabad, Lahore, and Islamabad left everything behind to reach Lahore, dedicating themselves to patient care and support. Prayers were offered morning and evening.

Although mobile phones were off and there was no contact on social media, continuous messages kept arriving on Yumna and Ashfaq's phones. People were worried, anxious, and praying. Even the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, sent a message to

Yumna:

"Asif, get well soon, prayers for you."

Renowned Quranic scholar Professor Ahmed Rafiq also sent an audio message filled with prayers and affection via brother Imran Chaudhry. In his message, he prayed for recovery and guided the use of tasbeeh for prayers. Some of the heartfelt SMS messages received are shared below, showing the concern and love of friends and well-wishers. May Allah bless them all and reward their prayers. By His grace, Allah granted new life.

➤ Sample Messages:

Hello sir!

I don't know whether you will be in a position to read this message or not. However, I will still write it. I came to know about the sad news the day of the incident. I was very disturbed throughout that day and am disturbed even now. I still remember your smiling face whenever I visited your office. The humility of your attitude and the kindness of your heart are God-gifted qualities. I am sure you will get well soon with His grace. I can't wait for the day to see you in your office again. May you get well

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soon, sir.

— Asfandyar, Customs

Sir, Assalamualaikum!

Hope your good self is recovering fast. May Allah give you good health and early recovery.

— Regards

Sir,

Praying that the procedure goes well and for your early recovery. May Allah keep you in His protection. I'm in touch with colleagues in Lahore and glad that you are being looked after in the best possible manner. May Allah bless you and keep you out of harm's way. Amen.

— Regards

AOA!

MASHA'ALLAH, good news. May Allah Kareem bless you with good health and early recovery. Stay blessed.

— Regards, Abdur Razzaq

AOA,

Dear Asif, this event is an "aazmaish" from Almighty Allah to bring you closer to Him. The more one is beloved by Allah, the more severe the aazmaish. Nothing will happen to your life (InshaAllah); steadfastness is needed at this stage to be uplifted by Allah SWT. Attach more to Him to succeed and gain His pleasure.

— Dr. Wasim Aftab, PIC

Asalam-o-alaikum wa rehmatullah wa barakatu.

I just heard from Dr. Fazal Karim that you had a car accident. I hope it wasn't serious, but I understand that you are still in the hospital. May Allah SWT bless you and grant you recovery soon, InshaAllah. Thousands of people are praying for you. May Allah SWT grant you quick recovery so you can continue your welfare work. Please update us if you find it appropriate.

— Dr. Anayatullah Khokhar, Gold Coast, Australia

Dear Sir, Assalamualaikum,

Praying for your health and long life. Insha'Allah, nothing can harm you. Hundreds of thousands of people worldwide are praying for your well-being as you work day and night for the oppressed. Allah bless you, sir!

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— Best regards and best wishes

Assalamualaikum!

May the Owner of the Universe always keep you under His mercy, and may Allah grant you speedy health and wellness. Ameen.

— Your sincere, Mehboob Elahi

AoA Dr. Sb,

Worried about your health. May Allah SWT bless you with complete and early recovery (Ameen). You are a messiah for thousands of people, and our prayers are for you. I will be extremely happy to assist.

— Best regards, Hamed Sheikh

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Part Three **From the Hospital to Home**

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Prayer Overcame Destiny

Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah went through a series of extraordinary trials. Each experience granted him invaluable lessons and deep learning. The final ordeal was life-threatening, marked by prolonged pain and suffering. Not once but many times, he stood face to face with death. Life itself seemed suspended on a balance, swinging constantly between fear and hope.

He survived an accident in which dying appeared easier than living. Yet his grip on hope remained strong and wide. Countless prayers were offered for him, sincere and heartfelt, to the extent that it felt as if prayer had overcome destiny itself. It seemed that such a severe trial would not loosen its hold without causing irreparable loss. And yet, remarkably, this immense calamity passed without leaving even a lasting scar.

His book "حادثہ، مسیحا اور زندگی" is the narrative of this turbulent storm, in which his fragile vessel of life was steadied by trust in Allah, by the sincerity of those who wished for his well-being, and by the countless prayers surrounding him. Surely, he himself must have been astonished by this outcome, as must have been all who knew him and those who treated him.

In this journey between annihilation and survival, one truth must have become evident to all: at every moment, the weight of prayer tipped the scale in his favour. He was granted the calm of humility and succeeded in placing his trust entirely in Allah.

Professor Ahmad Rafiq Akhtar

(3)

**Professor Khalid Masood Gondal and Dr. Yar
Muhammad**

Dr. Yar Muhammad is a Professor of Emergency Medicine,

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and I have known him for many years. He is younger in age and junior to us, yet Allah granted him professorship at a very early stage. From the very first day after the accident until the last, he stood by me throughout. Whenever a difficulty arose, it was he who handled it.

Dr. Yar Muhammad came and conveyed that Mr. Naqi had said that today I should be discharged. He added that he had received me at Jinnah Hospital on the first day and that he himself would now take me home as well. The way Dr. Yar Muhammad supported me from beginning to end is a favour I will never forget for the rest of my life.

My daughter, Yumna, had also not slept even for a single moment during the past fifteen days. She kept saying that she would rest only when her father recovered. We were waiting for Mr. Gondal for the formal discharge.

Our projects in Tharparkar are running successfully. Prayers for my complete recovery were being offered there as well. Hindus were praying, Christians were offering prayers, and Muslims were praying with tears in their eyes. Charity was being distributed, and prayers were being offered in madrasas as well.

Professor Khalid Masood Gondal arrived with his entire team, smiling, leading everyone like a commander. He congratulated me and said, "Asif Jah, when I saw you on the very first day, your condition was extremely serious. I said to myself that this man has the prayers of his father and of the thirsty people of Thar. Insha'Allah, nothing will happen to him."

First and foremost, I thanked Allah Almighty, who granted me a new life. Professor Dr. Zahra and Dr. Farrukh said, "Doctor Sahib, Allah has granted you not one but three lives. Your accident was extremely serious, yet Allah saved you. Then Allah showed mercy during the shock as well, and later saved you on the ventilator. No matter how much you thank Allah, it will never be enough."

At that moment, Dr. Zahra remarked, "Doctor Sahib, your pain threshold, meaning your capacity to endure pain, is remarkably high. At no point did you say that you were in severe pain." I replied that all of this was the mercy of my Allah. It is His grace that He granted me a new life and restored my health.

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➤ Discharge from the Hospital and the Vice Chancellor's Car

After such a major accident, by the grace of Allah, I am recovering and heading back home. I asked Ashfaq to bring sweets for the doctors and staff of the ward. Everyone was celebrating. The ward workers, attendants, nurses and helpers were also given rewards. They took excellent care of me.

Mr. Gondal arrived with his team and congratulated me. Dr. Zahra and Dr. Farrukh also came, offering congratulations and prayers for my recovery. I thanked all these remarkable doctors from my heart.

My daughter Yumna, Masha'Allah, handled her father's treatment with great courage and strength. She stayed in confident contact with all the professors throughout. At home, Mahnoor, Huzaifa, Nauman, Dr. Naveed and Dr. Zahra all took care of me in every possible way and are still doing so. Ashfaq, Rafiq and others are all relieved and happy that their elder has recovered.

Meanwhile, Yumna went to complete the discharge paperwork. Mr. Gondal is a unique person. He never misses a chance to observe protocol. I received a call informing me that the Vice Chancellor of King Edward Medical University's car would take Dr. Asif Jah home. Ashfaq gathered our belongings and distributed sweets among the staff. Preparations for departure began.

Allah has shown great mercy. His kindness in saving my life and restoring my health is immense. Life has been granted for a purpose. There is still much work to be done. There are many helpless people to support, widows to assist, orphans to look after, poor children to educate, and thirsty animals and humans to give water to. There are places to go where humanity is suffering and fading away.

The children had brought balloons with them and were bursting them with joy. Fourteen days ago, their condition was entirely different. Everyone was worried, crying, praying to Allah, pleading, and fearful of what lay ahead. Today, Allah has shown happiness.

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Everyone at home is waiting. Khawaja Zafar has arrived from Islamabad, along with Khawaja Rais. Outside the surgical tower, there is an atmosphere of joy. Dr. Yar Muhammad has also arrived. After nearly two weeks, I have seen the outside world again. It feels strange. After two weeks, I finally had the chance to breathe in the open air.

When I offered the Maghrib prayer near Sukheki, the only thought in my mind was that I would reach home within half an hour. During that time, Asma and Ashfaq called, but I said we would talk properly once I reached home or the hospital.

➤ Worry Turned into Joy

Today, after nearly fourteen days and twenty hours, I am finally heading home. The journey from the surgical tower to home felt deeply pleasant. Lahore's roads, buildings and avenues looked new, as if I were seeing them for the first time. For two weeks, my world had been limited first to the ICU and then to the Gujranwala ward. But Allah's grace has been immense. He not only granted me a new life but also restored my health.

Asma and Mahnoor were standing there with garlands of flowers. Mahnoor was crying with happiness. Fifteen days ago, sorrow had entered this home. There was sadness, silence and anxiety everywhere. When I spoke to Abba Ji and Ammi Ji, they cried out in joy. From every side, there was only one voice: O Allah, this is Your mercy. Thank You. O Allah, You saved a life and granted health.

Alhamdulillah, the abdominal wounds are healing. A plaster of Paris is still on the ankle, and that too will come off gradually. The greatest happiness is that Allah has brought me home safely from the hospital.

My heartfelt salutes to Professor Dr. Asghar Naqi and his team, to Dr. Farrukh and Dr. Zahra, Dr. Nauman Nasir the cardiologist, Dr. Salman the Pulmonologist, Professor Ahsan the neurologist, and above all Professor Yar Muhammad, who took care of me from the very beginning until the final moment and kept a constant watch.

Special respect and gratitude to Professor Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, who supervised my treatment from the day of the

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accident until today. Salutations to all friends of Class '86 who prayed for my recovery. Salute to Dr. Junaid Asghar, who kept checking on me from Saudi Arabia, stayed in constant contact with my daughter, created a WhatsApp group, and discussed every issue whenever I faced a problem.

May Allah grant happiness to all these doctors and their families. May Allah keep His protection over them, bless them with the joy of their children, and grant them the strength to continue serving humanity.

➤ The Rosary Saved Me from a Suicide Attack and an Accident

Last night there was some itching on my body. Yumna gave me a tablet. My sleep is usually four or five hours at most. I woke up at three in the morning and kept talking. My daughter became worried and said she did not know what had happened to me. I felt like introducing my daughters to Professor Ahmed Rafiq Akhtar. Many of his lectures are available on social media. Listening to him helps a person build a connection with Allah.

At that moment, the image of Professor Ahmed Rafiq Akhtar came before my eyes. He says that the remembrance of Allah protects a person in every way. If you want to develop closeness with Allah, keep remembering Him again and again. What is a tasbeeh? It is the repeated remembrance of Allah with devotion and love. When Allah is remembered, He is greatly pleased.

It was three in the morning. I kept talking and my daughters kept listening as I discussed different things. Whenever I visited Gul Para in Gujar Khan, which is Professor Sahib's center, all his devotees were walking around with rosaries in their hands. But I had not yet started the specific tasbeehs he had prescribed.

Six months ago, I met Brigadier Basit, a friend of Nadeem Ahsan. He had served in the Rangers. Brigadier Basit traveled with me from Islamabad to Lahore, and along the way we kept talking about Professor Sahib.

Brigadier Basit shared his story. Two or three times in Karachi, suicide bombers targeted his vehicle. The people in the other vehicle were martyred, but he says he remained completely safe. He said this was because he continued reciting the tasbeehs that

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Professor Sahib had taught him. He has had a relationship with Professor Sahib for the past twenty to twenty-five years.

I too had recited the tasbeeh of “Ya Salam” while coming to the office that morning, and it was because of this that Allah kept me safe.

➤ Honoring Professor Ahmed Rafiq

February 19 was a Saturday. I am usually in Lahore on Saturdays. That day, Professor Sahib had his annual lecture. To attend it, I traveled to Gujar Khan with Jalil Akhtar, Hameed Qazi, Amjad Bukhari, and Muhammad Siddiq. We found seats in the middle. I was sitting right in front of Professor Sahib.

Suddenly, someone placed a hand on my shoulder. I asked what it was, and he said that Professor Sahib was calling me to the stage. I was both surprised and happy. I thought to myself how great a person he is. People have been his followers for forty, forty years, while I have only known him for a few days. I was not even regularly reciting the tasbeehs he had advised. Despite that, he honored me in front of everyone.

On the way back, I searched for the paper with the tasbeehs that Professor Sahib had given me and found it. Along with the prescribed supplications, I started regularly reciting the names of Allah that Professor Sahib had recommended. Because of these tasbeehs, Allah saved me from the accident and granted me a new life.

On July 6, at two in the morning, I felt as if I was in a spiritual atmosphere. More than fifteen days had passed since the accident. Ever since I returned home from the hospital, my younger daughter, Mahnoor, who has a scholarly temperament, has been talking to me about spirituality. She has her own way of praying. For my recovery, she observed fasts for three days and prayed with deep emotion, asking Allah to grant healing to her father. Through her prayers, Allah granted me a new life with good health and recovery.

➤ Mahnoor’s Spiritual Reflections

Mahnoor says, “On Sunday morning, two days after the accident, at the time of the Fajr prayer, I went outside, crying and praying for my Baba. The call to prayer was about to be made in

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the nearby mosque. Calls to prayer from distant mosques had already begun. I started praying. I prayed to Allah, saying, 'O Allah, grant my father healing. We all, and the poor especially, still need my father very much.' I prayed for about fifteen to twenty minutes. Then the adhan began in the mosque, everything fell quiet, and I looked up at the sky. I felt calm. It felt as if Allah had heard my prayer."

When Allah puts someone through hardship, He also gives the strength to endure it. Listen to Mahnoor's words. She is very close to spirituality. Since I returned home, she sits by me all night. She speaks with love and affection and reassures me.

At three in the morning, something unusual happened. All of a sudden, I started speaking while my eyes were closed. Mahnoor was awake. She came to me immediately and asked what was wrong, Baba. Yumna also rushed in and said, "Baba, please go to sleep." She checked my blood pressure and pulse and felt reassured. Yumna and Mahnoor stood by my bedside whole night.

The previous night, I had some itching on my body. By the grace of Allah, I am completely fine now. At that time, I was in a drowsy state. My daughters were standing beside me, listening carefully to what I was saying. I was talking to them about spirituality, speaking with them about Allah and His Messenger.

➤ The Immediate Effect of Prayer

By the grace of Allah, as my health continues to improve, I am gradually learning what I went through in the hospital during the early days. CPR was also performed. Just now, Awais told me that when I was on the ventilator, my condition was deteriorating badly and my breathing was failing. All of a sudden, I said that I needed to perform ablution.

Since I was on the ventilator, the doctors said it was not the right time. But when I insisted on offering prayer, Yumna helped me perform tayammum. After I offered the prayer, I do not remember what happened next. It was the children who later told me that I had prayed slowly, using gestures.

Then something extraordinary happened. My breathing rate, which had dropped to just two or three breaths per minute,

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suddenly rose to twelve or thirteen. Everyone was overjoyed, witnessing what a miracle Allah had shown. When the ventilator malfunctioned and burst up, Allah Almighty again showed His mercy. The second ventilator also did not work, but when the third one was connected, it started functioning. Allah, the Exalted, bestowed His grace and my condition stabilized and I started breathing normally.

However, the first three days after the accident were extremely difficult for my family. Yumna, Huzaifa, Mahnoor, Dr. Awais, Shehroz, and my brothers Naveed, Munir, Masud and Nomi were all in tears. But Allah showed His mercy and granted me a new life.

➤ **Saved from the Accident by the Blessing and Power of “Ya Salaam”**

On 18 June, I worked at the office. Since my transfer to Islamabad, I have made it a routine to travel to Lahore every Friday. Once I finish office matters, I travel to see my children, spend some time with them, and at the same time attend to my hospitals' affairs and examine patients for two days.

That Thursday, we left for Lahore at around half past three. I had it in mind that, Allah willing, I would offer the Maghrib prayer in Lahore. Had Rafiq been driving, we would have reached before Maghrib. The new driver, Qamar, was driving at a speed of 120. I usually sit in the front passenger seat beside the driver, but because of Covid I had started sitting in the back seat.

During the journey, I kept reciting the tasbeeh of *Ya Salaam*. Whenever there was time, I would take out my rosary. At times, I would recite my regular daily Tasbeehat. When the time for Maghrib came, we offered the prayer. About thirty kilometres before the Lahore Motorway toll plaza, there is a rest area on both sides where people have tea, offer prayers in the mosque, and take a short rest. We offered Maghrib there. I led the congregation, and five or seven people joined us.

Even after that, I continued reciting the tasbeeh on the way. The toll plaza was approaching. We were only fifteen or twenty minutes from home, as the remaining distance was about twenty-five kilometres. I had not eaten lunch and was thinking that I would

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reach home and Asma would have prepared food. Indeed, she had cooked my favourite vegetable dish, aloo palak, along with vermicelli. But that meal was not destined for me.

I am still speaking of 18 June. I began reciting the tasbeeh again. I believe the accident happened about fifteen to twenty minutes after we left the rest area. At the moment the accident occurred, the rosary was in my hand and I was reciting *Ya Salaam*. The vehicles collided. I remember nothing. I do not recall even a single scene of the accident. A video was shared on social media, but my children did not allow me to watch it.

When the accident happened, I was reciting the tasbeeh of *Ya Salaam*. Allah the Almighty saved me through these recitations. This is His grace. Those who saw the video say that I was drenched in blood and sitting on the ground. Yet I have no idea how or why the accident happened.

I am sharing these things with my daughters at three o'clock in the morning. I keep speaking, again and again. From the motorway, I was taken to Jinnah Hospital and then shifted to Mayo Hospital. The first operation was performed on Thursday, the second on Friday. I spent three days on the ventilator.

➤ Prayers and Tasbeehs

After three days, I began offering prayers using *tayammum* (dry ablution). In the mornings, my daughter Yumna would be on duty, or sometimes Nauman or Huzaifa would be with me. They never left me alone, even for a moment. Then the children would tell me, "Baba, please pray." I would perform *tayammum*, offer the prayer, and afterwards complete the full recitation of tasbeehs. I am completely certain that these tasbeehs supported me through everything.

The accident occurred on 18 June, and my operations were on 19 June. From 18 June until 1 July, I remained in Mayo hospital, continuously performing prayers and reciting tasbeehs. Today is 6 July. It is early morning, and I still need to complete my tasbeehs, which I shall, Allah willing.

At three o'clock in the morning, I shared everything with my daughters. I spoke about Professor Rafiq Akhtar, and my daughters understood what a remarkable person he is. Imran

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Chaudhry had already informed Professor Ahmed Rafiq about my accident. The professor did not know that I was also regularly reciting tasbeehs. Professor Ahmed Rafiq is a renowned Quranic scholar. Allah has blessed him with immense knowledge. At 85 years of age, he listens carefully to people and guides them through all their difficulties.

Imran Chaudhry told me that the professor had said, "I have prayed for Dr Sahib. Allah willing, nothing will happen to him." Then I reflected that all this goodness is by the grace of Allah, and the recitation of *Ya Salaam* played a very significant role. I sent a voice message to the professor, asking him to pray for my health and life. He instructed all those who follow his tasbeehs to pray for me.

During my stay in the hospital, Alhamdulillah, I continued my prayers and tasbeeh recitations. When I called, the Professor also sent a voice message, expressing his reassurance. He said, "The point is that the remembrance of Allah unites us with Allah. Your incident has convinced me even more to increase recitation of Allah's tasbeehs. There is immense power and blessing in the beloved names of Allah."

➤ The Effect of Prayers

Huzaifa was describing how we were all frantically searching for blood, going here and there. Allah provided help, and the blood bags were arranged. Several bags were collected. After the abdominal surgery, I was placed on a ventilator, which meant my condition had become very critical. Yumna, Huzaifa, and Sherry explained that my situation had deteriorated severely, and none of us knew what to do. Even the doctors were worried. Yet, Allah showed His mercy, and gradually my condition began to stabilize and improve.

Vice-Chancellor Khalid Masood Gondal, Dr Asghar Naqi, Professor Dr Zahra, Professor Farukh, Dr Salman, and Professor Yar Muhammad visited daily for rounds. When they left, the entire ward staff, including senior registrars, attended diligently to my care. Friends and well-wishers began offering charity on my behalf. Donations were given, and Allah bless dear friend Ejaz Sikka, who also contributed for charity. Ashfaq sent charitable donations in all over country.

News arrived from Tharparkar that Hindus also offered

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prayers in their own way and distributed *prashad* for my recovery. Through all these prayers, the breaths of life that had nearly stopped began to return. Prayers for me were even offered in the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah.

➤ Meeting in a Dream

Today is 19 July. It has been a month since the accident. During this time, countless people prayed for my recovery—people from Thar, from every province of Pakistan, friends abroad; in short, everyone prayed for my health. Many friends wanted to visit, but Ashfaq and Huzaifa insisted on strict limits, allowing only a few meetings due to the ongoing risk of coronavirus.

Chaudhry Basharat Sahib, with whom I have known for some time, called and said that he had met me in a dream. We shared very affectionate words. He said that immediately after the accident, he began praying earnestly to Allah, imploring Him to grant me a new life. Allah, through the prayers of friends, relatives, and even poor and needy patients, blessed me with a new life.

➤ Message from Professor Ahmad Rafiq Akhtar

Assalamu Alaikum. May Allah keep you in well-being and grant you complete health. I believe we should be grateful that Allah has granted both of us the opportunity to remember Him. Reciting His names strengthens our spirits and protects us from every affliction. Alongside the regular tasbeeh, also recite "*Inna Lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un*" a hundred times. Insha'Allah, soon we will be able to see each other in your full health and sound mind.

➤ Dr. Fayyaz Ranjha's Remarkable Stories

Dr. Fayyaz Ranjha came to visit. Here is what he said in his own words:

"Doctor sahib, we have come to see you and to share a saying: until now, you have brought blessings to millions. At that time, you were Model 62, Asif Jāh. When you dug 1200 wells to provide water to people, you were Model 62. Now, we expect that you are Model 2020, Dr. Asif Jāh. The 2020 model will serve the poor and needy even better and more

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appropriately. May Allah grant you healing and increase the impact of your blessings.”

He continued, “I was pleased to hear that you and your daughter decided not to seek treatment at a private hospital. Had you done so, King Edward and Mayo Hospital would have felt slighted that such a prominent figure did not trust his birthplace. You and your daughter fulfilled your duty. Your daughter said, ‘Mayo Hospital is my father’s hospital; it is also mine.’ The hospital staff treated you as one of their own. I remember that Allah granted me the ability that when I was serving as Medical Superintendent at Mayo Hospital, every patient received the same treatment without any inquiry into who they were or whether a doctor named Asif Jah was present or not. Each patient was given the same level of care that was provided to the Chief Minister’s mother, Hamid Nasir Chattha’s mother, Senior Minister Raja Basharat, Asifa Riaz Fatyana, and even the sister of the President of Pakistan. An abandoned patient brought from Data Darbar was also given the same high standard of treatment. On this, I stated that I personally bear witness that two stents were inserted free of cost for my own orderly at Mayo Hospital. Ranjha Sahib went on to say further.”

Dr. Ranjha shared another story:

“While travelling on the motorway to Islamabad for a meeting, the Additional Director called to report a patient had a ‘bomb.’ It turned out the patient was a poor potter, and the ‘bomb’ was a piece of wood from a cart, lodged in his chest. Surgeon Aftab Younis said the operation required disposable equipment worth 35,000 rupees. Our policy allowed up to 20,000 immediately; anything more required approval. The surgeon asked for permission, assuring me the patient would survive. The operation was performed, and the poor man’s life was saved. Later, when seven judges visited Sialkot Jail with the Home Secretary and Chief Secretary, a woman came forward repeatedly, explaining that she was a potter with no influential relatives. She expressed her gratitude, saying, ‘My son is saved because of you.’ I was moved to tears.”

Dr. Ranjha concluded:

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“Doctor, we love you because of your unwavering service to the poor, to the thirsty people of Thar, and to disaster victims. You reach the earthquake victims before officials, arrive first during floods, and reach remote areas like Thar and Gilgit-Baltistan ahead of others. It seems even earthquakes consult you before shaking the earth. Allah has a special blessing on you. Pray that at the end, I too may serve patients with dignity and that death comes to me while I am serving humanity.”

➤ **Abdul Wadood Khan’s Dream and the Concern of Tahir Qureshi and Jameel Nasir**

Alhamdulillah! My health is steadily improving. Today, many people came to visit, offered prayers, and left. Among them, Abdul Wadood Khan’s visit was especially memorable. Whenever Khan Sahib comes, he shares old stories as well as new reflections. I have had a long-standing relationship of respect with him. Back in 1994, under his supervision, I had the opportunity to work in Multan as an Assistant Collector. Alhamdulillah, he later retired as Deputy Chairman of the FBR. He is a courageous man, though occasionally stern.

He shared a remarkable incident: before my accident, he had a dream that he was in a graveyard where three graves were prepared. Two were already occupied, while the third was empty. He was calling out loudly, “Where is Asif Jāh? Where is Asif Jāh?” This, he said, indicated that my life was still to continue.

Similarly, my friend Jameel Nasir called me, expressing deep concern and advising caution. Tahir Qureshi, Collector of Custom also contacted me a day before the accident, warning me to adopt all preventive measures in order to avoid contacting Corona.

Alhamdulillah, by the grace of Allah, I was able to perform a proper ritual bath (ghusl) today. Huzaifa assisted me in the washroom and ensured it was done properly. Afterward, I offered the Asr prayer. For the first time in about six weeks, I was able to lie down on my own bed. The feeling of being back at home is truly unique—it feels as if I have returned to life itself.

During this period, my family took exceptional care of me in the hospital, and at home, they continue to attend to me morning and evening. Whenever I ring the bell, someone is immediately present. This is a profound blessing of Allah. Health, indeed, is

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the greatest wealth, and I am grateful to Allah. Over the past ten days, I have even rejoined my office online, attended conferences, and conducted video meetings with my collectors.

Fresh Initiatives to Provide Clean Water for the People of Dadu

Masha'Allah, the work of service and healthcare has resumed. New wells are being dug—sometimes Gul Daraz sends photographs of these wells, and sometimes they arrive from Qurban. We are in constant contact with Zulfiqar. A video from a village in Dadu went viral, showing children and women collecting water from a filthy pond. Our team visited the site, conducted a survey, and confirmed that access to clean water in Dadu is a major problem. People were forced to drink from contaminated ponds.

In response, a campaign was launched. Members of the New Umeed (Hope) Foundation raised funds, and Dr. Amna Asghar from the “Fi Sabilillah” group initiated an impressive drive. Whatever idea comes to Dr. Amna’s heart, she posts about it, and funds start pouring in immediately. Now, under the leadership of Zulfiqar Ali, our team is going to Dadu. In addition to smart hand pumps, larger hand pumps will also be installed. We have resolved to address the water issue in Dadu fully.

Alhamdulillah, more than fifty hand pumps—both large and small—have already been installed in various villages of Dadu. Zulfiqar Ali continues to oversee the installation in different villages, and funds are arriving continuously for further expansion. From the United States, Shahida Sultan of the Al-Basit Foundation has contributed funds through her niece, Syra Wain. May Allah bless this effort abundantly.

In addition, the annual tradition of Qurbani has begun across the country this year. Donations for the Rohingya Muslims have already been sent. Sacrificial meat will be distributed among orphans and the needy in Balochistan, Chitral, Tharparkar, Sindh, Nowshera, Mardan, Swat, Bannu, Azad Kashmir, Sargodha, Lahore, Jhang, Peshawar, Lakki Marwat, and other cities. Meat distribution will also take place in Tharparkar.

By the grace of Allah, my health is improving, and I am able to manage office work alongside these charitable initiatives. Masha'Allah, the service and healthcare work has resumed in full

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swing. While patients have not yet begun visiting, all other service projects are ongoing. No words can truly express my gratitude to Allah for protecting me from such a severe accident and restoring my health. As my health returns, my entire family and I prostrate before Allah, repeatedly offering thanks for His immense mercy.

➤ The Care of Dr. Naveed Anwar

Dr. Naveed, my younger brother, is an exceptionally capable doctor, Masha'Allah. He runs his own clinic in Sargodha, and even while living there, he continues to care for our parents. Since the day of the accident, he closed both his home and clinic to rush to Lahore to be with the family. His children, Dr. Nauman and Abu Bakr, have also been constantly by my side.

Dr. Naveed initially provided care at the hospital, and since returning home, all treatment has been under his close supervision. He administers injections and drips with great caution, staying by my side for hours until the drips are fully completed. He sanitizes every item in the bedroom, keeps careful track of all medications, and monitors my condition after each injection or drip. Whenever my health wavers, he attentively observes and reassures me, ensuring that every detail of my recovery is managed meticulously.

➤ The Visit of Professor Dr. Amir Aziz

Three days ago, my health deteriorated. Professor Dr. Amir Aziz is a world-renowned orthopaedic surgeon, without equal. He is also the Chief Executive of Gurki Hospital. In my distress, I sent him a voice message, and he immediately replied, reassuring me not to worry and saying that my survival was a miracle. He came around 5:30 pm, embraced me upon arrival, and said there was no need for concern.

He mentioned that at the time of the accident, he had also sent a bag of B-negative blood from Surgi Med Hospital. We had heartfelt conversations, and he congratulated me on my recovery. May Allah keep Dr. Amir Aziz safe; despite being such a distinguished doctor, he is humble and simple-hearted. He told Asma that my survival was a miracle. He even sat with me on a foot rest. The great doctors spent half an hour by my side. Meeting such virtuous people brings spiritual joy, and the positive impression of his visit remained for several days.

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He also reviewed an X-ray of my ankle and confirmed that the surgery was done excellently. He encouraged me that in a few days I would start walking again and carry out all my work with renewed energy and determination. The visit of Professor Amir Aziz brought immense joy and peace to my heart. May Allah keep him happy and grant him the ability to continue serving humanity.

➤ Civil Awards 2020

This year, the Civil Awards were scheduled to be announced on 14th August. I gathered all my documents as quickly as possible and forwarded them to the FBR. The deadline for submission was 5th June. For the award nomination, a committee is formed within the FBR, including the Secretary of the Revenue Division, the FBR Chairman, Member Customs, Member IR, and Member Admin. The committee approved my nomination and sent it forward. The biggest role in ensuring that the nomination was submitted on time was played by Faiz Elahi Memon, Member Admin, who was transferred from the FBR shortly after. Perhaps he had even come from Karachi specifically to help submit my nomination.

My parents in Sargodha were praying for me as well. On 10th July, the award committee held its meeting. As soon as the meeting began for approval, my children, Asma, and my parents started praying to Allah. Mahnoor went above and beyond; she had already kept continuous fasts for three days for my health and even fasted a day specifically for the approval of the award.

The meeting began at 2 pm on 10th July. My citation was discussed in detail, highlighting my contributions. Officers from every province, as well as representatives from Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, praised my welfare project. My heart raced with excitement. Alhamdulillah, the first message I received was from Tahir Qureshi: "Sir, congratulations!" Jamal Sahib from Gilgit, who was attending the meeting, also sent a message confirming that my name had been approved. I had already received the prestigious civil award Sitara-e-Imtiaz in 2016, and now the second highest civil award Hilal-e-Imtiaz was officially approved. Dr. Hamid Atiq also called to congratulate me. Praise be to Allah for granting me this second honour. I informed my

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parents at home, everyone was overjoyed and offered prayers.

➤ **Yumna, Mahnoor, and Huzaifa Always by My Side**

It has been more than a month since the accident. It is around nine in the morning, and Mahnoor and I are sitting together. Mahnoor is a very loving daughter and takes great care of me. May Allah always keep her happy and prosperous. Even at night, when I am asleep, she stays awake to make sure I do not need anything.

When we are awake, we talk about various topics. During this time, roughly half of it was spent in the hospital. My world then was limited to the wards—first the ICU, then the East Surgical Ward. The Gujranwala Ward was full of drama: the cries and calls of patients echoed even at night, and there was always a flow of new cases.

Throughout that period, Yumna, Huzaifa, Nauman, and Abu-Bakr were by my side. I had to stay in the hospital for about two weeks. Since returning home, everyone has been focused on looking after my health. It has been over two weeks now. Most of the time is spent sleeping or resting. Alhamdulillah, the surgical cuts and wounds are healing well. The pins have been removed, arranged by Rana Arshad in his office. By the grace of Allah, I have been granted full recovery.

➤ **Asif Butt's Prostration of Gratitude**

Asif Butt, along with Muhammad Sadiq, Member of the Customs Appellate Tribunal, came to visit me. Asif Butt is a colleague from Customs. Overcome with emotion, he could not contain himself and performed a prostration of gratitude (sajdah) right there, thanking Allah. There is a deep bond of affection and respect with Asif Butt. Since retiring from his job, he has been practising law and has a keen interest in reading and writing. He has now become a recognised columnist, with collections of his articles already published.

Brigadier Afzal Rana calls daily and shared that special prayers have been offered for me even at the Haram. Alhamdulillah, I am grateful for the love, care, and affection I have received from so many people.

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Floods in Chitral Gojal destroyed several homes and left many people homeless. Immediately, our representative, Zindagi, was sent to Chitral to distribute rations among affected families, which he delivered the very next day. In this way, the work of treatment of the poor and needy and service to the humanity in distress resumed in full force.

➤ The Devotion of Friends and the Power of Prayers

The accident happened on 18 June, and today is 19 July. Being confined to a sickbed can be mentally upsetting for a patient. Having loved ones around and offering assurances and praying serve as a form of psychotherapy or healing which is incredibly important. I consider myself very fortunate that my daughters, Yumna and Mahnoor, my wife Asma, and my son Huzaifa have been taking complete care of me. Even the slightest discomfort prompts all four to rush to my side.

Yumna, along with her cousin, my nephew Dr. Nauman, and my younger brother Dr. Naveed from Sargodha, as well as other family members, are always present. Alhamdulillah, despite such a major accident, my recovery is steadily progressing and my external and internal wounds are healing. Occasionally, I experience a mild fever.

Rana Arshad removed the pins from my ankle and encouraged me to start walking again. He emphasised the mental aspect first: grounding myself and convincing my mind that I am capable of walking. He guided me step by step, ensuring I moved carefully and steadily. With reassurance and support, he helped me walk in his office using a walker, instilling confidence that I could regain mobility gradually.

➤ My Mother's Spiritual Blessings

Alhamdulillah, my mother is here with me from Sargodha. Early in the morning, she gets up, recites her prayers, and blows over me with her spiritual blessings. Thanks to her prayers and these spiritual gestures, my whole day feels pleasant, and I experience deep inner peace. It is a great blessing to have the support of one's parents.

Many people have come from far and wide to visit. Umair Butt and Umar Butt from Gujranwala, both young and generous

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businessmen, came specially to meet me and offered their prayers before leaving. Chief Collector Customs (Central) Dr. Fareed and Collector Customs Dry Port Mohsin Rafiq also visited.

Through the prayers of friends, the poor, the needy, and my family, Allah Almighty has granted me speedy health. May Allah allow me to fully recover soon, to stand on my own feet, walk, and resume all my work with the same energy I had before. After this accident, I am determined to serve humanity, help others, support the poor, and assist those affected by disasters with renewed zeal and dedication, Insha'Allah.

➤ First Ritual Bath and Recovery

Today was spent at home. I had my hair cut by the barber, though Huzaifa protested, saying he would do it himself. Ashfaq brought new supplies for Saif, the barber, and everything was thoroughly sanitized before the haircut. Huzaifa helped me with my ritual bath.

The weather was very pleasant—cool breezes with a light drizzle. Stepping outside felt wonderful, as if I had returned to the world after being confined. A patient confined to a room begins to feel trapped; that single room becomes his whole world.

On this beautiful day, a long-time friend, Naeem Chaudhry, came to visit. Naeem is a person of deep care and spiritual connection, and we have shared many years of remembrance of Allah. He mentioned that he has been asking about me every day.

Travel and movement have always been a part of my life. Whenever a disaster strikes anywhere in Pakistan, I have tried to reach those affected area immediately after the calamity and take active part in rescue, relief and subsequently rehabilitation of disaster hit affectees. Alhamdulillah, Allah has been gracious, granting me health and wellbeing. Being unwell makes one truly realise the value of health.

It is a great blessing that I have regained both health and mental strength as well. Insha'Allah, there is still much work ahead to complete my pending agenda. I hope to continue serving the helpless, treating the sick, providing water to the thirsty, and feeding the hungry and rehabilitate the shelterless.

➤ Ongoing Treatment and Service at Barah kahu

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Hamid Qazi, the retired General Manager of PTV, is currently overseeing our hospital and welfare centre in Barah Kahu. Alhamdulillah, he is a very experienced and capable person. We discussed various topics, and Insha'Allah, a new project will soon be launched here, similar to the one already started in Lahore. We have named it the "Apna Rozgar Scheme," which aims to help people start small businesses so they can earn independently and provide for their children. There is also consideration for a small-loan scheme to support this initiative.

Other duties in Barah Kahu are continuing as well. Dr. Rimsha is conducting patient check-ups and treatments. Thanks to Dr. Rimsha, the centre in Barah Kahu is thriving. She has been with us since day one, attending to patients with great care and attention. Daily meals are also being provided to the poor and needy families.

Recently, our colleague, Collector Customs Ali Raza, lost his mother. She generously donated the items she used to our hospital. The mother of Ali Raza was a renowned fiction writer with many published works and had always admired our work. In her memory, a Quran recitation ceremony was held at the hospital, with Ali Raza also participating, and prayers for all the departed soul were offered.

Service work at Barah Kahu continues uninterrupted. Meals are being prepared, medical treatment is ongoing, a sewing school is operational, and on the third floor, a hall/room is being built to host various welfare and educational programmes.

➤ A Half-Hour Journey Spanning Fourteen Days

Today is 18th July, and it has been exactly one month since the accident. On 18th June, around this same time, I had set out from Islamabad for Lahore, thinking I would reach after Maghrib prayer. Instead of reaching home, I ended up in the hospital. This was Allah's will. I had to stay there for quite a few days. What should have been a 30-minute journey to home turned into a ride in a Rescue 1122 vehicle to the hospital. Finally, after fourteen days and twenty hours, I was able to return home.

During those two weeks, I saw neither the sunlight nor the moonlight. After a month, Huzaifa and Nauman assisted with my first proper bath. It felt incredibly refreshing. My body felt strangely

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altered, as though it had shrunk and dried up. When water touched my skin, it brought immense relief. Huzaifa thoroughly rubbed and applied soap, washing away a month's worth of accumulated dirt.

Today, many people came to visit, including Mehboob Shah, with whom I share a 25-year-long relationship. He is a generous man, though these days he rarely leaves home due to health issues. He had undergone a bone marrow transplant in Canada.

➤ Now You Have to Walk, Now You Have to Run

It has been a month and a half since the accident on 18th June. Alhamdulillah, Allah has granted recovery and healing. Rana Arshad, an orthopedic surgeon, examined my ankle thoroughly at his office. He removed the plastic cast and checked all the movements. Alhamdulillah, the up-and-down movements of the ankle are almost back to normal. Allah's grace is immense: the ankle, which had been completely mangled and drenched in blood, now sits in its normal position. Praise be to Allah, the movements are functioning properly.

Rana Arshad is not only an excellent surgeon but an even better human being. He goes deep into understanding a patient's problems. During the treatment, he carefully explained how I should manage myself. He motivated and inspired me throughout, repeatedly emphasizing that I must start walking soon. "You have to run. You have to move. You have to walk."

Mahnoor wrote this phrase beautifully and placed it by my bedside. Seeing it every morning fills me with new courage and energy. About a month after the accident, when I first put my foot on the ground, it felt like I was learning to walk for the first time. Fayyaz Ranjha remarked that one Asif Jah was born 58 years ago, and now the "reconditioned" Asif Jah 2020 has been born—58 years later.

Now it's time to walk. Time to run. Time to move forward and serve humanity with even greater dedication. It is said that those in the vehicle that collided with ours did not survive, but Allah saved my life. No amount of gratitude can ever suffice. Gradually, the pain is decreasing.

➤ The Shower of Divine Mercy at Arafat

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Today is the Day of Arafah. Last year on this day, we were in Makkah, standing in the plain of Arafat. On that day, the skies opened, and Allah's mercy poured down in torrents. After offering prayers at Masjid Namirah, we stepped out, and the rain fell so heavily that everything was soaked within moments. The air was filled with Allah's blessings.

The Ihram² garments were drenched, umbrellas broke, and streams and rivulets started flowing everywhere. It took nearly two hours to reach our tents from Masjid Namirah³ through the muddy, waterlogged paths. Amidst all this, people were crying out to Allah, overwhelmed with devotion, while at the same time enjoying the sheer delight of the rain. The heat vanished completely, replaced by a refreshing coolness.

During this, a Sudanese pilgrim, unable to bear the tremendous lightning and thunder, fell in prostration and was martyred in the path of Allah. He became the first martyr of Arafat, and on the Day of Judgment, he will rise in the state of wearing ihram. This year, due to Corona preventive measures only around ten thousand people performed Hajj, but neither the same scenes nor the same blessings could be witnessed again.

➤ Eid al-Adha in Lahore

Every year, Eid was celebrated with my parents, siblings, and extended family in Sargodha. This year was different—I was compelled to stay in Lahore due to the injuries from the accident. The comfort was that my mother was with me, offering prayers morning and evening.

Usually, for Eid prayers in Sargodha, my father would take the sons, nephews, and brothers along, and the day would be filled with joy. After returning, we would visit the cemetery, offering

². Ihram is the sacred state a Muslim enters before performing Hajj or Umrah. It involves intention, specific rules, and simple clothing symbolizing purity, humility, and equality. Pilgrims avoid cutting hair, using perfume, or engaging in arguments, focusing instead on worship, self-discipline, and devotion to Allah throughout the pilgrimage journey.

³ Masjid Namirah is a historic mosque located on the plain of Arafat near Makkah. It is significant during Hajj because the Hajj sermon is delivered here on the Day of Arafah. Pilgrims gather for prayers and reflection, remembering the Farewell Sermon of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the message of unity.

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Fatiha at the graves of relatives. My mother shared that when the accident happened, some women from the neighborhood came immediately and reassured her, saying, "Nothing will happen to Dr. Sahib." My mother, a simple woman of old traditions, repeated only one prayer: that Allah will protect her son.

The treatment process was challenging, with ICU and ward days testing my condition, but Allah's mercy remained constant. Dr. Rana Arshad, when examining my ankle with the plastic of Paris removed, confirmed that its movement was completely normal and advised that I start putting weight on the other leg as well.

Prayers continued to pour in from people across the country. Maulana Fazl Rahim, Maulana Yusuf Khan, and Maulana Fazlur Rahman consistently remembered me in their prayers. Allah's grace ensured that this year's annual sacrifice arrangements continued throughout the country, including Azad Jammu Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan.

For the first time, Eid was celebrated in Lahore itself. I had feared donations might be fewer this year, but Alhamdulillah, contributions were the highest ever. Ijaz Ska, Imran Butt, Mehbub Shah, Iftikhar Basheer, and others brought substantial donations. Funds were sent to purchase sacrificial animals for Chitral, Hunza, Azad Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, Muzaffargarh, Nowshera, Mardan, Swat, Peshawar, and Laki Marwat. InshaAllah, every center will hold Eid sacrifices.

I pray that Allah restores my health completely soon so I can return to this work of service and treatment with the same energy and zeal.

➤ Eid al-Adha Prayer in the Mosque

Today is Eid al-Adha, and for the first time in many years, Eid is being spent in Lahore. Every year, we would reach Sargodha the night before Eid. My father, all my brothers, and their children would gather to offer the Eid prayer together.

This year, the prayer was different. Huzaifa suggested that walking was difficult and that we could pray at home, but I insisted that the Eid prayer must be offered in the mosque. Suleman Shakoor also joined us. We entered the mosque in Khyber Block.

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Everywhere in the mosque, upstairs and downstairs, people had gathered. The Maulvi was delivering a sermon. The Eid prayer was scheduled for 6:30. At the appointed time, the prayer began.

I thanked Allah that from June 18 to today, August 31—about a month and a half later—He granted me the ability to come to the mosque and offer Eid prayers.

➤ Eid with Family in Lahore

Today is the second day of Eid al-Adha, and we are in Lahore. Family members are coming here from Sargodha. Alhamdulillah, I am sitting outside in the lawn. The weather is very pleasant—cool breeze, a refreshing chill, and showers have blessed the day. Everywhere is soaked and thriving. Alhamdulillah, animals are once again being sacrificed for the sake of Allah.

By the grace of Allah, my health is improving day by day. Yesterday, I was able to offer Eid prayer in the mosque. The family in Sargodha has also been in touch throughout. The greatest blessing is the prayers of my parents. My mother is here with me and keeps praying every moment. At this age, having the support of one's parents is a huge blessing. My mother trusts in Allah fully; she embodies reliance and contentment. She told me that when my accident happened, she prayed, "O Allah, protect my child, keep him safe."

I have also shared with my family that, by the grace of Allah, we are celebrating Eid together. I have slowly started moving my feet, and Insha'Allah, very soon I will be able to stand and walk on my own. Insha'Allah, I plan to go to Islamabad and resume my charitable as well as official work. Once conditions improve, I intend to perform Umrah with my son and there offer my heartfelt gratitude to Allah. Whatever mercy Allah has granted, whatever life He has bestowed, I now intend to dedicate even more of it to the service of His creation and humanity in distress.

➤ Professor Dr. Farukh's Dedication and Sacrifice

When it was time to remove the ventilator, Dr. Farukh insisted, "I will take it off myself." She stayed by my side for four hours, monitoring my vital signs. Once my breathing and pulse stabilized, she personally removed the ventilator and then returned home. May Allah keep her happy. From the very first day

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at Mayo Hospital until the last, she paid great attention to my care, visiting daily—first in the ICU and then in the ward—to check on my condition.

Dr. Farukh, Dr. Zahra, and all the hospital doctors have been taking excellent care of me. Alhamdulillah, I have now started walking with a walker. It is remarkable how many blessings Allah grants to a person: when healthy, we often do not realize how easy it is to eat, walk, see, and smell. But if even one sense is impaired, life feels incomplete.

I have spent my life in constant work and movement—never staying in one place, traveling across the country. Whenever it was time for prayer during my travels, I always tried to pray in congregation at a mosque. By Allah’s mercy, wherever I went in Pakistan or abroad, I was able to pray in congregation. Even at the Presidential Palace, I prayed in congregation a few times. Now, however, out of necessity, prayers are being performed at home, often with gestures rather than fully standing, yet I remain grateful for the ability to pray at all.

➤ The Impact and Power of Parental Prayers

When I came home from the hospital, the only desire in my heart was to quickly reach Sargodha and be with my parents. Allah fulfilled this wish as well—my parents were brought to Lahore in Dr. Naveed’s car. The moment I met them, I could not contain my emotions and cried out in joy. My father said, “I prayed to Allah for only one thing: that the life of my son, who has done so much good, be protected. I am certain that it was because of these prayers that Allah saved your life.”

Alhamdulillah, I am now close to my parents, holding their hands and listening to their words. My father, a retired headmaster, speaks with such authority and knowledge that no one else interrupts. He knows about travel, trade, and religion. In conversation, he shares insights that leave one amazed at the depth of his understanding. From him, I learned lessons in honesty, integrity, hard work, truthfulness, contentment, and simplicity. He taught me how to live with halal earnings and lead a righteous life.

In the evening, respected friends—Khalid Masood Gondal,

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Fayyaz Ranjha, Yar Muhammad, Rizwan Naqvi, and Khurram Kaleem—came to visit. Khurram Kaleem was delighted to meet my father, realizing he was his former student.

Professor Gondal shared, “While performing your surgery, I felt a moment of worry, but immediately I said to myself, ‘Asif will be fine because his parents are praying for him constantly.’ It was these prayers that guided every step and relieved you from pain.”

Today, Sunday, people have been coming all day to visit. Visitors have arrived from far and wide—Peshawar, Karachi, Balochistan, and Islamabad—all eager to see me and offer prayers for my health.

➤ **Colleagues and Staff in Treatment and Service**

The colleagues and staff involved in treatment and service show immense love. Their hearts beat as one. I always try to resolve their problems, and in turn, they give their hearts and souls to serve. These employees are truly remarkable; when treated with respect, cared for, and supported in their difficulties, they dedicate themselves completely to the work at hand and in your service.

This morning, my health deteriorated somewhat. Huzaifa and Mahnoor kept asking repeatedly, “Baba, what happened?” The sleep medicine I took yesterday still has its lingering effect. Today, stomach pain worsened, and diarrhea caused severe discomfort. Amid all this, I could hear my mother’s voice—she was sitting on the prayer mat, praying, “O Allah, have mercy on my children.”

My father said, “We should share happiness and make things easier for others. I taught children for fifty years, standing in classrooms, educating three or four generations. Some of my students are now grandparents. While teaching them, I always prayed to Allah, ‘O Allah, through them, increase knowledge in my children. Make them successful and honorable.’ Allah accepted my prayers. Alhamdulillah, currently there are ten doctors among our children. May Allah protect them always.”

➤ **Time for Serving Humanity**

My faith and that of my donors have strengthened, believing that the time Allah has granted is meant for serving humanity. Even while bedridden, the work of service and treatment has

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already begun. Ashfaq has sent funds to all centers for sacrificial animals, and people are arriving on Eid. In Thar, Chitral, Balochistan, Bannu, Kohat, and wherever our centers exist, arrangements for Qurbani have been made. Donations are arriving from people, and contributions have also started coming in for installing hand pumps in Dadu. Wherever a disaster strikes, my team reaches there immediately, and the process of service and treatment begins. May Allah keep this work ongoing and grant the ability to serve the maximum number of people. In Islamabad, service and treatment continue at the Barah Kahu hospital; may Allah increase this work further and grant the ability to serve His creation. Ameen!

It is a great blessing from Allah that even during days of illness, the work of welfare continues. With Eid al-Adha approaching, we have sent funds for purchasing sacrificial animals in various cities—Balochistan, Chitral, Thar, Nowshera, Mardan, Swat, Bannu, Azad Kashmir, Sargodha, Lahore, Jhang—and also for Rohingya Muslims in Bangladesh. News arrived from Astore that a village caught fire, and all the belongings of the people were destroyed. Through Nargis Tariq, new warm shawls and children's clothes and shoes were sent via Amjad in Gilgit.

Allah has granted us the ability to serve humanity across the country. Because of His grace, new wells are being dug, old ones repaired, and green farms established. Despite illness, it is a tremendous blessing that the work of charity and welfare continues. May Allah further grant people the willingness and ability to participate actively in serving humanity. Alhamdulillah, service and treatment continue at Barah Kahu and our various dispensaries. The new life Allah has granted me has renewed my energy and strengthened the drive to do more good work.

➤ Mother: A Supreme Example of Service and Contentment

The house is full of warmth and life. My mother is here. She is a beautiful embodiment of contentment, love, compassion, and sacrifice. She has lived her entire life with contentment—first serving her husband, then her children, and now serving her grandchildren. It is a great blessing from Allah that her presence continues to watch over me.

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Since returning home from the hospital, my mother has been with me. Every moment, every hour, she continuously offers prayers for my well-being. People are also visiting—coming from Islamabad and various other cities—to offer prayers and comfort. May Allah grant me the ability to stand on my feet and walk very soon. Allah willing, many more works of charity and welfare will begin shortly.

➤ Visitors from Across the Country

Since falling ill, people from all over the country have been coming to visit. Despite Ashfaq having to turn many away, devoted friends and well-wishers continue to arrive from every corner of the nation. Ashfaq decides who meets me and who does not. Those who get to meet me leave happy; those who cannot, leave disappointed. Some have come two or even three times. People have arrived from Multan, Muzaffargarh, Peshawar, Karachi, Tharparkar, and Diplo. Some bring gifts of honey, others bring fruits and sweets. The house is filled with flowers and fruit. Asma has started distributing the fruits and sweets among visitors, yet they still do not run out. Even today, visitors kept coming and going.

➤ Participation in a Zoom Meeting

Member Customs Tariq Huda, may Allah bless him, called to inform me about attending a board meeting. Due to COVID-19, most meetings are being conducted via Zoom or video link. Our meeting included Chief Collectors from Karachi and Lahore, while some attendees joined from Islamabad. Member Tariq Huda addressed the participants and welcomed me warmly, expressing happiness at seeing me healthy and back to work. I thanked my friends individually, and everyone congratulated me, saying they were delighted to have me back among them. I expressed gratitude to Allah for restoring my health and enabling me to continue service and treatment work.

The conference lasted over two hours, covering numerous projects and issues. Every year, we receive some funds dedicated to employee welfare. These funds provide scholarships for employees' children, help with medical treatment, and sometimes offer loans. Last time, we received 5 million rupees, which were distributed across North's various collectorates. Other Chief Collectors initially said they did not need funds, but at my

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request, the Member approved 5 million rupees, which were then divided among four collectorates. These funds are actively being used for the welfare of employees and their children. When a person's intention is pure, Allah provides opportunities to continue helping those in need.

➤ **Professor Khalid Masood Gondal and Rana Abdul Jabbar**

Professor Khalid Masood Gondal and Rana Arshad were sitting in the drawing room, proudly discussing their achievements. They noted that while many students come from Aitchison College, they themselves had studied in modest schools, yet went on to compete successfully with graduates from Aitchison and Cambridge. Rana Arshad shared that, by Allah's grace, he has repaired bones that seemed impossible to heal. He performed surgery on former Minister Ahsan Iqbal, whose arm had been shattered by a gunshot, and now Ahsan Iqbal has full movements restored.

A further connection with Rana Arshad emerged: he has a remarkable ability to transform barren areas into gardens. He showed pictures of plants he had planted at King Edward Medical University, which turned the Patiala Block into a lush green space. I also shared with him our efforts in the Thar desert, where we cultivated wheat, onions, vegetables, and fodder for animals. May Allah continue to grant us the ability to make Pakistan greener and cleaner.

Rana Abdul Jabbar, now a Sessions Judge, also visited. His connection with King Edward Medical College dates back to his student days, when he lived in the hostel with his brother Dr. Abdul Qayyum. He later joined the judiciary and became a magistrate, eventually rising to Sessions Judge. His spouse is also a Sessions Judge, and it is possible that both may soon be promoted as High Court judges.

The evening was filled with lively conversation. Professor Gondal proudly told my father that from the first day he knew that your prayers would protect Asif, and that, by Allah's grace, nothing would go wrong. Rana Arshad continued sharing stories in detail, and the gathering finally concluded.

May Allah protect Asif and bless Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, Rana Arshad, and all the medical professionals who treated me with such care, granting me a renewed life and complete health

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through their dedication and skill.

➤ Immediate Effect of Prayers

By Allah's great grace, during my illness, countless people offered prayers for me. Yumna and Huzaifa stayed by my side throughout, while Mahnoor prayed from home, weeping as she supplicated to Allah. She said, "When I spoke to Allah, after a while I felt reassured that nothing would happen to my father. Once, during a prayer, I felt as if something had surrounded me. Allah had appeared before me, and He had healed my father. In the evening, when I went to see him in the hospital, he smiled and returned my greeting. He showed affection. Seeing my father healthy and smiling brought me peace and internal satisfaction. What I had felt in the morning, I could now witness with my own eyes." It is through the prayers of my children and of the poor that Allah has granted me a new life.

➤ Envelope for Patients

People continued visiting all day. Syed Yusuf Shah came from Shangla, and Dr. Aftab Azhar, a classmate, came from Lahore. Due to COVID-19, visits from other cities are more common. Visitors offered prayers, and I thought: when visiting a patient, there should be a tradition of giving an envelope, similar to weddings. This would help cover some of the costs incurred by the patient, and it would reassure them that relatives, friends, and well-wishers are thinking about him. In Islam, showing care, spending for others, and helping in hardship carries immense reward. Introducing the culture of giving an envelope during visits to patients would greatly benefit many poor patients.

➤ Connection Through the Mosque

Late at night, VC Sahib visited. Khalid Masood Gondal and I stayed together in the KE Hostel and studied together. From the very beginning, we had a bond centered around the mosque. Maulana Inam-ul-Haq Sahib was our Imam. His room hosted gatherings daily. People often say that most of the clerics intend to be invited for lunch or dinner, but Maulana Inam would daily invite and feed us. He even arranged iftar for the students and doctors. At that time, we were members of the mosque committee, and Khalid Masood Gondal served as secretary. Whenever a task came up for the mosque, we would collect

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funds, and the work would get done.

My friendship with Maulana has lasted ever since, and may Allah keep him safe. His children have taken over the family business. Meeting him brings back memories from 1980 to 1986. Sometimes we would trouble Malik Rasheed, or others. Once, we put Elfie into the lock of Malik Rasheed's room. Malik Rasheed then threw a stone at me, injuring my forehead. I had to take myself to the Mayo Hospital emergency for treatment, all the while pleading with him not to play pranks on me again. Those were the days full of both fun and engagement.

➤ **Courage, Strength, and Endurance**

A patient, whether at home or in the hospital, can easily fall into depression. Alhamdulillah, I am able to pray using tayammum. On Saturday when I couldn't speak and was unconscious, the first thing I did was write on paper, asking for ablution to be performed. A few days after the accident, I was able to resume prayers. Prayer is a fundamental pillar of Islam—there is no excuse to neglect it. If you are sick, you can pray while lying down, using gestures to indicate the movements. Allah will accept it.

Allah has been merciful to Pakistan; COVID-19 cases are on the decline, and most patients have returned home. Yet globally, the devastation continues, with deaths and patients in critical condition.

From June 18 until today, July 15, nearly a month has passed. Allah has granted me courage and endurance. My family—Yumna, Huzaifa, Mahnoor, Asma, and Dr. Nauman—take care of me in every way. My bedroom has been turned into a ICU room of a hospital. Mahnoor is on duty at night; during the day, Huzaifa and Yumna look after me, along with Asma. At no moment do I feel alone. My heart is set on leaving this room soon and returning to my normal routine activities.

People came from Thar, hosting generous gatherings before leaving. They came to see the project, the new farms. We have a team member, Aslam Marwat, whom I sent to Thar. He is a remarkable person, independent-minded, and even at 70, always ready for service and healthcare work. Aslam Marwat departed yesterday, and his plane is about to land in Thar. The locals are eagerly awaiting him because whenever he takes on a task, he

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begins posting on Facebook about delivering hope and distributing green farm produce to the people of Thar. People are waiting for him—and for me as well. Insha’Allah, once I am fully recovered, will definitely visit the people of Thar with my team of dedicated workers.

➤ The Accident and the Invisible Power

Allah the Almighty has been immensely merciful. A serious accident occurred, and people say surviving it was nothing short of a miracle. It felt as if some invisible power had lifted me out of the vehicle and placed me safely aside. Although my body was battered with wounds, and blood was pouring from my ankle onto the ground, I was conscious and telling others to take care of themselves.

From June 18, 2020, until now, nearly a month has passed. For someone like me, always on the move, being confined to a single room was a great challenge. Alhamdulillah, Allah granted me the strength; after three days, the drowsiness ended, and I was able to perform all prayers using tayammum and gestures. Allah accepts these acts of devotion.

I have even started handling office work online. One staff member brought files from the office, and calls are coming in, asking, “Sir, when will you come back? We are all waiting for you.”

This morning, it was very hot in Thar, but by evening it rained. Aslam Marwat was overjoyed, saying that Allah had brought coolness to Thar for us. When it rains in Thar, it creates a remarkable scene: animals come out, and the peacocks display playful antics, hopping and dancing in the rain, a beautiful sight to witness.

➤ Parents’ Support, Allah’s Mercy

These days, Allah has shown immense mercy. My mother, a simple and unassuming woman, though uneducated, is a living example of sacrifice for others. From her, I learned the values of contentment, selflessness, and devotion to others. Alhamdulillah, both my parents are mentally alert even at this age. Having parents close by at this stage of life is a great blessing and carries immense reward. Allah’s grace keeps their shadow over me, and through their prayers, He protects me from hardships and trials.

My parents pray constantly for me. Recently, Collector

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Saleem from Peshawar and Junaid Jaleel from Islamabad visited. I had very meaningful conversations with them. From Sargodha, devoted and loving Khalid Iqbal Musarrat came to visit. Seeing me in good health brought him great joy. He had been sending continuous prayers after my accident, and when we spoke ten days later, he wept with emotion.

Today, I spent the entire day at home with my children, Asma and my mother. Allah's special mercy is evident as my mother sits by me and prays continuously. When I rise, she blows gently over me. A mother's prayers carry immense power and effect. Throughout the day, visitors kept arriving. My class fellow, Professor Dr. Muhammad Sohail, came with his son and shared that the entire class is praying for me. May Allah shower His mercy and grant me the strength to become fully active, walk again, and return to the mosque soon. Ameen.

➤ Gratitude to Allah

When someone faces difficulty or pain, it's natural to start questioning why it happened to me. But by Allah's special mercy, Alhamdulillah, from the very first day of the accident until now, not even for a moment did I dwell on why it happened to me. What occurred seemed like a dream that ended. As recovery progresses and wounds heal, a sense of peace comes. Ya Allah! I, Your humble servant, devoted to serving Your creation and helping those in distress, ask You to forgive my mistakes and shortcomings and turn all hardships into happiness.

➤ The Blessing of the Rosary: Pins Removed Without Anesthesia

When the accident occurred, all three bones of my ankle were broken and seemed completely detached from the ankle. Professor Rana Arshad performed an excellent surgery. After one month, now it is time to take out the PINS. The previous night was spent in anxious anticipation, praying for Allah's help. After ten o'clock, I had neither eaten nor drunk anything, and sleep was minimal. There was worry in my heart, but with Allah's help, difficulties are resolved.

At nine in the morning, we arrived at the hospital. Shortly after, Rana Arshad and his team, along with Dr. Zahra, head of the anesthesia department, were present with their team. A strange

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fear lingered in my mind. At that moment, I recalled an incident of Hazrat Ali (RA) with a spear—he instructed that if a spear was to be removed while he was standing in prayer, it should be done during his prayer. Similarly, as I began my intention for prayer, the procedure began.

As Dr. Rana removed the plaster, I first recited Ayat al-Kursi⁴ and then started reciting Ya Salam, Ya Momin, Ya Allah on my rosary. I was convinced that the PINS would come out without anesthesia, Inshallah. Dr. Zahra held my hand; all anesthesia preparations were ready. Emergency medications and injections were at hand, and they had also prepared to numb the foot with a local injection if needed.

Rana Arshad, a very devoted and methodical person, first cut the plaster separately. Dr. Zahra attached ECG electrodes and monitored blood pressure, also setting up a drip. Within five minutes, Rana Arshad announced the first PIN, which had joined the bones, had come out. I expected some pain, but I could not imagine that the PIN would come out so easily and without discomfort. He proceeded with the second PIN as well, though initially, only one was planned for removal that day.

Dr. Zahra conversed with me throughout, and the second PIN was removed just as smoothly, without pain. Rana Arshad announced the completion, and we thanked Allah. Dr. Zahra congratulated me, noting that all preparations—local, spinal, and general anesthesia—had been ready. I told Dr. Zahra that it was Allah’s blessings that made it so easy. While she held my hand, I held the rosary in the other, reciting Ya Salam, Ya Momin, Ya Allah⁵. By Allah’s mercy, the procedure was made effortless.

➤ Now You Have to Walk

We were in the operation theatre for one hour. Plaster of Paris

⁴. Ayat al-Kursi is a powerful verse from Surah Al-Baqarah describing Allah’s sovereignty, knowledge, and protection, often recited for spiritual safety, blessings, and reassurance for believers.

⁵. **Ya Salam, Ya Momin, Ya Allah** are among the beautiful names of Allah, reflecting His attributes of peace, faith, and divine sovereignty. Believers recite these names in supplication to seek inner tranquility, protection, and spiritual strength, remembering Allah as the ultimate source of safety, trust, mercy, and guidance in life.

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was applied again. Afterward Professor Arshad took me to his office after the procedure. He seated me and said, “Dr. Asif, now you have to walk. I am going to make you walk.” Dr. Tahir was also there. He said, “I am sitting here. You will not be allowed to leave until you walk.”

A walker was brought from home. He told me to stand with confidence. Slowly, I lifted one step, then another. Much depends on a doctor’s approach and how he treats a patient. When a doctor gives you courage and confidence, the patient finds it easier to overcome illness. Rana Arshad encouraged me and said, “Just like the story we read in the FSc English book, *His First Flight*. Today is your first flight again.”

I thought to myself, the first flight had already passed long ago. This was the second flight. By Allah’s great mercy, I took my first step in Rana Sahib’s office, then the second. He then asked me to take three or four rounds. Nearly two hours passed walking between the operation theatre and the office.

Rana Sahib says that a doctor should always keep a patient’s hope alive. If hope fades, the patient breaks down mentally, and then the illness can become life-threatening.

➤ First Office Activities After the Accident

If there isn’t harmony between the doctor and the patient, treatment becomes very difficult. Early in the morning, Dr. Rana Arshad called and said, “Doctor Sahib, we have treated you. Now you must take over with your own willpower.” I told him that I had a video conference with my collectors. He replied, “Definitely hold the conference, but attend it fully prepared so that you appear completely recovered.”

I did just that—dressed well, wearing a waistcoat with the Pakistan flag on it. The video conference began, and everyone unanimously said, “Sir, we are very happy to see you in this condition.” Collectors from Peshawar—Mohammad Saleem, Khalil Yousfani, Khial Muhammad, and Arshad Khan—joined, as did Rasheed Habib Khan from Gilgit. Seema Raza Bukhari was also present. At the start, a prayer for the departed Iqbal Munib was offered; he was two years senior to me, had lived in the Customs Colony, and I used to meet his father Haji Sahib in prayers. May Allah grant him forgiveness.

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The conference then proceeded. Collector Seema Raza shared updates from her Islamabad Collectorate about ongoing projects and how revenue could increase. Mohammad Saleem spoke about the reopening of exports at Torkham and some imports resuming; conditions were gradually improving. Insha'Allah, the end of COVID-19 is very near. As the cases decline, the situation at Torkham will improve further, boosting bilateral trade.

The video conference felt very good. I thanked Allah for gradually restoring my full health.

➤ A Miracle in Medical History

This is a special mercy of Allah, a blessing beyond comprehension. It is a miracle in the history of medicine, as respected Dr. Professor Aamir Aziz remarked, that Allah granted a new life. He saved me from a terrifying, life-threatening accident. During treatment, the threads of life were repeatedly strained and restored.

By Allah's grace, kindness, and mercy, and through the prayers of friends, well-wishers, family, children, parents, poor patients, the thirsty people of Thar and Balochistan, Hindus and Muslims crossing Thar, and thousands of the helpless, Allah granted me new life.

Initially, He protected me from the accident. The vehicles collided at bullet-like speed, hitting front, back, and sides, leaving our car completely crushed. Looking at the vehicle, one would surely think that its occupants must have been beloved to Allah. Later, during surgery, Allah protected me through multiple delicate stages, ensuring my survival.

➤ 14 August 2020 – Announcement of Hilal-i-Imtiaz

Today, Allah Almighty has bestowed yet another honor. The civil awards for the year 2020 were about to be announced. My heart was restless, anxious. Even though all the committees had approved the award, there is never complete peace until the official notification is released. By the grace of Allah, another prestigious recognition for services to humanity—the Hilal-i-

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Imtiaz—was about to be conferred.

Professor Khalid Masood Gondal, Vice-Chancellor of King Edward Medical University, has been in constant contact. He too was to receive the Presidential Award for Excellence. I waited anxiously by the phone all night, every ring raising hopes that the notification had arrived. Eventually, around 2:30 in the morning, a WhatsApp message popped up. It was the official notification of the Presidential Award. First, I thanked Allah and offered two rak'ahs of Nafl prayer in gratitude. I shared the news with Asma and the children; their joy knew no bounds.

On 14 August, messages of congratulations poured in throughout the day. Reporters from multiple channels came for interviews, and guests kept arriving all day. Thousands of calls came from across the country and abroad. The atmosphere was full of happiness. In Sargodha, the entire family, especially my parents, were overwhelmed with joy. Asma's brothers, Farukh and Faheem, came with their families and children to offer their congratulations. We repeatedly thanked Allah for this blessing. This time, the nomination for the civil award was sent by the Federal Board of Revenue, whereas on the previous occasion, it had been submitted by the Punjab Government.

➤ **Message from Prime Minister, Great Imran Khan**

I also received a congratulatory call from the Chairman of the Federal Board of Revenue, Mr. Javed Ghani. Late at night, a message came from the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan. He wrote: *"You really deserved it. You truly earned this award."*

With the announcement of the award, my spirits lifted significantly. On 14 August, Asma arranged a meal for the poor, while Yumna, Huzaifa, and Mahnoor had a special Hilal-i-Imtiaz cake made. The cake was cut late at night, and everyone extended their congratulations. I thanked Allah for granting such joy after enduring a major accident.

While speaking with representatives from various news channels, I stated that I dedicate this award to my poor and underprivileged patients, disaster-affected people, and the thirsty communities of Thar. It is through serving all these people and helping quench the thirst of Thar's residents that Allah has

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granted me this honor. Prior to this, no government officer has ever received the Sitara-i-Imtiaz first and then the Hilal-i-Imtiaz during government service.

➤ Meeting with Professor Ahmed Rafiq and His Concern

I had often heard the name of Professor Rafiq Akhtar and had the chance to listen to some of his lectures on YouTube. I was deeply impressed by him. When I was transferred to Islamabad, I told my colleague, Collector Customs Imran Chaudhry, that I wanted to meet Professor Rafiq. Last year, he had come to Islamabad to give a lecture at the International Islamic University. Imran told me that I could both meet Professor Rafiq and attend his lecture, which filled me with joy.

After quickly finishing my office work, around 1 p.m., I received a call from Imran Chaudhry saying that Professor Rafiq wanted to speak to me. On the phone, I greeted him with *Assalamu Alaikum*, and he said he was on his way. At the Customs House gate, we welcomed him, creating quite a buzz. Conversations about tasbeeh (prayer beads) began, and people started coming in with their questions and problems.

Professor Rafiq is a great scholar in *Ilm al-Adaad*⁶ (the science of numbers). People sometimes ask him, “Professor, why don’t you keep a beard? You wear a three-piece suit, so how can we consider you a scholar?” He replied that he has never asked anyone to call him a scholar. The essential point is that a beard is a Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and should be kept. Allah has blessed us too, but the essence is that Islam is not in the beard itself; it is a part of the thousands of Sunnahs of the Prophet, and the beard is one of them.

During our conversation, I shared personal matters, and Professor Rafiq treated me with great respect. He asks the names of those who come for tasbeeh, calculates numbers, and prescribes the appropriate counts for their recitations. I also discussed my children—taking tasbeeh for the health of Asma’s

⁶ **Ilm al-Adaad** (the science of numbers) refers to the traditional Islamic study of numerical symbolism and calculations, often linked with Arabic letters, spiritual practices, and mystical interpretations. It has been used historically in scholarship, numerology, and esoteric traditions to explore patterns, meanings, and relationships between numbers, language, and spiritual concepts.

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brothers and for Asma herself. I kept the tasbeeh instructions in my desk; sometimes I follow them, sometimes not.

He taught me four specific tasbeehs:

1. *Ya Salam, Ya Momin, Ya Allah*

يا سلام، يا مؤمن، يا الله

2. *Ya Rahman, Ya Raheem, Ya Kareem*

يا رحمن، يا رحيم، يا كريم

3. *Ya Zul Jalal wal Ikram*

يا ذا الجلال والإكرام

4. *La Hawla wa La Quwwata Illa Billah*

لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله

Each should be recited three hundred times. Before starting these tasbeehs, he explained certain prayers to be said. Alhamdulillah, I have been regularly reciting these tasbeehs for several months, every day after Fajr prayer.

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Part Four

From Lahore to Islamabad, From Islamabad back to Lahore

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Prayers Bear Fruit

When the doctor regained his consciousness and got recovered, he called me to share news of his well-being. He said, "The prayers of friends have worked; by Allah's grace, I am much better now." I replied that if the prayers of sinners like us had real effect, you would never have faced that accident. Perhaps it was the prayer of the mother over whose head you had placed a hand of mercy, whose child had perished under the roof of a school in Balakot. Perhaps it was the prayer of a widow in Jhang whose home had been swept away by floodwaters, for whom he had built a new roof. Perhaps it was the prayer of a Hindu woman in Thar, whose child-like creature clung to her chest, the skeleton of bones visible, and to whom you had offered cold, sweet milk. Perhaps it was the prayers of the people of this "Pakistan," whose national anthem you had sung before the children of Awaran.

In my hand is Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah's book "حادثہ، مسیحا اور زندگی" which holds pain, suffering, repeated disasters, miracles upon miracles, and the powerful effect of prayers.

Allah tests His righteous servants. I do not advise that Dr. Asif Jah to halt his welfare activities, but at the same time I pray to Allah to keep him safe from every trial and give him more courage and strength to help the humanity in distress.

Asadullah Ghalib
Columnist, Roznama Nawa-i-Waqt

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(4)

Relief After Distress

The Holy Qur'an says:

"Indeed, with hardship comes ease" (Inna ma'al usri yusra).

After facing such a grave accident, Allah granted moments of joy. Even on Sunday, from morning until late at night, guests and friends kept arriving to offer congratulations. People came from far and wide, bringing bouquets and sweets, to share their felicitations. From Fajr until late at night, mobile bells kept ringing. Messages of love, blessings, and prayers poured in from across Pakistan and around the world via Instagram, Facebook, email, Twitter, and WhatsApp.

May Allah always keep my entire family, friends, well-wishers, colleagues in service and treatment, and all participants in happiness safe and content. Through all their prayers, Allah not only granted me a new life but also honored me with a distinguished civil award from the President of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

➤ Returning to the Office After Two Months

On the morning of August 17, 2020, plans were made to travel to Islamabad after two months. Yumna, Mahnoor, Huzaifa, and Asma accompanied me. We left Lahore at 9:30 a.m., thanking Allah for granting complete health through His mercy. Alhamdulillah, the journey was safe and smooth. Traveling with the children and Asma is always a delight. Since June 18, my family and children had been constantly by my side.

Jahangir, along with his mess colleagues, welcomed us with bouquets and flower petals. Everyone was in high spirits. Karamat had prepared a delicious meal, which we enjoyed together. Around 3 p.m., we headed to the office. Outside the Customs House, Collector Customs Islamabad, Seema Raza Bukhari, Khayal Muhammad, Arshad Khan, Khalil Yousfani, and other officers received us warmly. Upon entering the office, I first offered two rak'ahs of Nafl as gratitude to Allah, thanking Him for allowing me to return to work in good health after two months.

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Madam Seema Bukhari and Khayal Muhammad presented bouquets, and there was even a cake bearing the Hilal-e-Imtiaz insignia. We cut the cake, enjoyed it, and exchanged congratulations on receiving the award and, more importantly, on my recovery. Official matters were attended to, and after two hours, we returned to the mess.

After Maghrib, my younger sister Nasira, Shahid, Tahir, and Uncle Muhammad Hussain came to the mess with the children. Nasira brought homemade pizza and burgers for the kids, who made a joyful ruckus. Every moment and every breath was spent in gratitude to Allah for granting life and complete health.

A photo of returning to the office was shared on Facebook, receiving hundreds of heartfelt messages from friends across Pakistan and abroad. May Allah keep all my friends and colleagues happy. Professor Aamir Aziz wrote, “Asif, your survival is a miracle.” The night brought restful sleep. With the children and Asma around, it felt like being at home.

At 3:30 a.m., I woke up, performed ablution⁷, offered Tahajjud, and completed my Tasbeeh. Fajr arrived during this time, and after the prayer, I prayed to Allah for safety and well-being. After Fajr, I rested briefly. Karamat prepared breakfast early, and Shahid PRO arrived with Jahangir.

➤ Meeting the FBR Chairman from a Wheelchair

Early in the morning, I headed straight to the FBR. Going to the office in a wheelchair is a unique experience. Everyone looks at you differently—some with sympathy, some with curiosity, and others with slightly stern eyes. Those who are unaware can’t help but ask repeatedly: “What happened? How did it happen? How come?” Explaining it all can be tiring troublesome. Thankfully, there was a ramp outside the FBR; otherwise, most of our large buildings don’t have such facilities for the special persons.

Foreign delegates frequently visit the country. If one of them were disabled or in a wheelchair, they would be surprised that while the buildings are grand, there is no proper arrangement in

⁷. Ablution, or wudu, is the Islamic ritual washing of hands, face, arms, head, and feet before prayer, symbolizing physical cleanliness and spiritual purification before worship.

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the lifts to accommodate wheelchairs. Abroad, even the smallest building ensures waiting areas, lifts, public transport, and special seating for those with special needs.

The officers at the FBR gates welcomed me warmly, offered prayers, and I thanked Allah for the gift of life and health. Using the lift, I reached the third floor, where Chairman FBR, Mr. Javed Ghani, personally greeted me standing in his office. He inquired about my well-being and was visibly happy to see me back in good health and spirit. He specially congratulated me on receiving the Hilal-e-Imtiaz and also recovery from the accident.

I also met Member Legal, Sarfaraz Waraich, and visited Fayyaz Rasool's office. Fayyaz received me with warmth and respect. I met Members Customs Tariq Huda, Hasan Saqib, and Dr. Saeed Jadun as well. Tariq Huda was very happy to see me, offered prayers, and served me tea. We discussed office matters, and it's clear that both he and Chairman Javed Ghani share mutual respect and a deep bond. Alhamdulillah, under their leadership, FBR is performing well—may Allah grant them more success.

I also met Hafiz Muhammad Ali Indhar, Member HRM. All FBR officers and staff received me with genuine warmth and respect.

➤ Recovery: A Gift from Allah

In the evening, I met Dr. Arslan, Yunus Khan, Asif Saeed Khan, and Khawaja Zafar Iqbal at the mess. All congratulated me on my recovery and the award of Hilal-e-Imtiaz. Dr. Arslan and Yunus Khan are senior colleagues, and a bond of respect and affection exists with them. Yunus Khan said that my recovery is truly a great gift from Allah, and no amount of thanks could ever be enough.

I shared a meal in the mess with Yunus Khan, Saeed Jadun, and Dawood Pirzada. Yumna, Huzaifa, and Mahnoor went to Nasira's place, and Huzaifa returned late at night. Early the next morning, at around 5:30, I woke up, performed ablution, and thanked Allah. Alhamdulillah! Allah has now given me strength. I have started going to the bathroom alone, and with the help of a walker, I am moving around my room independently.

➤ Health: The Greatest Blessing

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Allah's blessings are many, but the greatest of all is health. With health, a person can achieve everything and overcome even the toughest difficulties. Only in illness does one truly realize how precious health is.

It is Allah's special mercy that after such a grave accident, He restored my health. Allah has granted countless blessings—life, strength, loving and devoted children, a caring wife, and affectionate family and friends.

After my ankle operation, when I stepped onto the ground for the first time a month later, I felt the true value of walking. It was as if I had taken a step in life for the very first time. Rana Arshad reminded me: "Doctor Asif, as you walk, keep in your mind firmly—I will walk and take steps as I did before."

➤ The Bond Between Doctor and Patient

Rana Arshad is a professor of orthopedic surgery—a humble, down-to-earth man with great excellence in his work. He described my ankle: it had been hanging loosely with all three bones completely separated and shattered. With Allah's help, he carefully aligned them, and by His grace, the bones settled perfectly into place.

Rana Arshad gave me so much mental strength that I could take my first steps in the ward. Slowly, with the help of a walker, walking became easier. The relationship between a doctor and patient is unique. When a doctor instills confidence, it makes fighting the illness much easier for the patient.

I am grateful to Allah, who, after such a severe and frightening accident, restored my health and spared me from any lasting disability. Rana Arshad believes in reassuring the patient, keeping hope alive, and giving mental support. When the patient's spirit remains strong, recovery comes faster and more smoothly.

➤ Meeting with Dr. Aftab

On the way to the office with Huzaifa and Rafiq, we first visited Dr. Aftab's home in F-7. He welcomed us with warmth and devotion, showing affection even to Huzaifa. Dr. Aftab is passionate about our work and knows all the children and healthcare staff personally. He has read all my books multiple times.

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After spending some time with him, we headed to the office. Using the ramp at the back entrance, I got into the wheelchair and reached the fourth floor by lift. I met with Arshad Khan to address pending office matters and issued instructions to the collectors in Peshawar, Gilgit, and Islamabad. The office remained busy all day, with friends and colleagues coming by to enquire about my health and offer prayers for my full recovery.

We returned in the late afternoon. Sitting in the office for four to five hours after such a long time caused some fatigue, so I rested for a while at the mess.

➤ Trip to Barah Kahu

After Maghrib prayer, we set out for Barah Kahu. Islamabad's weather was pleasant, though it had been raining lightly every day for the past three days. Today, the drizzle continued, turning heavier after sunset. The children enjoyed the cool, refreshing weather.

As we neared Barah Kahu, close to Bani Gala, the rain intensified. At Al-Miraj Habib Trust Hospital, Hamid Qazi, Jahangir, Saqib, Naheeda, and Syed Qadir welcomed us warmly. The dining area was ready, and many people were already seated, enjoying their meals. The hospital looked refreshed and renewed, and a new hall was under construction.

Yumna, Huzaifa, Mahnoor, and Asma were delighted seeing the hospital setup. Naheeda served hot chicken pulao, which everyone enjoyed. Outside, the rain poured even heavier as we made our way back. Exhausted from the day's activities, sleep came quickly. At Fajr, I awoke, completed my prayers and tasbeeh, and then rested for a while.

➤ Huzaifa, My Son—My Bodyguard

Around ten o'clock, I set out for the office with Huzaifa. He is truly a blessed son. For the past two months, he has been constantly by my side. Since arriving in Islamabad, he has been like a shadow, always near. If I ever take off my mask, he immediately puts it back on. Visitors are required to wear masks, whether they are young or old. Huzaifa has even kept a stock of masks at home. Anyone without one must put it on before meeting me. In every sense, he is fulfilling the role of my bodyguard.

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At the office, senior colleague Muhammad Siddiq came to meet me. Throughout the day, calls and messages of congratulations kept coming. Stepping into the office felt as though nothing had happened. Alhamdulillah, all routines of life have resumed.

The hardest part of the last two months was being unable to go to the mosque for prayers. Thanked Allah, the most Merciful and Protector for a lifetime, Allah has granted me the ability to pray five times a day, on time, wherever I am—on land or in the air. From Singapore to Japan, Thailand to Turkey, China, and beyond, I am grateful that my prayers were always performed, often in congregation. During my visits to Singapore and Japan, companions of faith were always near, and we often prayed together.

➤ Return to Lahore with Family

By midday, we wrapped up office matters and held meetings on key points. Around three, we reached the mess, where Karamat and Nauman had prepared delicious pea pulao and potato cutlets. Asma and Yumna had already packed. By four, we set out for Lahore. The journey was pleasant. The past two months had been mostly spent in Mayo Hospital and the rooms at home. Alhamdulillah, now that I'm venturing out, I feel steadily better. Everything appears brighter, cleaner, and more vivid.

It's the rainy season; the roads, fields, and trees look fresh and washed. Rafiq is an experienced driver, and in three and a half hours he got us safely to Lahore. On the way, we passed the spot where the accident occurred. Alhamdulillah for protecting me from such a grave event and granting a new life.

By around nine, we reached home, had dinner, and went to bed. I woke at half past four, performed Fajr prayers, completed the tasbeeh, and recited Surah Kahf. Alhamdulillah, the routines of life are gradually returning to normal. Asma is eager for the day when I can attend the mosque for prayers as before. I pray to Allah that He grants that ability soon.

There is wisdom in Allah's plan. After many years, I've been blessed to spend such an extended time with my children. Previously, for decades, my routine was rigid: rising after Fajr, reading newspapers, doing some writing, preparing for the office, working 9 to 5, a short rest after returning, and then checking patients from Maghrib to Isha. From June 18 to August 20, this

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rhythm was interrupted by the accident.

➤ Return to Hospital and Patient Check-ups

By Allah's grace and the prayers of the needy, after two months and ten days, I was able to return to the hospital to see and treat patients. The entire hospital staff, along with Ashfaq, welcomed me at the main gate with flowers. Everyone showed joy and delight. The patients, seeing me after such a long time, could hardly contain their excitement. "Doctor, where have you been?" "May Allah grant you life and health! You are our support in times of need," they said, each stepping forward to greet me.

Dr. Yumna began patient check-ups alongside Dr. Maryam, daughter of Moin Sharif. Amma Bashiran and Begum Anwar remained seated until the very end. They could not leave without meeting me; their prayers accompanied my departure. Mansha Qazi, Farooq Tasneem, Shehzad, Kashif, Maulana Fazl-ur-Rahman, Iftikhar, and Sheikh Zahid also came, with flowers and sweets. Sweets were distributed among the patients. Naveera Baber also arrived and displayed her oratory skills. Mansha Qazi delivered a rich, rhymed, and metered Urdu speech, while Qari Mubeen and Maulana Fazl-ur-Rahman offered prayers for my good health.

Alhamdulillah, the new project, *Apna Rozgar Self-Reliance Scheme*, was inaugurated, providing unemployed individuals with carts and equipment to start their own businesses. After lunch, we continued patient check-ups. Treating patients after such a long time brought immense spiritual satisfaction. Yumna continued examinations and treatments in another room. Late at night, we returned from the hospital, grateful to Allah for granting the opportunity once again to serve patients.

➤ Friday Prayers

Alhamdulillah, by Allah's special grace, I was able to offer Friday prayers at the Jama Masjid in Wahdat Colony. Every entrance to the mosque had a ramp for wheelchairs, something often overlooked in many large mosques. Without a ramp, bringing a wheelchair in and out can be very difficult.

Alhamdulillah, I also offered the Isha prayer in my hospital mosque, following the lead of Maulana Fazl-ur-Rahman. On

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Saturday morning, I woke up at Fajr time, performed ablution, offered prayers, and completed my tasbeeh. I thanked Allah for His countless blessings and for granting me health.

Around noon, I went to Mayo Hospital with Ashfaq and Huzaifa to meet Professor Rana Arshad, the orthopedic surgeon. Professor Rana Arshad is not only an exceptional surgeon but also an incredibly compassionate and caring human being. Meeting him brings spiritual joy; half of one's pain seems to ease simply through his kind demeanor and comforting conversation. Being in his presence, speaking with him, one immediately feels a sense of warmth and reassurance.

➤ The Doors of the Physician and the King Should Remain Open

Whenever I meet Professor Rana Arshad, he shares words of wisdom. Today he said, "The doors of a physician and a king (rulers) should always remain open to everyone, because in an emergency, one may need a doctor at any moment, or justice from a king or ruler."

With great skill, he aligned my broken, scattered, and dangling ankle bones. He instructed his assistant to carefully cut the upper part of the plaster. Once the window was made, every movement of the ankle was checked. Alhamdulillah, nearly all movement are now normal. He prescribed exercises and brought the joyful news that I can now walk bearing weight on both feet.

Praise be to Allah that the disability I suffered on June 18 is now, Alhamdulillah, almost fully resolved after two months and five days. I even took a few steps in his office without support. It reminded me of the very first moment I set my foot on the ground after the POP was removed. Professor Rana Arshad was very pleased with the ankle and foot movements. He immediately informed Professor Masood Gondal, Vice Chancellor of King Edward Medical University, who was also very happy, although he could not attend in person due to a webinar. Professor Yar Muhammad represented him perfectly. From the very day of the accident until today, Yar Muhammad has been by my side at every moment. Allah bless him always. He has been a great source of strength and support during the ordeal.

➤ Our Shared Friends and Prayers

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Sitting with Professor Rana Arshad, listening to his words, his tried-and-true advice and proverbial wisdom, it feels as if he's speaking what's already in my heart. Though I haven't known him long, every meeting leaves me wishing he would speak endlessly while I listen with rapt attention.

A remarkable coincidence is that many of our friends are common. Today, he showed me a list including Khalid Masood Gondal, Tariq Najeeb Najmi, Abdul Jabbar Shaheen, Athar Waheed, Dr. Saeed Ilahi, Dr. Rai Saeed, Yaseen Murtaza, Khawar Ikram Bhatti, Mirza Mubashir Baig, Imtiaz Ahmed Khan, Imtiaz Dev, and many others. With all of these friends, bonds of love and respect have been nurtured over many years.

After noon, we returned from Professor Rana Arshad's place, yet friends and well-wishers continue to visit, checking on my health. Today Irfan Mumtaz came from Faisalabad, someone with whom I share a deep bond of affection and respect; he has been inquiring about my well-being since the first day. Mr. Ilyas comes every day since the day of the accident, bringing fresh fruit with him, offering prayers and good wishes.

During this illness, the outpouring of prayers, love, and care has been beyond measure. There is no substitute for heartfelt prayers offered with such sincerity.

➤ **Mian Hanif's Sincere Prayers**

Mian Hanif, CEO of 92 News, shared that ever since learning of the accident, prayers for my recovery have been offered continuously at both the Holy cities of Madinah and Makkah. It is through these heartfelt prayers that Allah has preserved my life and granted complete health.

Brigadier Afzal Rana has also been sending daily messages of love and prayers since the very first day, often timed with Tahajjud prayers. May Allah bless all friends and those who pray with joy and protection. It is through these prayers that Allah granted me a new life. As Aslam Marwat rightly said, Izrael had arrived at Mayo Hospital, but our prayers drove him away. A prayer that springs sincerely from the heart carries immense power—it can even alter destiny. Allah's mercy responds to such heartfelt pleas, as was evident during and after the accident. At every moment, Allah's mercy was manifest.

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After returning home from Mayo Hospital, I rested briefly. Near Maghrib, with Huzaifa and Safdar, I went to Jahanzaib Block-449. For the first time in so long, I performed Maghrib prayer in congregation under the leadership of Qari Usman in our Hospital. I am profoundly grateful to Allah for granting me the ability to pray in congregation once again. May Allah bring the day when five daily prayers are performed in the mosque in congregation once again. During the illness, initially I managed with tayammum and gestures, but now, Alhamdulillah, I am able to perform prayers properly with wudu.

➤ Serving and Treating Patients

After nearly two months and ten days, I returned to the hospital today to examine and treat patients. They were eager and anxious; both old and new patients greeted me in unison. Visitors continued to come throughout the day. By Isha, I had examined fifty to sixty patients. After such a long time, seeing and interacting with them brought deep joy and spiritual satisfaction. I thanked Allah for granting me the opportunity to serve and care for the poor and needy once again.

Ashfaq and other colleagues said that Allah's blessings are evident—my presence has restored the hospital's energy and vibrancy. Both patients and hospital staff were delighted. After finishing with the patients, I performed Isha prayer in congregation. For the past thirty years, this has been my routine: arrive at the hospital after Maghrib prayer, treat patients, perform Isha, and then return home.

Returning home late at night, Asma congratulated me for going back to the hospital and treating patients. Bushra Shahid and her mother from the Islamic Welfare Trust visited for greetings and well wishes. After a long, tiring day, I slept soundly. At Fajr, I awoke, performed wudu, and prayed. Praying alone and relying on gestures is a unique experience—especially for someone accustomed to praying in congregation all the life. Gestures can be confusing: it's easy to lose track of whether to go into prostration or bowing. Initially, after returning from the hospital, I performed prayers with tayammum, relying on guidance through gestures.

➤ Your Family: The True Wealth of Life

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More than two months have passed since the accident left me bedridden. During this period, it became clear that fame, titles, and recognition hold no real value. The true wealth of life is your family—your children, siblings, and close friends. Everything else is fleeting, an illusion, a deception. During my illness, the care and attention given by my children, Asma, and other family members were unmatched—they provided round-the-clock support in a way no one else could.

In addition, close friends and colleagues left no stone unturned in offering assistance and care. The heartfelt prayers of the poor and needy patients, the love and devotion from the people of Thar, and sincere supplications brought Allah's special blessings. Today, most of the day was spent at home. Since the accident, the majority of my time has been confined to the house, but now, thanks to Professor Rana Arshad, I have been allowed to bear weight on both feet and move around. Even walking from one room to another requires effort. Throughout the day, visitors continued to come, requiring me to move to the drawing room to meet them. Alhamdulillah, life is gradually returning to normal. Yet the day I most look forward to is when I can go to the mosque for congregational prayers on my own, as I used to. Allah has already shown immense mercy, and now I pray for the strength and ability to resume all my daily activities independently.

During the day, I worked with Suleman Shakoor to finalize the list of newly constructed wells and green farms in Thar. Senior colleagues Abdul Wadood Khan and Tariq Boss visited as well. Khan Sahib is a walking encyclopedia of Customs history. Although retired for many years, he remains fully aware of all happenings in the department. He has ready information about both new and old colleagues. His stories are fascinating, sometimes leaving one astonished; his memory is remarkable. He recalls every day spent in Customs, sharing both joyful memories and tales of challenges.

In the evening, senior Geo reporter Adnan Malik and veteran TV journalist Naseer Wahga came to enquire about my health. Our bond goes back twenty-five years, built on mutual respect and affection. They congratulated me on my recovery and on receiving the Hilal-e-Imtiaz. Professor Dr. Yar Muhammad also joined them. After a long day, fatigue caught up, and I slept early.

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At 3:30 a.m., I awoke to perform Tahajjud prayers, praying for the well-being of my children, the safety of the nation, and the long life and success of Imran Khan.

➤ Reception at the Zafar Ali Khan Trust

Today, the Zafar Ali Khan Trust in Lahore, under the guidance of Taseer Mustafa, organized a reception in my honor to celebrate the awarding of the Hilal-e-Imtiaz. When I mentioned the event to my children, they were initially reluctant. Huzaifa and Yumna said, “Baba, we cannot let you go just yet.” After some effort, I managed to convince them, with Huzaifa and Ashfaq accompanying me.

The driving force behind the Zafar Ali Khan Trust, Mr. Khalid Mahmood, former Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board, has a long-standing affection for my work. Though he was in Islamabad, he called to say that he would return especially for this function. He arrived on time.

The event featured speeches from Taseer Mustafa, well-known columnist Raoof Tahir, researcher Mansha Qazi, Professor M.A. Raf Raf, and others. A large number of scholars, columnists, and literary figures attended the occasion. Participants congratulated me on my recovery and on receiving the Hilal-e-Imtiaz.

During my address, I extended general thanks to the leaders of the Zafar Ali Khan Trust and offered special gratitude to Khalid Mahmood. I shared that after the accident, Allah had granted me a new life. The additional time given by Him, Allah willing, will be devoted to serving humanity. There are still many vulnerable people to support, victims to aid, and the thirsty to quench. Allah willing, as long as I have life, my service to mankind will continue.

➤ Yumna: The Realization of My Dream in the Hospital

Wednesday was spent at home. After Maghrib prayer, I visited the hospital, where a large number of patients were present. Dr. Yumna also began examination of patients. Watching Yumna examining the patients is the fulfillment of a dream I have had for years.

When Yumna was very small, I used to take her in my arms to the clinic, sit her on the table, and continue seeing patients. Sometimes she would pull the stethoscope from around my neck

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and start "checking" me herself. Today, that little Yumna has grown into Dr. Yumna. Sitting across with me, she is examining and treating patients with care and affection. Her becoming a doctor and working alongside me as a competent and skilled professional is the realization of my dream.

Back in 2012, during Hajj, when I first saw the Kaaba, I prayed for my children. Allah has graciously answered all those prayers. Alhamdulillah!

Later in the day, I had a Zoom meeting with Member Customs Tariq Huda from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Chief Collectors and Collectors from Karachi and various parts of the country also attended. Member Huda instructed all officers to intensify their efforts to curb smuggling, in line with the Prime Minister's vision, to support the country's economy through stricter enforcement.

➤ Serving and Treating Flood Victims

The country continues to experience torrential rains. Karachi has been devastated, with the entire city submerged in rain water. In Balochistan and Sindh, the Customs Health Care Society has been actively providing relief. Flood victims have been supplied with tents, meals, and rations. Medical camps have also been set up in affected areas, where thousands of patients have received treatment. In Chitral, ration distribution took place in Yargun Lasht for flood victims.

It rained throughout the day. Masood from Sargodha also informed me that water had entered his home. After Maghrib, I went to the hospital with Yumna to examine patients and provide them treatment. Despite the rain, a considerable number of patients were present. Watching Dr. Yumna attentively examine the patients brought back old memories. It felt as though I were in my younger days, sitting in a disaster-affected area, attending to patients.

Like the rest of the country, Lahore has also experienced intermittent rainfall, creating a flood-like situation everywhere. May Allah have mercy. Poor families' fragile homes have been swept away like debris. Late at night, a donor named Ittisam visited. He donated for a Green Thar Farm project and also contributed to building homes project for the poor in Thar.

Due to the rain, electricity was out for two to three hours at

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night, which made the evening restless. By Allah's special grace, my health is improving. I have now started walking with a stick, leaving the walker behind. Initially, placing both feet on the ground was a little difficult, but Alhamdulillah, walking has become easier with 20 pairs.

➤ Alhamdulillah! Never Felt Any Pain

Today is Jumma (Friday). I offered the Fajr prayer in the morning and rested for a while afterward. I completed my tasbeeh and recited Surah Al-Kahf. Reciting Surah Al-Kahf ensures Allah's protection over one's weekly affairs as has been narrated by Companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Before the accident, I had also recited it on a Friday Fajr. By Allah's grace, He granted me a new life. Allah's mercy has been immense: from the day of the accident, June 18, until today, August 29, 2020, I never felt severe pain or mental depression.

Even though my entire body was severely affected—vertebrae dislocated, internal organs compressed, heavy bleeding, fractured ribs during CPR, and my ankle was badly injured—Alhamdulillah, I never experienced intense pain. I did not cry out, nor did I need painkillers or injections. Because of this, the renowned anesthesia professors at Mayo hospital, who took exceptional care of me, kept checking daily, repeatedly noting that my pain threshold is very high. Yumna was in constant contact with the kind-hearted Dr. Farukh, who responded immediately to her messages, even at two or three in the morning. May Allah reward all these doctors abundantly.

For Jumu'ah prayer, I went with Huzaifa and Ashfaq to the Jamia Mosque, D-Block, Wahdat Colony. Since Eid, Friday prayers have been offered there, and Masha'Allah, the mosque is always packed. Most importantly, a kind and thoughtful person ensured ramps at every entrance, making it accessible for worshippers in wheelchairs.

After Maghrib, I went to the hospital. There was a rush of patients, who not only got checked but also offered prayers of gratitude upon seeing me. Rabia said, "Doctor Sahib, I have prayed for you a lot."

➤ Professor Dr. Shehzad Anwar and Hafiz Zohaib Tayyab

Around eight o'clock, Professor of Urology Dr. Shehzad Anwar came to meet, accompanied by columnist Hafiz Zohaib Tayyab.

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It had been nearly ten years since I last met Dr. Shehzad Anwar. We share many ties—both are from Sargodha and completed their MBBS at King Edward Medical College, staying together in hostels for several years.

In 2005, during the earthquake, Dr. Shehzad Anwar joined us in visiting the affected areas, participating actively in relief and medical services for earthquake victims. During our KE days, we had many memorable meetings. Masha'Allah, he is a kind-hearted, upright, and empathetic doctor. Meeting him brought back all those old memories. His father, Dr. Anwar, also used to engaged in meaningful discussions with us.

Ms. Shaheen, a driving force behind the Rotary Club and an active participant in welfare work, came with her friend to convey prayers and joy for my recovery from illness. I offered the Isha prayer led by Hafiz Zohaib Tayyab; his recitation created a deeply spiritual atmosphere. Alhamdulillah, now that I can go to the hospital, I am able to perform a few congregational prayers again. Today is the 9th of Muharram. I woke early for Fajr prayer, remembering the eternal sacrifices of the martyrs of Karbala and prayed for their forgiveness.

➤ New Umeed (Hope) and the Kind-Hearted Women of the “Fi Sabeel Allah” Group

All day, news of the floods across the country caused great concern. Although teams from the Customs Health Care Society have been assisting flood victims in Sindh and Balochistan for the past two weeks, providing them with rations and treating thousands of patients, the situation remains dire. Cooked meals are also being distributed to the flood-affected populations in Balochistan and Dadu. In Karachi, the conditions continue to be critical.

Ali Asghar has been tasked with locating the affected settlements and arranging cooked meals there. Dr. Amna also called, and the women in her group expressed their desire to contribute to these relief efforts. Whenever a disaster strikes in the country, the women of the “Fi Sabeel Allah” Group in Lahore and the New Umeed (Hope) Foundation always collect funds and hand them over to support the affected people.

The flood situation is worsening day by day. Calls are coming

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in from Maulvi Fatahullah and Zindagi, reporting extremely difficult conditions in upper Chitral, where people are stranded and waiting for immediate help. InshaAllah, efforts will continue as needed. Appeals for donations have been made to benefactors.

The night ended with early rest. Today is the 10th of Muharram, Ashura—the day commemorating the eternal sacrifice of Imam Hussain (RA) and his family to keep Islam alive. To honor the martyrs of Karbala, Quran recitations were performed for the reward of their souls.

➤ **Going to the Kitchen and Preparing Breakfast**

Before the accident, it was my habit to get up while everyone else was still asleep and prepare my own breakfast in the kitchen. Today, after nearly two and a half months, I slowly made my way to the kitchen. I gathered the ingredients and, sitting on a chair, made an omelette from two eggs. At that moment, Asma's eyes opened. She ran over, saying she had been coming, but she was visibly happy to see that things were slowly returning to normal. The routines of life that had been disrupted by the accident were gradually being restored.

➤ **Asma Remembers Every Moment of the Ordeal**

Asma remembers every single moment of that terrifying period. She said her courage had been pushed to its limit; it had felt as if an apocalypse was unfolding. The only support was prayers and supplications to Allah. At times, there was a delirious haze, with no thought of sleep or food. Our house in Sargodha was filled with people, and everyone's lips carried the same plea: "O Allah, have mercy and grant life."

Asma shared that there was no peace either at home or in the hospital. Every time a mobile phone rang, hearts would skip a beat, and only after hearing that everything was alright would calm return. I had breakfast with Asma, and she gave me an apple milkshake. Early in the morning, we completed our tesbeeh (prayers of glorification) outside the drawing room, enjoying the view of the lawn with a gentle breeze blowing.

➤ **Early Morning View of the Lawn**

The lawn was covered with a lush, green carpet of grass. The

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melodious sounds of birds, nightingales, and doves filled the air. The greenery refreshed the eyes and uplifted the spirit. After so many days, it felt wonderful to witness the morning scene. Insha'Allah, my old routine will soon return. Morning walks after Fajr will become a habit again.

After the Zuhr prayer, Allama Choudhry Asghar Ali Waraich, a scholar known for his poetic translation of the Quran, came for a visit along with his artist son Ali Waraich. Allama Sahib is a seasoned journalist and respected columnist from Sargodha, and we share a long-standing relationship of love and respect. He congratulated me on my recovery and expressed joy on conferment of Hilal-e-Imtiaz. Waraich Sahib spoke with charm and said that those who work sincerely and without greed are always rewarded and guided to success by Allah.

Another long-time friend, Mr. Naeem, also visited and enquired about my health. Alhamdulillah, my health is steadily improving. I woke up at 2:30 a.m., performed Tahajjud prayers, and prayed for the well-being of everyone and the safety of the country, completing my tasbeeh afterwards.

➤ Trip to Islamabad with the Family and Asma

Today was planned for a trip to Islamabad. The children and Asma insisted they would not let me travel alone in my current condition. So, the family set off around 10:30 a.m. Yumna, Huzaifa, Mahnoor, and Asma accompanied me as my bodyguards, ensuring I was never alone.

The journey from Lahore to Islamabad was accompanied by rain—sometimes light, sometimes heavy. Dark clouds loomed across the sky, pouring in some areas and drizzling in others. The rain washed the roads, buildings, and trees, making everything look fresh and transparent. Mahnoor, sitting in the back, enjoyed the beautiful scenery that dazzled her eyes. After Kalar Kahar, the rain intensified, turning the road into a flooded stretch. Despite the heavy downpour and limited visibility, Rafiq skillfully drove on. On the motorway, water covered the roads so completely it felt like the car was floating.

We reached Islamabad at 3:30 p.m. Shahid, the PRO, and Jahangir welcomed us. Shahid is exemplary in his diligence—once tasked, he completes it without delay. During my hospital

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stay after the accident, he even traveled to Lahore three times in fifteen days just in order to enquire about my health and well being. Jahangir is another example of devoted service. May Allah bless them both.

The kind-hearted Collector of Peshawar Customs, Muhammad Saleem, came to meet as well. Keramat had prepared delicious pea pulao and potato cutlets, which the children and I eagerly enjoyed. I also contacted Arshad Khan and Khayal Muhammad to give instructions on various matters. After a short rest, we had dinner in the mess dining room. Following Yumna's request, we went out for ice cream at her favorite café.

Later at night, we returned home, slept early and enjoyed a sound sleep. I woke up at Fajr, performed my prayers, and prayed for the safety of the country and the well-being of my children. I asked Allah to grant me complete health soon so that I can return to the mosque and perform my prayers there.

➤ Starting the Day with the Recitation of the Holy Quran

After breakfast and a short rest, I headed to the office around 10 a.m. Today marked the resumption of my 28-year office routine after a two-and-a-half-month break. Alhamdulillah, throughout my career, this routine always began with the recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by its translation and commentary. Afterward, a prayer would be offered, ensuring the day was filled with Allah's blessings.

On June 18, the day of my accident, the day had also begun with the name of Allah, and it was His grace that preserved my life. Today, on September 1, 2020, after this long interval, the office day once again began with the recitation of the Quran. Hafiz Huzaifa Bashir, my son delivered a beautiful recitation, followed by the translation and interpretation of selected verses. A prayer was offered, and gratitude was expressed to Allah for allowing me to once again begin the day in His name and under His guidance. I prayed for continued health and the ability to serve His creation once more with more vigour and energy.

Throughout the day, people visited the office. After a long time, I met senior Customs officers and kind-hearted colleagues, including Director General of Reforms and the recently appointed Chief Collector Customs Balochistan, Gul Rahman. There is a

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longstanding bond of love and respect with Gul Rahman; he is a seasoned, honest, and humane customs officer who has always worked diligently and with integrity. Meeting him brought heartfelt joy.

The week's office tasks were managed, and I returned home around 4 p.m. The rain continued both during the morning commute and the return, as heavy downpours persist across the country, causing devastating floods in many areas. Alhamdulillah, despite these challenging conditions, the work of service and treatment continues unabated.

➤ Saved by Allah from Great Calamity

Relief efforts for the flood-affected continue in Dadu, Tharparkar, and Jafarabad in Balochistan. Ration bags are being delivered, and medical camps have been set up. Additionally, tents have been sent to Dadu and Balochistan. In Karachi, cooked food is being distributed among those struggling due to rainwater. In Chitral, the Zindagi team has also provided aid to flood victims in Upper Chitral, continuing efforts from earlier assistance there. May Allah have mercy on all.

After reaching the office, most of the time was spent in the room. Khawaja Zafar Iqbal and Mumtaz Ali, former Additional Secretaries, came to meet. Heartfelt conversations took place. Mumtaz Ali is a person of insight, not just an officer but also a religious scholar. He said that Allah saved me from a very great calamity through this accident, and prayed that Allah continue to have mercy and grant the ability to continue righteous work. Mumtaz Ali's distinction lies in completing both worldly education and the Dars-e-Nizami; he is well-versed in Quran and Hadith, has cleared the CSS exam, and held many important administrative positions. Whenever we meet, he offers guidance and advice illuminated by the Quran and Hadith.

Late at night, Huzaifa and I watched the thrilling T20 match between Pakistan and England, which Pakistan won. We slept late. Early in the morning, Asma woke me, urging me to quickly perform Fajr prayer. I got up, performed ablution, and prayed for the well-being of all, national security, long life for the children, blessings and protection for Imran Khan. I also woke the children and Asma for prayer. Alhamdulillah, two weeks ago Yumna,

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Huzaifa, Mahnoor, and Asma accompanied me, and this time they are with me again.

The children say that until full recovery is achieved, the plaster (POP) is removed, and physical health and energy are fully restored, they will not let me go to Islamabad alone. Their presence is a great blessing, giving courage and strength.

➤ **Asma, the Children, and the Family's Devoted Care**

Since June 18, Asma and the children have devoted themselves entirely to my care. They have been ready around the clock, attending to every need. At the hospital, along with the children, Nauman, Abu Bakr, Awais, Sheri, Munir Bhai, and Naveed Bhai stayed on duty 24/7. The moment I shifted position, they would immediately ask if I was alright, ensuring there was no problem. Huzaifa would sit on a chair through the night. Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal had arranged for the registrar's office to be open so the children could rest, but even when Huzaifa tried to take a short break, Abu Bakr or Nauman would take over the duty seamlessly.

My daughter Yumna truly went above and beyond. From morning to night—and often through the entire night—she stood vigil by my bedside. During the fifteen days in the hospital, she hardly saw morning or evening, losing sleep and developing dark circles under her eyes. Throughout the night, she would monitor every detail, and by 8 a.m., during the rounds, she would update the doctors thoroughly about my condition: what had happened, which lab reports had arrived, and how my health had been overnight. May Allah always keep my daughter happy and bless her with every joy.

At the hospital, Yumna's friend Fakhr-un-Nisa and her cousin Dr. Zahra also assisted with my care, ensuring I was well looked after. May Allah accept their service.

During June, when COVID-19 was at its peak and fear and anxiety were widespread, coming to the Mayo Hospital and spending time with patients required immense courage and heart. In this regard, all family members, siblings, and close friends from Sargodha spent as much time at the hospital as possible, without hesitation. Munir Bhai would sit outside the ward, worried and

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often shedding tears in concern. Khawaja Farooq visited twice from Sargodha, and Jaleel Akhtar came to Lahore twice despite Hanaf Bhabi's illness. May Allah reward all of them.

Later, along with Jahangir and Rafiq, I went to the office. The day was busy with official matters, meetings, and interactions, continuing the rhythm of work while reflecting the care and support of family and friends.

➤ Bouquets and Blessings

Dr. Tariq Habib Cheema, elder brother of Customs colleague Tahir Habib Cheema, sent a beautiful bouquet of fresh flowers along with a heartfelt message wishing good health and recovery. Madam Kanwal also came with flowers and a cake. Kanwal, a kind-hearted and virtuous Customs colleague, has always been a source of warmth and support. May Allah bless and keep them happy.

After office, we visited Dr. Aftab's home and met his sister, Sarwat Sultana, who congratulated me on my recovery. Dr. Aftab is a man of great character, always greeting with warmth, affection, and kindness. His sister is also a woman of noble character and a generous heart. She donated us "Al-Miraj Habib Trust Hospital" in Barah Kahu, where patients are being cared for, meals are provided to the needy, and various welfare activities are ongoing.

Asma and the children went to visit their younger sister Nasra. In the evening, upon returning, Asma, Yumna, and Mahnoor went with me to G-14 to check on Hanif Bhabi's well-being. May Allah grant Mrs. Jaleel health and wellness. In the early days, whenever we came to Islamabad, we would stay at Mr. Jaleel's house. Hanif Bhabi provided remarkable care and service. Asma remarked upon meeting her, saying that they had always extended their hospitality, while we had never had the chance to reciprocate.

➤ Meeting with the Family of Late Dr. Zubair Yousfani

The wife, daughter, and elder sister of our Customs colleague, batchmate, and brother Dr. Zubair Yousfani (late) came to the mess to meet us. I have always shared a bond of love and respect with Zubair. Twenty-six years of friendship and affection passed in what feels like the blink of an eye, and he eventually left us.

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October 31, 1992, still feels like yesterday—the day I first met Zubair at Walton Civil Services Academy. I also vividly remember the day, two years ago on June 18, 2018, when we laid him to rest at H-10 cemetery.

Sitting with his family, we recalled memories of Zubair. Speaking with his daughter, I told her, “Dear, your father was a remarkable person, always striving to help the poor and resolve their problems. May Allah elevate his rank in Paradise.”

Today, Jahangir had prepared lunch from home for us, and we also met his wife. We enjoyed the meal together. After the day’s fatigue, I had a deep and restful sleep. At 4:30 a.m., I woke up, offered Fajr prayer, and prayed earnestly to Allah: “O Allah, grant me complete health soon, and make me able to return to the mosque to prostrate in front of you.”

Accompanied by Jahangir, we headed to the office. Upon entering the Customs House, the guards respectfully assisted me out of the car and into the wheelchair. We approached the lift from the back entrance, where Shahid had arranged a ramp. From there, we reached the fourth floor via the lift.

➤ Meeting with Former FBR Chairman Riaz Malik

Today, the former FBR Chairman and esteemed Customs officer, Mr. Riaz Malik, graciously visited my office. Riaz Malik is a legendary Customs officer, always treating me with kindness and respect. He had arranged my transfer from Faisalabad to Lahore and has spent over twenty years in Lahore since then.

He arrived right on time and specifically mentioned that he had come to congratulate me on receiving the Hilal-i-Imtiaz, expressing how joyful it is that the government of Pakistan honored a colleague with such a prestigious national award. He also extended his congratulations on my recovery.

Riaz Malik shared that in the seventeen years since his retirement, he has not visited any Custom office, but due to his special regard for me, he made this visit. People of true stature always stand out. After about eight minutes, he stood and said, “My time is up, please excuse me.”

I presented him with copies of my two books. It reminded me that twenty-six years ago, when I sent my first book, *Health Care*,

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to all Custom officers, the only encouraging phone call I received came from Riaz Malik, then Director General of Customs Intelligence.

➤ Award Ceremony in Islamabad and the President Coming Down from the Stage

The day of Riaz Malik's visit was being talked about all day. Along with him, senior colleagues Muhammad Siddiq and S.A. Alam had also come. While Riaz Malik left after eight minutes, the other two colleagues stayed for quite some time, and the gathering was lively. I returned from the office around 3 pm and rested briefly.

Today, the Excellence Award ceremony was held by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce in Serena Hotel. Sohail Malik, the driving force of the Chamber, had specially invited me. Shahid and Huzaifa accompanied me to the hotel. The chief guest was the President of Pakistan, Dr. Arif Alvi. Entering via the walk-through gate while seated in a wheelchair, we were guided respectfully by the crowd into the hall, which was packed. We were seated on special couches reserved for distinguished guests.

The ceremony Mr. Muhammad Ahmad ,began with the recitation of the Quran and the national anthem, the young president of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) delivered a welcome address, highlighting the commitment of the business community to Pakistan's economic development. Awards were then presented to entrepreneurs who had shown excellence in various sectors.

Apart from business leaders, several government officers, including IG Police Amir Zulfiqar, Hamza Shafqat, DC Islamabad, and myself, received awards from the President. When it was my turn, as I approached the stage in my wheelchair, President Arif Alvi graciously came down from the stage to personally hand me the award. I expressed my special thanks to the President for his kindness.

➤ Meeting with the Turkish Ambassador Ibrahim Mustafa Yurdakul

As we were leaving the function, the Turkish Ambassador, Mr. Ibrahim Mustafa Yurdakul, noticed me from a distance and came forward to greet me. He inquired about my well-being, and

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when I mentioned the accident, he immediately prayed for my complete recovery. Ambassador Mustafa Ehsan is a well-known and respected figure in Pakistan. He often sits in the front row at official functions. Like the great people of Turkey, he is compassionate, humane, and inspiring. He considers Pakistan his second home. I had previously met him at the Turkish Embassy, where I also contributed a donation for the Turkish earthquake victims. When IG Police Amir Zulfiqar Khan tried to introduce me formally, the ambassador said, *“I know Dr. Asif. He is a friend of Turkey.”* On one occasion, he had also specially invited me for a meal at Serena Hotel.

➤ A President’s Bodyguard Who is a Fan

After dinner, as we came out of Serena, a young member of the President of Pakistan’s security team came forward. He respectfully opened the car door and helped me get seated. He greeted us with admiration and told Shahid that although he is part of the President’s security team, he has been a fan of Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah for many years.

We returned around 9:30 pm. Spent some time chatting with the children and Asma, and had a good night’s sleep by 11 pm. I woke at 3 am, performed ablution, and offered Tahajjud prayer, praying for the country’s safety, the well-being of my children and family, and success for Imran Khan. I asked Allah to grant me complete recovery soon so I could attend the mosque again.

After Tahajjud, I rested briefly and enjoyed a sound sleep until 6 am. I regretted that Fajr prayer had been missed, so I offered Qada⁸ (missed) Fajr prayer. In keeping with Friday, I recited Surah Kahf and prayed for blessings, protection, and well-being. Completed tasbeeh and woke the children from their sweet sleep. We had breakfast together, after which the children went back to sleep.

The weather in Islamabad truly changes like a chameleon. Although the sun shone in the morning, by afternoon the sky was overcast, and rain began at 11 am, continuing late into the night.

⁸. Qada refers to performing an obligatory prayer after its prescribed time has passed. It reflects responsibility, repentance, and commitment to fulfill missed religious duties sincerely.

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Heavy rainfall also continued on Thursday night. By 10:30 am, we were ready to begin our return journey.

➤ Meeting Parents and Family in Sargodha

After consulting with the children, it was decided to travel to Sargodha. We had not been able to go after Eid-ul-Fitr, as the accident happened shortly afterward. Along the way, there was intermittent rain and overcast weather. Near Bhalwal, it was raining as well. Around 1 pm, we reached home in Sargodha. My father, mother, Dr. Naveed, Munir Bhai, and the rest of the family welcomed us at the gate. The children showered flower petals. Overcome with emotion, my father began to cry, thanking Allah. Everyone embraced and offered prayers. Gratitude was expressed for being safely returned home and for the chance to meet parents and other family members and accepted all my prayers.

After meeting, we immediately went to Siddiqiya Mosque to offer Friday prayers. Later, everyone sat together for a meal. My father was visibly delighted and said, *“Son, from the very day of your accident, I have been praying: ‘O Allah, I have dedicated my son to Your path. If his deeds are pleasing to You, grant him life. Restore his health and help him stand on his own feet again.’ Today, seeing you, it is clear that Allah has shown His mercy.”*

➤ Parents’ 65th Wedding Anniversary

All of my prayers have been answered by Allah. *O Allah, thank You. Your mercy has granted my child a new life. O Allah, continue to shower Your mercy, protection, and blessings upon him, and allow him to continue serving Your creation,* my father further elaborated. The entire family was joyful. My father surprised everyone by announcing that today marked his 65th wedding anniversary. A cake was immediately ordered, which he cut, and all family members offered their congratulations. Yumna, Huzaifa, Mahnoor went to Nauman’s home. After a long time, we spent the night outdoors under the open sky, lying on charpais⁹ in the courtyard beneath a star-filled sky. It was a restful, peaceful sleep. After breakfast the next morning, we prepared to return to Lahore.

⁹. A charpai is a traditional woven bed common in South Asia, made of a wooden frame and rope weave, used for sleeping, sitting, and social gatherings.

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➤ Freedom from the Foot (POP) Cast

On Saturday around 1 pm, Rana Arshad called in his office in order to remove the POP cast. Dr. Tahir was also present, with whom I share a 40-year-old bond of love and respect that continues to grow. After the accident, Dr. Tahir stayed closely involved, spending time, encouraging the family in general, and Yumna in particular—something no one else could have done.

Immediately, Rana Arshad called the dresser to remove the cast. Alhamdulillah, the foot emerged completely intact. Due to nearly two and a half months in the cast, the skin had dried, and a layer of dirt had accumulated. The dresser first washed the foot thoroughly with soap and then scraped off the accumulated layer. Rana Arshad treated us delicious naan and haleem, saying, *“By Allah’s grace, our work is complete. Allah has restored your health.”*

After nearly two and a half months, I walked on both feet for the first time. Every moment, every breath was spent in gratitude to Allah for not only saving me from such a serious accident but also for preventing any disability. *O Allah, a million thanks to You. I am Your humble servant, constantly seeking Your mercy. O Allah, for Your generosity, continue Your blessings upon me and my family. Keep us in Your protection and grant us the ability to serve Your creation to the fullest.* Around 3 pm, I returned home, walking through the main gate on my own feet for the first time in over two months, offering heartfelt thanks to Allah.

➤ Both Feet on the Ground

Among all the blessings Allah has bestowed on humans, the greatest is health. Health is life. Being able to walk on one’s own feet is such a tremendous blessing. Today, I truly realized its value. Taking Allah’s name, I placed my feet on the ground without support, gradually taking steps. Gratitude to Allah filled my heart for granting freedom to my feet after two and a half months trapped in a cast. At home, Mahnoor and Asma welcomed me with joy. Following Rana Arshad’s advice, I had joggers from Mall Road with arches, which made walking more comfortable. At Maghrib, I headed to my hospital. Alhamdulillah, I offered the Maghrib prayer in congregation at the mosque and thanked Allah. Until Isha, I checked and treated patients, receiving

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congratulations from the hospital staff on my recovery. After performing Isha in congregation, I returned home. Before sleep, my daughter Yumna gave my feet a thorough massage. After being confined in a cast for over two months, a layer of dirt had accumulated. She cleaned it carefully, soaking the feet in salt water, which softened them. A peaceful night's sleep followed. Early morning, I performed Fajr, completed my tasbeehat, and thanked Allah for my recovery.

➤ Noor Jamali Arrives from Balochistan

In the evening, Noor Muhammad Jamali, our coordinator in Balochistan, came with his children to meet us. For many years, Noor Jamali has overseen our welfare activities in Balochistan. Recently, he helped flood victims in the Naseerabad Division through the Customs Health Care Society. Tents were provided under the coordination of Collector Customs Jameel Nasir from Karachi. Medical camps were organized, cooked meals were distributed, and rations were delivered to the flood-affected. Allah's mercy is evident: whenever disasters strike, whether floods or earthquakes, our teams are active on the ground, aiding affected communities. Currently, Zindagi in Chitral is helping flood victims, while Zulfiqar Benouri and Qurban Samejo are assisting in Dadu and Thar, distributing rations, setting up medical facilities, and providing cooked meals. MashaAllah, the flood victims in Dadu have received excellent tents arranged by Collector Customs Mohsin Rafiq from Lahore. In Karachi, Ali Asghar has been distributing food to rain-affected people for the past two weeks. Noor Jamali's little children were full of excitement, repeatedly saying in Balochi, *"Baba, let's go to the zoo!"*

➤ Follow-up Checkup with Professor Dr. Asghar Naqi

Yumna announced her decision that we could not go to Islamabad until all the follow-up checkups with the doctors were completed. When it comes to children, one has no choice but to yield. Yumna has been taking care of her father since the day of the accident. Her wish is for her father to fully recover and resume all his affairs.

For the follow-up, the first visit was on Monday morning to Professor Dr. Asghar Naqi, the renowned surgeon who had performed my surgery, at the Patiala Block. Dr. Naqi came from

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the Medical Education Department. He conducted the checkup with great care and affection, answered all of Yumna's questions, and said, "Congratulations from my side. Your father is completely fit."

Dr. Naqi's classmate, Dr. Khalid Cheema, was also present. He greeted us warmly, offered congratulations on the recovery, and said, "We all have been praying for you." Thanks be to Allah for granting a new life and full health.

➤ Checkup and Treatment at Bahria Town International Hospital with Dr. Nauman Naseer

After finishing with Dr. Asghar Naqi, we contacted Dr. Nauman Naseer, who asked us to come to Bahria Town Hospital. We arrived at Bahria International Hospital at 4:30 pm. Dr. Nauman Naseer welcomed us with great warmth and respect. He first conducted an ECG and a complete examination, followed by an echocardiography. Alhamdulillah, all the heart parameters were perfect. Yumna was delighted after all the tests.

Bahria International Hospital is excellent in every respect. Dr. Nauman Naseer is a young cardiologist, MashaAllah. He spent significant time in the U.S. and came to Pakistan at the request of Malik Riaz of Bahria Town. He also shared that, with the support of Professor Khalid Masood Gondal, Vice President of CPSP, a four-year FCPS training program has been started at the hospital.

Dr. Nauman Naseer took great care in the ward and continued to do so afterward. He responded promptly whenever we communicated. A Holter test was also conducted. Thanks be to Allah, no heart issues were found.

➤ Visit to Dr. Imran Waheed and Ultrasound for DVT

Late at night, we visited Dr. Imran Waheed to have an ultrasound done to check for possible DVT, as both legs were swollen and walking had become difficult. Dr. Imran Waheed Qureshi is a highly skilled ultrasound specialist with mastery in his field. He can accurately diagnose conditions through ultrasound. Immediately upon arrival, he performed the ultrasound and showed the blood flow in the veins. Alhamdulillah, there was no sign of DVT.

After meeting with doctors and completing all the tests

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throughout the day, Yumna, my daughter, was relieved and happy. The treatment that began immediately after the accident on June 18, 2020, had, Alhamdulillah, reached completion on September 8, 2020. Although there had been ups and downs and fluctuations in health along the way, Alhamdulillah, Allah has now granted full recovery. May Allah always keep us in His protection.

Exhausted from the day's activities, I fell asleep quickly. I woke up for Fajr, offered my prayers, completed the tasbeeh recitations, and thanked Allah for granting full health after such a serious accident. I prayed that Allah enable me soon to be able to go to the mosque.

In Islamabad, I spoke with Arshad Khan and Khayal Muhammad, discussing various matters regarding the office and giving necessary instructions. After performing Maghrib prayer, I proceeded to the hospital, where a large number of patients had gathered.

➤ **Professor Muzammil Ahsan and Mansha Qazi**

Professor Muzammil Ahsan, who has been our companion in service and treatment, was standing at the dais addressing the patients. He encouraged them to turn to Allah, to live life following the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and to adopt moderation in eating. Upon seeing me, he was pleased and said that Allah had protected me in the accident, giving me a new life. He added that Allah still has many tasks of service and treatment for me to fulfill.

Professor Ahsan has been a companion in service and treatment for many years. Despite his advanced age, he has traveled with us to distant places numerous times. Whenever he accompanies us, he sets up his own "corner of wisdom" and sits quietly. Women approach him to share their personal problems and matters of the health. He provides them both medicine and prayers.

Rizwan began calling in patients one by one. By Isha, about 60–70 patients had been examined and treated. I felt as energetic and refreshed as before. Mansha Qazi also arrived and, in her distinct style of rhymed and polished Urdu, congratulated me on my full recovery. We thanked Allah for granting us the ability to resume treatment and service. May Allah keep this work ongoing and everlasting.

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That night, I had a good sleep. I woke up at Tahajjud time, performed ablution, and offered the Tahajjud prayer. I prayed for the safety, well-being, and blessings for the country, as well as for the health, safety, and success of Imran Khan. I asked Allah to maintain goodness and success in all plans and to grant the ability to manage office affairs properly.

Thanks be to Allah for protecting me from a major accident and granting me the ability to stand again and continue work in welfare and service. Early in the morning at Tahajjud, I woke up, performed additional prayers, and prayed for the safety of my children, the country's prosperity, protection from sudden calamities, and for Imran Khan's long life and success. I prayed that Allah honor Pakistan among the nations of the world and defeat those who look upon it with ill intent.

We had spent the past two weeks in Islamabad with the children. Today, we intended to go to Islamabad again, but the children insisted that we should not go alone, as for the past almost three months, Asma and the children have been with us constantly from morning till evening.

➤ Journey to Islamabad with Huzaifa and Ashfaq

After much discussion, Yumna and Mahnoor convinced Huzaifa to accompany us. Ashfaq also joined. After Fajr prayer, we departed for Islamabad at six in the morning. For the past year and a half, this had been the routine: to pray Fajr before dawn and then set out for Islamabad. The accident had caused a disruption in this schedule.

Early morning travel is very pleasant. The motorway is free from traffic, and one enjoys the natural scenery and captivating views along the way. MashaAllah, greenery stretches on both sides of the motorway. The weather is crisp, a relief after the recent season of heavy and stormy rains. The rain has washed the roads, fields, mountains, large trees, and buildings, making everything appear bright and fresh.

Rafiq and Ashfaq accompanied us, while Huzaifa acted as a bodyguard. Mahnoor and Yumna insisted on bringing him along, saying that although, by Allah's grace, Baba has recovered, they still cannot leave him alone. The journey from Lahore to Islamabad was very pleasant. Around ten o'clock, we reached the

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G-6/4 mess, had breakfast, and prepared to go to the office. At the office, the officers and other colleagues warmly welcomed us.

➤ Arrival of Pir of Awaran from Bannu

Aslam Marwat came from Peshawar and Zahoor Khan from Bannu to visit. When Aslam Marwat posted a video of entering the office on Facebook, congratulations and prayers began pouring in from all over the world. Aslam Marwat has been a devoted servant of humanitarian work and treatment. Known as “The Thirsty for Blood,” he has collected over fifty thousand units of blood for children suffering from Thalassemia and Hemophilia. Currently, under her supervision, the Blood Jigar Transfusion Service in Peshawar provides blood to those in need.

Zahoor Khan is famously known as the Pir of Awaran. In 2013, an earthquake struck Awaran. Teams from the Customs Health Care Society, under my leadership, reached Awaran despite extremely difficult and dangerous conditions. Afterward, Zahoor Khan, Shafqat Rizwan, and Ghulam Ishaq Khan stayed in Awaran for six months. They built more than fifty permanent houses for the earthquake victims and constructed two large mosques. The people of Awaran gave Zahoor Khan the status of a Pir.

Morning and evening, women and men came to him for amulets, and throughout his stay, he continued serving the community. The poor residents of Awaran would eat simple lentils and bread themselves but prepared meat for Zahoor Khan. This is the true way to win hearts: through love, compassion, and resolving people’s problems. By doing so, even separatists can be brought into the national mainstream.

➤ Aslam Marwat, Branded Salt, and Neem Leaves

Aslam Marwat brought authentic salt from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Jahangir brought neem leaves. We added the leaves and salt to warm water and soaked the feet for half an hour. This helped reduce the swelling and pain in the feet. InshaAllah, life is gradually returning to a normal course.

We had a meal with Aslam Marwat and Zahoor Khan, and worked in the office until the evening. People continue to visit, offering congratulations on full recovery. By Allah’s special grace, the coronavirus pandemic in Pakistan has ended, with only a few patients remaining across the country. May Allah grant them

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complete healing as well.

In the mess, prayers for Asr, Maghrib, and Isha were led by my son Huzaifa. With Allah's mercy, I hope soon to be able to perform prayers in the mosque again.

Since June 18, this is the first night spent away from family, but Huzaifa is representing everyone. He has taken great care since the day of the accident. The innocent child shared that in the initial days it felt like a catastrophe, as if the world itself was ending and our protection was gone. But by Allah's grace, He granted health and well-being.

Having Huzaifa beside me made for a very restful sleep. I woke at 4:15 am, performed Tahajjud, followed by Fajr prayer and breakfast, rested briefly, and then prepared to go to the office. We reached the office around 9:30 am. All staff were assembled at the Customs House.

Although I have started walking with a stick, climbing stairs remains difficult, so the wheelchair is still used occasionally. Entering through the rear door of Customs House, we took the lift from the basement to the fourth floor office. As usual, the day began with recitation of the Quran, its interpretation, and supplication. I prayed to Allah for His blessings, protection of Pakistan and people worldwide from sudden calamities, and guidance in completing office work and files. Throughout the day, people came seeking solutions to their issues. Pending matters were addressed with Arshad Khan, and instructions were issued.

➤ Meeting with Abdul Rashid Sheikh

Abdul Rashid Sheikh, Director General of Customs Intelligence, visited the office to inquire about my health. He offered prayers for a full recovery. Abdul Rashid Sheikh is an exceptionally honest, virtuous, and capable officer, and I share a bond of affection and respect with him. He had also come from Lahore to check on my health.

I also met Gul Rehman, and had a detailed discussion with Junaid Jaleel, Collector of Customs Islamabad. Several proposals were discussed to improve the functioning of the collectorate. After 4 pm, we returned to the mess, accompanied by my son, Muhammad Huzaifa.

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➤ The Importance of Family

Since the accident, it has become increasingly clear that your family, children, parents, and a few sincere friends and colleagues are everything you truly have. In difficult times, they are the only support; no one else can be relied upon consistently. The way my family—Asma and the children—have cared for me, and continue to do so, is unparalleled. Even now, they are not ready to leave me alone.

On Wednesday, Mahnoor and Yumna sent Huzaifa along. My son Huzaifa has been like a shadow, accompanying me to the office and staying with me in the room after returning to the mess. Benefiting from his presence, I performed Asr, Maghrib, and Isha prayers in congregation, led by Huzaifa. After Isha, I had dinner and intended to sleep.

On Friday morning, I woke up at Tahajjud, performed ablution, and offered the Tahajjud prayer. Being Friday, I recited Surah Kahf and completed the tasbeeh. Fajr prayer was performed, followed by a short rest and breakfast. Preparations for the office then began.

➤ Anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah

Today marks the anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Through his immortal struggle, Pakistan gained independence on August 14, 1947. May Allah grant him paradise in every turn.

At 9:30 a.m., I proceeded to the FBR headquarters with Shahid, the PRO, and Ashfaq. Three weeks ago, when I had visited FBR, I had used a wheelchair to go upstairs. Today, with courage, I entered through the main gate walking with a stick.

Upon reaching the third floor, the first meeting was with Member Legal and long-time friend Dr. Sarfraz Waraich. He and other colleagues were very pleased to see signs of improvement in my health.

I then attended a meeting of Chief Collectors and Collectors, led by Member Customs Operations Tariq Huda, where strategies were discussed to curb smuggling across the country in line with the Prime Minister's vision.

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➤ Friday Prayer at Masjid Riyaz-ul-Jannah

Friday prayers were offered at Masjid Riyaz-ul-Jannah along with Customs House colleagues. After prayers, we set out for Lahore via the motorway. Because it was Friday, there was an unusually long line of vehicles heading to Lahore. Due to the two-day weekend, Fridays generally see heavy traffic on the motorway. During the coronavirus lockdown, public transport was scarce, and only a few vehicles could be seen. Alhamdulillah, normalcy has returned, and traffic is now heavy on both sides of the motorway. A large number of private cars and buses were also visible in the Chakri and Kallar Kahar rest areas.

Just after crossing Kallar Kahar, a sorrowful message arrived from my long-time friend and colleague, Muhammad Jaleel Akhtar, informing me that his wife, respected Hanaf Bhabhi, had passed away. She had been unwell for the past six months. Last week, Asma had visited her. May Allah grant her eternal mercy. Around 5 pm, we reached Lahore.

➤ Participation in Hanaf Bhabhi's Funeral

The plan was to attend Mrs. Jaleel's funeral. Despite the exhaustion from travel and swollen feet, it was necessary to go. Asma also wished to have a final glimpse of Hanaf Bhabhi. Memories went back to October 1995, when we had accompanied Jaleel Sahib to Abbottabad for his wedding procession. On the return journey, Jaleel Akhtar had traveled with us. On the wedding day, Asma had done Hanaf Bhabhi's makeup. Jaleel Sahib's children are of the same age as ours, and we have traveled together many times. In Islamabad, we had no other residence, so we often stayed with Jaleel Akhtar's family. Hanaf Bhabhi served wonderfully, preparing delicious meals, especially her walnut chutney. May Allah bless her afterlife.

After Maghrib prayer, we set out for Rasheedpur village near Sarai Alamgir. Rafiq drove skillfully, and by 10 pm, we reached the canal near Sarai Alamgir. The railway crossing was closed and took ten minutes to open. We hurried toward the village, where Wajid had arranged guides along the way. The funeral was ready. Asma stopped the procession briefly to see Hanaf Bhabhi's face; she looked peaceful in sleep. Due to travel, my body and feet were swollen, and walking was difficult. Wajid arranged a

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motorbike to take me to the cemetery, where the funeral prayer was offered.

We met Jaleel Akhtar's relatives, Azam Sahib, Colonel Rafiq, and Wajid Advocate, offering comfort to their children and advising patience. Around 12:30 am, we began the return journey. After three hours, we reached Lahore at 3 am. Every part of my body ached, and both feet were swollen. Upon lying down, I immediately fell asleep. Alhamdulillah, I woke up for Fajr prayers and rested again until 10 am.

At 2 pm, we met Pakistani businessman Mukhtar Ahmed, based in Spain, and long-time friend Malik Rasheed. We had a meal together with Jaleel. By Asr, we rested again. Gradually, the pains in my body are decreasing. Alhamdulillah, my health is steadily improving.

➤ **Tariq Shah and “Allah, the Kaaba, and the Servant”**

At Maghrib, Hajj companion and guide Tariq Shah arrived. Under his leadership and guidance, I undertook two Hajj journeys, the details of which are recorded in my travelogues *“Allah, the Kaaba, and the Servant”* and *“Guests of the Merciful Lord.”* Since last year, Tariq Shah has been eagerly awaiting the opening of visas, so he could illuminate his eyes with the sight of the Kaaba and the Prophet's Mosque.

➤ **Dr. Yumna with Patients**

At Maghrib, we visited the hospital. My daughter Yumna has often attended to patients. Seeing the trust patients place in her brought me immense joy and satisfaction. May Allah grant my daughter the ability to serve humanity and bless her with a bright future.

At the hospital, renowned advocate Mian Nadeem Mahmood visited for patient inquiries. Tariq Sahab was also present. Naveera Babar came along with her father and shared details about her passport. Umar Farooq from Turkey had promised to send Naveera Babar to Turkey on a scholarship.

Isha prayer was offered at the hospital. I also spent some time chatting with Malik Rasheed. Later, we returned home late at night. The fatigue from travel caused me to sleep early. My whole body ached intensely, and swelling in my feet persisted.

At 4 am, I woke for Tahajjud prayer. Fajr time coincided, and I

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performed Fajr as well. I prayed for the country's safety, the well-being of children, and the long life and success of Imran Khan.

In the afternoon, I met with Malik Rasheed and his maternal uncle, Tufail Kamboh. We exchanged thoughts on various matters and had lunch together.

➤ Compassion with Patients

During the journey of service and treatment, one sometimes meets patients with whom a special bond develops. One such patient is a young girl from Bhalwal, Asiya Bibi, who has been under treatment for the past two years. She has recovered from TB and hepatitis, but whenever her health declines even slightly, she calls and travels from Bhalwal to Lahore.

Today was a Sunday holiday, and Asiya called: "Doctor, I'm coming from Bhalwal. I must have a check-up with you." By 6 pm, she arrived at the hospital. After examining her, I prescribed her medications and answered all her questions. Asiya happily took her medicines and left, giving her prayers in gratitude.

➤ Arrival of Malik Rasheed and Interesting Conversations

My relationship with Malik Rasheed spans the last forty years. We lived together in King Edward Medical College hostels for many years and have shared joy, grief, and hardships. He had come since yesterday to check on my health and had been in daily contact for the past three months. Upon arrival, he began apologizing for being late.

We had a meal together. Meanwhile, Asma, Huzaifa, and Yumna went out to find joggers for me. Professors Rana Arshad and Dr. Aamir Aziz had advised that good arch-support joggers should be worn for one and a half months to aid walking. Yumna and Huzaifa brought soft but expensive Skechers for me. I had never even bought shoes at half that price, but Yumna said, "Baba, I got these for you for comfortable walking is easier." She immediately helped me wear them. Walking felt very comfortable, and my feet felt relieved.

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That night, I slept early. At 4:30 am, I woke for Tahajjud¹⁰, performed prayers, and completed the tasbeehat. I woke Yumna, Huzaifa, and Mahnoor for prayers and went for a short morning walk. The greenery around brought freshness to the eyes. Insha'Allah, the regular morning walk routine after Fajr will soon begin.

➤ New Responsibility at FBR

It is Monday. I took the day off from the office but stayed in touch with Arshad Khan from home. Early in the morning, I received a phone call from Chairman FBR, Javed Ghani, requesting a meeting. FBR has assigned me a new role as the In-Charge of the Integrity Management Cell. Alhamdulillah, I am grateful that the leadership of FBR trusts me. Insha'Allah, I will strive to fulfill these new responsibilities to the best of my ability.

➤ Meeting Friends

At 10 am, I went with Ashfaq to meet the Director General of Health Care Punjab at his office on Cooper Road. Haroon Jahangir Khan has been the DG of Health for the past few months. He has transformed the office, adding a new block. Haroon Jahangir is a KE classmate, and our bond of friendship and respect remains strong. He welcomed us warmly, introduced us to his directors in kind words, and even served delicious coffee. On our way out, he stayed until our car drove off.

After this, we went to meet another classmate, Chairman Sheikh Zaid Hospital, Professor Dr. Mateen Izhar. Dr. Mateen came out of his office to receive us. We shared warm and affectionate conversations. He congratulated me on my recovery and conferred Hilal-e-Imtiaz award. We also discussed the posting of Mrs. Yar Muhammad.

Next, we visited Nabeel Awan at the Secretary of Health's office. The Secretary greeted us with great respect. We discussed Yumna's appointment as a medical officer. The Secretary introduced us to his officers, most of whom were already familiar with my name and work. When someone serves humanity

¹⁰. Tahajjud is a voluntary late-night prayer offered after waking from sleep, seeking closeness to Allah, forgiveness, guidance, and spiritual peace in quiet, reflective moments.

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sincerely and with pure intentions, Allah places love for them in people's hearts.

Alhamdulillah, my health is steadily improving. Use of the wheelchair is almost stopped, and I am now walking easily with a stick. I managed to walk to all three offices, including some stairs. Walking is still slightly difficult, but since Yumna brought me Skechers, it has become much easier and comfortable. Over the past three months, I have realized how great a blessing it is to stand, sit, and walk. From the hair on one's head to the toes, Allah has endowed humans with countless blessings. If even one of these is slightly impaired, one immediately realizes how much they had been blessed and prays to return to a normal routine as soon as possible.

➤ **Walking: Such a Great Blessing**

From June 18 until today, September 14, I have felt daily how great a blessing it is to be able to walk. After every prayer, I pray to Allah, asking Him to restore my strength and energy as before. I ask for courage so that I may once again walk on my own two feet to the mosque to perform every prayer in congregation. I also pray to resume my morning walks regularly and to carry out my daily routines with the same vigor and warmth as before.

After Maghrib, I went to the hospital. With Malik Rasheed, I examined and checked on patients. Maghrib prayer was led by Maulvi Mubeen. Patients traveling from far away were pleased to finally meet Dr. Asif. I spent some time chatting with Dr. Rasheed Malik, recalling the days spent in KE Hostel. Those were golden days—no worries except studying, waking and walking at will, playing pranks, sometimes going out for Tabligh, or watching a movie with Mohsin while still pausing to offer prayer on time. Later, Dr. Rasheed left for home, and I had a long phone conversation with another old hostelmate, Dr. Akhtar Basra, reminiscing about KE days.

➤ **Trip to Islamabad with Asma**

On Tuesday morning, I woke up for Fajr prayers. After the prayers, preparations were made for the trip to Islamabad. Hafeez and Mahnoor still could not bear to leave me alone. They collectively persuaded their mother, Asma, to accompany me.

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Their love and care over the past three months have been immense, never leaving me for even a moment, and even now they would not allow me to travel alone. At 6 am, we departed for Islamabad. Traffic on the motorway was light; hardly any vehicle was in sight. Rafiq drove calmly for the first time, and in three and a half hours we reached the mess. After breakfast, preparations for the office visit began.

Upon reaching Customs House, I told Rafiq that today I would walk instead of using the wheelchair. Slowly climbing the stairs at the main entrance, I entered the office. All staff and colleagues offered their congratulations. Alhamdulillah, even after using the lift, I walked all the way to my office.

➤ Meeting Dr. Saeed, Founder of PKLI

Today at the office, I had the privilege of meeting Dr. Muhammad Saeed Akhtar, the renowned kidney transplant surgeon and founder of PKLI. Dr. Saeed Akhtar, based in the U.S., is an exceptional Pakistani doctor who established a remarkable center in Lahore for liver and kidney transplants. Unfortunately, envious people did not appreciate his efforts and found excuses to remove him from the institution.

Dr. Saeed Akhtar spoke in a calm and humble manner, saying he bears no grief over being separated from the institute. His vision and plan were to provide free treatment to every poor and needy patient, and he had even designed a full system for it, though it could not be realized. Currently, he is associated with the Pakistan Kidney Foundation. Today, he had brought some medical equipment for underprivileged patients and came to the office for clearance. The items were cleared quickly and handed over to him. Dr. Saeed Akhtar is a simple, sincere Muslim and highly skilled in his field.

➤ Visit of Yasin Tahir

Before Zuhr, a senior Customs colleague and former Secretary of the Government of Pakistan, Mr. Yasin Tahir, came to meet me. Immediately after the accident, he had prayed for me with tears in his eyes. When we spoke today, he said, "Insha'Allah, nothing will happen to you. By Allah's grace, you will recover soon." Seeing me healthy and well brought him immense joy and happiness. He said this was the result of all the prayers. "May Allah be pleased with you. You serve His creation, and that

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is why Allah saved your life and granted you more time, so you can serve even more of His creation. Insha'Allah, His help and support will always be with you."

The day was filled with people coming and going for office matters. Mr. Khawaja Zafar Iqbal also came to meet, eagerly awaiting when the weekly recitations (Barah-Kahu) would resume. After attending to all office matters, I returned around 4 pm to G-6/4 mess. Asma had been waiting. Jahangir brought hot Finger Fish, which we enjoyed together. After a short rest, Maghrib and Isha prayers were offered. The day's work and travel left me exhausted, and I slept early.

➤ **Keep the Patient's Hope Alive**

I woke up early at five in the morning. After performing Fajr prayer, I prayed to Allah for blessings, well-being, and protection. I thanked Him for His countless favours and humbly asked for the strength and courage to be able to return to my work and attend the mosque for congregational prayers. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an, *"When I am sick, it is He who cures me."* Indeed, it is only Allah who saves from illness, accidents, and calamities. Yet, the patient's willpower, the cooperation between patient and doctor, and shared effort play a significant role in recovery. Professor Rana Arshad rightly says that the mutual relationship between doctor and patient is extremely important. The doctor must keep the patient's hope alive, and the patient must also have the will to fight the illness, recover, and return to normal life.

➤ **Salute to the Great Doctors of Mayo Hospital**

I am fortunate that immediately after the accident, highly skilled, sincere, and compassionate doctors, led by Professor Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, treated me with dedication and utmost care. During the treatment, they not only worked meticulously but also continuously encouraged me. Department heads such as Professor Dr. Farukh, Dr. Zahra, Dr. Nauman Naseer, Dr. Yar Muhammad, Professor Dr. Asghar Naqi, and others, under the leadership of Professor Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, supported my treatment while constantly boosting my morale.

Alhamdulillah, despite facing life-threatening challenges after the accident, I never let go of hope and never succumbed to

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despair for even a moment. My children and Asma were deeply worried; they tried to stay strong in front of me, yet would pray and cry for my health in private. I constantly encouraged them to remain patient and turn to Allah.

Professor Rana Arshad is an extraordinary person. After the operation, when he came to check the POP, he immediately told me, *"You must walk. You must believe in your mind that you can walk. You are as capable as before, and insha'Allah, you will walk."* Following his guidance, when the pins were removed from my ankle, I took my first steps slowly in his presence. He continued to encourage me, strengthening my resolve every step of the way.

➤ **Never Lose Hope in Allah's Mercy**

Even during the POP, Professor Rana Arshad kept reminding me to consider myself normal and take steps forward. Initially, I had to use a walker to move. Eleven weeks later, when the POP was removed, I began walking with a stick. Gradually, I placed weight on both feet and took a few steps without support. In the early days after the POP was removed, I still relied on a wheelchair, but now, Alhamdulillah, I can walk to wherever I need to go. For stairs, I still take some support. Yesterday, for the first time, I walked up the stairs at the Customs House to reach the lift.

I share this story to emphasize that one should always rely on Allah and never give in to despair. As Dr. Rana Arshad says, hope and faith must remain alive. A patient's willpower is the greatest support. With determination, a patient can overcome illness and regain strength.

➤ **Meeting the FBR Chairman and New Responsibilities**

By Allah's grace, my courage and strength are gradually returning. At nine in the morning, I went to the FBR headquarters with Rafiq. A meeting with the honorable FBR Chairman, Mr. Javed Ghani, was scheduled. Upon entering FBR, Rafiq suggested taking out the wheelchair, but I told him, *"Insha'Allah, I will walk."* Shahid suggested using the ramp, but I replied that there were only five or seven steps and I could manage them. With Shahid and Jahangir supporting from the sides, I took the steps forward, entering inside while thanking Allah for this strength. Truly, it is Allah who grants power and courage after

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illness.

At nine thirty, I entered the Chairman's office on the third floor. He welcomed me warmly. We discussed strategies for improving revenue targets and overall performance. He also congratulated me on my full recovery. During the meeting, Director General of Customs Intelligence, Abdul Rashid Sheikh, also arrived. Chairman Javed Ghani introduced a new unit, the **Integrity Management Cell**, designed to monitor corruption and ensure the integrity of officers and staff. He explained that I had been appointed to lead this unit because my own integrity is beyond reproach.

After meeting the Chairman, I met Member Admin, FBR, Bakhtiyar Muhammad, an upright and honest IRS officer who is running the FBR administration efficiently. He assured me that they would fully support me in any way necessary and expressed confidence that the Integrity Management Cell under my leadership would achieve great success. Following this, I met with Fayaz Rasool, Chief International Customs.

➤ **Dr. Zubair Yousfani (Late) and Fayaz Rasool**

Whenever I visit FBR, I make it a point to meet Fayaz Rasool. Being in his office always brings back old memories. A few years ago, in the same room, I used to have long conversations with my dear colleague, Dr. Zubair Yousfani (late). Zubair would greet me with a smile and laughter. We would share heartfelt thoughts, discuss issues from around the world, and deliberate on suggestions to improve the department. Zubair was always thinking about ways to make the Customs Department better.

Two years ago, Zubair Yousfani left us and returned to the Almighty. May Allah forgive him and grant him Paradise in every inch of it.

After completing matters at FBR, I headed to the Customs House. I climbed the steps at the entrance and entered inside. Using the lift, I reached the fourth floor and walked all the way to my office. I thanked Allah for giving me life and the ability to walk again.

After Zuhr, Director General Abdul Rashid Sheikh arrived. There was also a meeting with Gul Rehman, DG Reforms. I had

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a long session with Abdul Rashid Sheikh, and we even shared lunch, with Junaid Jaleel, Khayal Muhammad, and Shahid Jan. During the lunch, we discussed the Integrity Management Cell in detail. Sheikh Sahib is an honest, decisive, and upright officer of the Customs Department. He is a devout, pious, and disciplined man, always wearing a turban over his shalwar kameez, conducting himself according to the guidance of the Quran and Hadith. He has his own distinctive way of working. Alhamdulillah, he has always shown me great respect.

After my accident, he has kept continuous contact. He personally came to Lahore to check on my health, and since I started coming to Islamabad, he has visited the Customs House three times to enquire about my health. I had intended to meet him, but he said in the Chairman's office that it would be difficult for me to come upstairs, so he would come to see me himself.

Until around four in the evening, we exchanged thoughts and continued to discuss official matters. I thanked Allah for granting me health and life.

➤ Health is Life

When a person falls ill, he truly realize how great a treasure health is. Alhamdulillah, my condition is improving day by day. I now eagerly await the day when I can return to my normal state and go to the mosque for prayers. Although I have already started praying standing up instead of using gestures, my energy and strength are gradually returning. Insha'Allah, I will soon be able to go to the mosque regularly.

After five o'clock, I returned to the mess and rested for a while. Near Maghrib, Nasira and Shahid came to visit. After performing Maghrib prayers, I rested again, as the extra walking and climbing up and down stairs had caused some fatigue. After Isha prayers, I had dinner in my room with Asma. She takes care of me morning and evening, preparing me and sending me to the office. She spends the entire day waiting and checking in on me. During the return from the office, we discuss the day's activities. After dinner, due to the day's fatigue, I fell asleep early and had a sound sleep. I woke up at five in the morning, offered Fajr prayers, and

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completed my Tasbeeh¹¹.

➤ **Attending Office Duties**

After a short rest and breakfast, I prepared to go to the Customs House. We left the mess at half past nine. Jahangir also joined us in the car with Rafiq. Mustering courage, I climbed the stairs at the entrance and entered inside. Taking the lift to the fourth floor, I walked through the corridor to reach my office. At every step, I thanked Allah. Just a few days ago, I would have had to arrive in a wheelchair, which now feels like a distant memory.

It is Allah who grants healing from illness and enables a person to return to normal life. I am grateful that He preserved my life during the accident, protected me from any permanent disability, and now, three months later, has allowed me to walk and come to the office again. Alhamdulillah!

Today, office matters were handled normally. Salim Akhtar, Chief of HRM from FBR, came to meet. We had a detailed discussion about the Integrity Management Cell. With the new responsibility assigned by FBR, Insha'Allah, I will strive to fulfill my duties in the best possible manner. May Allah grant me the strength and courage to serve the country and the nation properly.

➤ **“Haya Ala’l-Falah. Labaik Ya Allah”**

After four o'clock, I returned to the mess from the office. I rested for a while before Asr. When the call to Maghrib prayer rang out from Bilal Mosque, my heart became restless. I opened the door and stepped outside. Seeing Rafiq nearby, I could no longer contain myself—at the sound of “Haya Ala’l-Falah,” my feet carried me toward Bilal Mosque almost on their own. I got into the car with Rafiq and reached the mosque entrance.

After three months, I saw Bilal Mosque again, and Alhamdulillah, I was able to perform Maghrib prayers in congregation. During the prayer, tears streamed down my face; I could not control my emotions. I prayed to Allah, saying: “O Allah, restore the blessing of performing congregational prayers that

¹¹. Tasbeeh refers to the remembrance of Allah by repeating phrases of glorification, often counted on prayer beads, bringing spiritual calm, mindfulness, and a deeper sense of devotion.

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You have granted me. Make me capable soon of visiting Your house five times a day and prostrating before You.”

At the mosque, Maulana Zulfiqar and other worshippers greeted me with respect and congratulations on my recovery. I repeatedly thanked Allah for allowing me, after three months, to return to Bilal Mosque for prayers.

On June 18, 2020, I had offered Fajr prayer in congregation at the same mosque. That was the day the accident occurred.

After Maghrib, Dr. Faheem Asif’s sister and her husband, Professor Nasir Rasheed, came to meet. Professor Nasir teaches at Arid University and is a supporter of our welfare work. He had also donated toward building a well in Thar. Asma and his wife share a long-standing familial connection; they grew up together, and this reunion allowed them to reminisce and refresh old memories.

➤ Dinner at Islamabad Club After Six Months

At eight o’clock, Amjad Bukhari arrived. Hamid Qazi, Waheed Shah, and Professor Abdul Hayy Sheikh had organized a dinner at Islamabad Club to congratulate me on receiving the Hilal-i-Imtiaz. It was my first visit to the club in several months. After the lockdown in March, all hotels and clubs had been closed. Today, the club was lively.

We dined at the ground-floor buffet restaurant. I met Waheed Shah, the former private secretary of the FBR Chairman, after a long time. He is an engaging personality and a man of many talents, always ready with a solution for any problem. I also had a meaningful exchange of thoughts with Amjad Bukhari, Hamid Qazi, and Professor Abdul Hayy Sheikh. I enjoyed the sumptuous food and gracious company of friends at Islamabad Club.

We returned from Islamabad Club late at night. The day’s activities had left me exhausted, and I went to sleep early. I woke up early in the morning to perform Fajr prayer and recited Surah Al-Kahf, thanking Allah for the blessings that made the past week so fulfilling. I prayed that, by the mercy of Surah Al-Kahf, the coming week would also be excellent, as per the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). I completed my tasbeehat and headed to the office at nine, beginning the day with

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recitation of the Qur'an. Today, I completed the last verses of Surah Yusuf, explaining their meaning and tafsir¹². Indeed, it is Allah who rescues His servant from difficulties. After hardship and distress, He grants ease, happiness, honor, and elevated status. Truly, whoever places trust in Allah is given blessings from places he could never imagine.

➤ Momina Khayal's Visit and Interview

I worked in the office until one o'clock, coordinating pending matters and cases with Khayal Muhammad and Arshad Khan. Visitors continued to arrive. At eleven, I interviewed Momina Khayal, a renowned lawyer and founder of welfare institutions for special persons, for the "Customs Panel Lawyers." Momina is from Lahore and, like us, has established several charitable centres for the poor and needy. Although we have been Facebook friends for several years and met once before, we never had an in-depth discussion.

Currently, she serves as a legal advisor in the Ministry of Commerce, which keeps her coming to Islamabad. Momina shared that she has long wished for our organizations to collaborate on welfare projects. In this regard, in the evening, she visited Al-Miraj Habib Hospital with her sister, Mahnoor Khayal. Jahangir showed them all the departments. Momina was very pleased with the hospital's setup and expressed her hope that, Insha'Allah, we will soon start a collaborative project.

➤ Mosques in Islamabad

Friday prayers were offered at Riyaz-ul-Jannah Mosque with Junaid and Rafiq. Most mosques in Islamabad are spacious, well-ventilated, and built on large plots of land. During regular prayers, a considerable number of worshippers attend, but on Fridays, each mosque sees thousands gather. After performing Friday prayer at Riyaz-ul-Jannah, we returned to the mess for lunch and then departed for Lahore.

¹². Tafsir is the scholarly interpretation and explanation of the Quran, aiming to clarify meanings, context, language, and guidance within its verses. It draws on linguistic analysis, historical background, Hadith, and classical scholarship to help readers understand divine messages and apply them thoughtfully in daily life and spiritual practice.

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Currently, the weather in Islamabad is hot. The whole week has been warm and humid, whereas last week's weather was perfectly normal. Despite the heat, it was manageable even without air conditioning. Fridays on the motorway are usually crowded, with a high volume of government and private vehicles heading to Lahore. Public transport also runs extensively. Due to the recent heavy rains, greenery is abundant everywhere. The hills around Kallar Kahar are lush and vibrant, covered in green shrubs and grass, presenting a beautiful sight.

At the Bhaira Stay & Food stop, the car was parked near the mosque. Alhamdulillah, I performed ablution and offered Asr prayer in congregation without any difficulty. I repeatedly thanked Allah for granting me the ability to return to the mosque and offer congregational prayers after three months.

➤ **The Beginning of Congregational Prayers**

Later, near Sukheke, at a rest area mosque, I offered Maghrib prayer—the same mosque where, three months earlier on June 18, I had offered Maghrib. I thanked Allah repeatedly for making it possible to pray in the mosque again. I told Asma that on June 18, we had left this mosque, got into the car, and exactly fifteen minutes later, the accident occurred. Alhamdulillah, Allah saved us, gave us a new life, and has now made it possible to perform prayers in the mosque once again. Insha'Allah, soon all prayers will be performed in congregation.

Around eight o'clock, we reached home. Yumna, Huzaifa, and Mahnoor greeted me warmly, making it feel like a long-awaited reunion. Dr. Awais's wife, Ayesha, was also present and greeted me politely. Being home and meeting the children immediately refreshed me and removed the day's fatigue. I had planned to visit the hospital, but there were no patients, so after dinner, I prepared to sleep early. The day's travel and activity had left me quite tired, so I went to bed promptly and enjoyed a deep, restful sleep.

Early in the morning, I woke up to perform Fajr prayer. I went outside for a short walk in the lawn. During the walk, I completed my tasbeehat, just as I had done before the accident. I expressed heartfelt gratitude to Allah for granting life and health. Alhamdulillah, daily routines are beginning to return to normal.

➤ **Prayers of Hanif Abid**

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After breakfast, I rested for a while and spent time chatting with the children. I offered Maghrib prayer at the hospital and attended to patients for check-ups and treatment. Hanif Abid, our supervisor for welfare work in Southern Punjab, had come from Multan. I asked him what he had intended to whisper in my ear when my condition worsened after the accident. Hanif Abid explained that he wanted to recite a tried-and-true Sunnah prayer in my ear. Later, he recited it repeatedly. Prayers continued in the communities we had served in Multan and Muzaffargarh.

After Isha prayer, I attended a wedding at the PC Hotel for the first time in six months. Huzaifa and Ashfaq accompanied me. It was the wedding of Senator Talha Mahmood's daughter, who married the son of an IR Service Commissioner. Many familiar faces and former batchmates were present. I also had a detailed meeting with former FBR member Raza Baqir, who congratulated me on my recovery and conferment of Hilal-i-Imtiaz.

➤ Meeting with Senator Talha Mahmood

Senator Talha Mahmood personally arranged for me to meet his brother-in-law, Asim, Commissioner IR. We have known him for the past three to four years, initially through Pakistani resident Waqar Badshah in Turkey. Like us, he works for the welfare of distressed people in Pakistan and abroad. Together, we contributed to relief work for Syrian refugees in Turkey.

The wedding had a large number of attendees. Only a few were wearing masks, and handshakes and warm embraces were exchanged freely. It seemed that people in Lahore had almost forgotten about COVID-19. We returned from the PC Hotel late at night. The day's fatigue allowed for a good night's sleep.

At Fajr, I woke up, offered prayer, and Alhamdulillah, I have started praying while standing again, though I am still unable to fully prostrate. Insha'Allah, that too will soon be possible. After completing tasbeehat, I rested for a while. Most of the day was spent at home with the children and Asma. We discussed plans for returning to the office the next day. The children were hesitant to leave me alone, worried that something might happen. Over the past three months, I have been under Allah's protection and the care of my family. Even when I began traveling to Islamabad a month ago, someone was always with me, making the environment feel like home. The children and Asma provided

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extraordinary care and welfare over more than three months.

➤ **Dinner at Abdul Wadood Khan's House**

On Sunday night, respected Abdul Wadood Khan hosted a dinner at our home in our honor. It was the first visit to someone's home after my recovery in over three months. Muhammad Sadiq, Member of the Customs Appellate Tribunal, was also present. Abdul Wadood Khan's hospitality and the food he serves are exemplary. The homemade dishes, especially the roast chops and turnip meat, were very delightful and tasty. The dessert was so delicious that we kept licking our fingers.

Not only did he serve the meal, but on departure, he gifted us Khilafa's Naan Khatai and homemade Panjeeri. Abdul Wadood Khan is also a great conversationalist; we have to listen to both new and old stories regarding the different officer in Pakistan Custom. He keeps track of everyone's affairs and ready to present guidance when required. Above all, his greatest quality is humanity—he equally treats every person, young or old, officer or grade IV employees.

➤ **Instructions and Advice from Yumna**

I woke up early and offered Fajr prayer. Yumna immediately gave me instructions:

- Wear a mask when going outside.
- Do not go anywhere except the mess and office; going to Barah Kahu is prohibited.
- Perform prayers at home.
- Avoid unnecessary travel.
- Follow all COVID-19 SOPs.
- Someone must stay with you at the mess at night.
- Daily video calls will be held to review and update regarding implementation of these instructions.

Leaving the house alone after saying goodbye to Asma and the children felt strange and difficult. Asma kept praying and blowing blessings as we departed. The journey with Rafiq was smooth and pleasant. On Monday morning, the motorway is usually busy as many people return to their offices after the weekend. By 10 a.m., we reached Islamabad safely, prepared,

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and went to the office.

After attending to office matters, I went to FBR with Gul Rehman, DG Reforms, around noon. Tariq Huda, Member Customs Operations, inquired about my health; he had been a little unwell in recent days but is now recovered. Prayers were offered for his continued health. After a long time, I met Naeem Khan, Collector Customs, as well as Dr. Sarfraz Waraich, Member Legal, and Syed Habib, former Customs Collector.

➤ A Night Away from Family

I returned to the mess around 2 a.m. and rested in my room. Being alone made me realize how important and necessary the presence of family is. For the past three months, my family had been with me, taking care of me 24 hours. Even while lying in bed, if I turned over, someone was always there asking, “Baba, what happened?” During the last one month, my family had even stayed with me in Islamabad. May Allah keep all my family members happy and bless our home with prosperity.

At Maghrib, longtime friend Khawaja Zafar Iqbal came by. We had a long conversation and shared dinner together. Shahid had assigned duty to Junaid Sepoy, who stayed alert throughout the night. Whenever I rang the bell, he would immediately come. Sleep came late, and I missed my family and Asma because of the past three months spent with them. Early in the morning, close to Fajr, I woke up, offered prayers, and completed my Tasbeeh. Rafiq came upstairs to check if I needed anything and brought me green tea. The children had also given him strict instructions to take care of me and not let me wander around.

➤ Busy Streets of Islamabad

By 9 a.m., I headed to the office. These days, Islamabad’s streets are lively. There is heavy traffic early in the morning, which has increased with schools, colleges, and universities reopening. At some places, it is necessary to wait for a long time. During the lockdown, the streets were deserted, and occasionally a car would pass by. I reached the office at 9:30 a.m., beginning the day in the name of Allah and praying for the safety and well-being of the nation and the country. I met with Khayal Muhammad to attend to office matters. Later, I discussed the restructuring of the Integrity Management Cell with Saleem Akhtar.

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➤ **Hafiz Muhammad Ali Indhar, Member HRM**

FBR Member HRM, Hafiz Muhammad Ali Indhar, IRS, is one of the most senior officers. During the early days as Collector Appeal, he also served as my Member Legal. He is an extremely honest and noble-minded person. He has been posted in FBR for the past five years and is, Masha'Allah, in Grade 22. Over many years, I have developed a relationship of love and respect with Hafiz Sahib. Today, he visited Customs House at my invitation. We had a great conversation and enjoyed lunch together. During our talk, the late Muhammad Zahid Khokhar was fondly remembered; he had a special friendship with Hafiz Sahib. May Allah forgive him. Junaid Jaleel, Imran Chaudhry, and Khayal Muhammad also joined the lunch. We presented a shield to Hafiz Muhammad Ali Indhar on his retirement.

➤ **Meeting Guests on the Path of Allah**

I returned from the office around 4 p.m. and rested for a while. Muhammad Ismail and Uncle Muhammad Hussain came from Sargodha to visit. I offered Maghrib prayer in congregation at Bilal Mosque. A Tablighi Jamaat was present in the mosque. It was a long time since I had met those devoted to Allah's path. The lockdown had greatly affected their activities, so it was heartening to see the Tablighi group active again. After the prayer, I listened to a lecture. One speaker emphasized that everything happens by Allah's will; not even a leaf moves without His permission. True success is in the Hereafter. This life is temporary, and for a believer, the world is like a prison. By living according to Allah's commandments and the Prophet's ways, one achieves real success. Sitting with the Tablighi brothers and listening to them after such a long time brought spiritual joy.

I also met Customs colleague Dr. Saeed Jadoon, a senior officer now posted at FBR. He is constantly working day and night to improve the department and the customs service. He shared updates about the recent reforms. After Isha prayer, I went to sleep early. I woke up for Fajr prayer and completed Tasbeeh, thanking Allah for health and life. By His grace, daily routines are gradually returning. I pray that soon I will be able to move normally, attend all prayers at the mosque, and once again lead service and medical outreach to distant areas.

➤ **Love in the Hearts of People**

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After breakfast, I rested briefly and prepared to go to the office. Today I went to FBR again, entering via the ramp alongside the main entrance. Since the accident, Shahid PRO or Jahangir accompany me to offer support. Officers and staff, even those I have never met before, stand to greet me, inquire about my well-being, and pray for my full recovery. Alhamdulillah, from the early days of the accident until now, everyone has been praying for my health. When a person works for the welfare of others, Allah instills love for them in people's hearts.

The first meeting was with Chairman FBR, respected Javed Ghani, who has been leading the organization for the past three months. Under his guidance, FBR is progressing, meeting revenue targets, and free from scandals. He inquired about my new responsibilities, and I explained that work had begun according to his directives. InshaAllah, efforts will continue to make FBR a corruption-free organization.

Next, I met Member Admin FBR, Bakhtiar Muhammad, who always greets with respect and love. May Allah keep him happy. He is also committed to purifying FBR, emphasizing that those openly involved in corruption will not be spared. He also sought some medical advice.

In the afternoon, I reached Customs House and discussed office matters with Khayal Muhammad and Arshad Khan. I have a good rapport with DG Reforms, Gul Rehman, and we caught up after Zuhr. He cautioned me about my increasing weight and advised caution with food, which I accepted. Around 4 p.m., I returned to the mess to rest briefly before heading to Bilal Mosque with Rafiq. Since coming to Islamabad, I have performed most of my prayers in this mosque. Alhamdulillah, I offered Maghrib prayer in congregation.

➤ With Dr. Sarfaraz Waraich in the “Land of the Sun God”

At 7:30 p.m., I headed to the Saddle Lounge at Islamabad Club, where Customs colleague Chaudhry Muhammad Akram, Chief Legal, had organized a farewell dinner in honor of Member Legal, Dr. Sarfaraz Waraich. Dr. Waraich is a towering figure in the Customs Department. Alhamdulillah, after more than 36 years of service, he retired on September 30, 2020. Throughout his career, he remained one of the most successful customs officers, constantly striving for the betterment of the department.

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Besides his professional expertise, he has deep insight into history, politics, tourism, and both national and international affairs. When he speaks, others rarely have the courage to interrupt, and he is also an accomplished writer. My first overseas trip in 1996 was with him, which I narrated in my two books, *"In the Land of the Sun God"* and *"From Singapore to Japan."* After dinner, I bid farewell to Dr. Waraich and prayed for his long life. Returning from the club late at night, I slept early due to the day's fatigue. I woke up at 4:30 a.m. the next morning.

➤ Fajr Prayer at Bilal Mosque

Alhamdulillah, after three months and six days, I headed to Bilal Mosque early in the morning with Junaid to offer Fajr prayer in congregation. I thanked Allah for granting me the ability to once again pray in the mosque with congregation. The prayer was led by Maulana Zulfiqar, and it was a spiritually uplifting experience. After such a long time, I enjoyed the morning view of Islamabad. The weather was pleasant, with a gentle cool breeze flowing.

After resting briefly, I had breakfast. The spiritual experience of Fajr at Bilal Mosque still lingers in my heart and mind. I shared this joy with Asma and the children, as well as with Aslam Marwat. Everyone was delighted. Aslam Marwat even raised a strong Takbeer in celebration and offered congratulations. After a short rest and completing Tasbeeh, I prepared to leave for the office.

Currently, Junaid Sipahi is on duty with me at night. Whenever I ring the bell, he immediately comes to assist. Early in the morning, he warms water with salt and neem leaves for me, in which I soak my feet. It brings comfort and reduces swelling. At 9:30 a.m., I reached the office, began the day in the name of Allah, and spent the day handling official matters.

➤ Lunch in Honour of Dr. Sarfaraz Waraich

After Zuhr prayer, a luncheon was arranged in honor of Dr. Sarfaraz Waraich, attended by Dr. Arsalan, Abdul Rasheed Sheikh, Gul Rehman, Junaid Jaleel, Chaudhry Akram, Rizwan Salabat, and other officers. Karamat prepared and sent an excellent meal. Dr. Waraich is a senior colleague in Customs and has earned respect and renown in the department.

After the meal, the attendees discussed Dr. Waraich's personality and knowledge. At the end, Dr. Waraich thanked

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everyone, recalling that he had spent 36 years in the department and that it feels like just yesterday he joined. He said he had always worked for the betterment of Pakistan and the department. Abdul Rasheed Sheikh offered a prayer, and shields were presented to Dr. Waraich in recognition of his service.

At 4 p.m., I returned to the office. Maghrib prayer was offered in congregation at Bilal Mosque. After Maghrib, a strong desire arose in my heart to visit Barah Kahu Hospital, even though the children and Asma had advised against it.

➤ **Visit to Barah Kahu Hospital**

With Rafiq, I headed to Barah Kahu. Today, the weather was much better than before, with a light, pleasant breeze. Passing through Murree Road and near Bani Gala, we reached Spring Valley. Seeing Syed Qadir, Jahangir, Naheeda and Saqib busy in helping the patient brought great delight and joy. Alhamdulillah, the welfare and service activities at the hospital were ongoing, and patient checkups were in progress. The dastarkhwan was spread out, and Rafiq distributed chips among the children.

Returning to the hospital after such a long time was a great joy. Naheeda brought tea in a Chitrali style and said that had she known earlier, she would have prepared a Chitrali dish especially for me. Saqib brought Peshawari Qahwa. Late at night, we returned home and rested.

Early in the morning, I woke up and, with Junaid and Rafiq, went to Bilal Mosque for congregational prayer. We walked back from the mosque to the mess. Alhamdulillah, I have slowly begun walking again. I had the blessing of reciting Surah Kahf, and, Insha'Allah, by the grace of this recitation, the coming week will pass safely and peacefully.

➤ **Memories of Zahid Khokhar**

On the way, I met a few worshippers who inquired about my well-being. The memory of the late Zahid Khokhar came to mind. As we returned from Bilal Mosque to the mess, all the moments of the past one and a half years came flooding back. No matter the rain, storm, or wind, Zahid Khokhar and I would go to the mosque to pray.

During the Covid-19 days, Zahid Khokhar remained mostly confined to the mess during Ramadan. He performed Fajr and

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Isha prayers in congregation there, but Alhamdulillah, I continued to attend the mosque whenever possible and offered all prayers in congregation during Ramadan, including Tarawih, while most regular worshippers, fearing Covid-19, stayed at home following SOPs.

In this context, it is also important to remember Abdul Rasheed Sheikh. Even during the Covid-19 risk period, he prayed in congregation at the mosque and even found one where worshippers stood shoulder to shoulder according to the Sunnah. After prayer, I used the Aslam Marwat formula: soaking my feet in warm water with neem leaves, which brought relief and reduced swelling.

➤ **Friday Prayer at Riyaz-ul-Jannah Mosque**

At 9 a.m., I headed to the office. Alhamdulillah, I maintained regular attendance this week from Monday to Friday and completed work efficiently. I am deeply thankful to Allah for granting health and life.

After finishing office work, at 1 p.m., I headed to Riyaz-ul-Jannah Mosque. There is a large turnout for Friday prayers, with people from surrounding offices coming in droves. The mosque is filled with worshippers both inside and outside. The Khateeb delivers sermons with calm and deliberate speech, offering guidance and advice.

➤ **Return Journey to Lahore**

After performing Friday prayer on the rows set up outside Riyaz-ul-Jannah Mosque, we departed for Lahore. The motorway traffic was not heavy yet. Alhamdulillah, Sarfaraz Sepoy accompanied us. Whether a sepoy or a collector, whenever anyone requests to accompany his is welcomed. The motorway journey was very pleasant.

Near Sukheke, we saw an elderly man standing by the roadside. It seemed he wanted a ride to Lahore. Although Rafiq had already moved the car forward and the gentleman had not gestured, I told Rafiq to bring him along. The car was reversed, and the elderly man joined us. He offered heartfelt prayers.

We reached home around Asr time. Meeting Asma, Yumna, Huzaifa, and Mahnoor was a joy. Asma welcomed us with

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delicious and hot biryani. The children eagerly inquired about the week's events. Yumna first conducted a thorough check-up—measuring blood pressure, inspecting the healing abdominal wounds, and ensuring everything was alright. She has always been deeply caring, especially during our service and medical trips. Now, Alhamdulillah, she is a qualified doctor, continuing to look after health and well-being since the day of the accident.

➤ **Maghrib Prayer at Noorani Mosque**

After nearly three and a half months, Maghrib prayer was performed at our Noorani Mosque. After prayer, worshippers surrounded me with affection and respect, all saying in unison that they had prayed morning and evening for my health. Being at the mosque again was deeply uplifting, and I repeatedly thanked Allah for granting me the ability to return.

Immediately after prayer, we headed to our hospital. A large number of patients were present. Seeing Khalid Masud (known as Mamoon), Pashmina, Malaika, Ali Haider, Riaz, and Ishtiaq brought great joy. Isha prayer was performed in congregation behind Qari Usman. By 8 p.m., we returned home, had dinner, and planned to sleep early.

The next morning, after Fajr prayer, I woke up, offered the prayer, and then spent some time in the lawn completing tasbeeh. Asma prepared a delicious breakfast. Due to travel fatigue, I rested for another two hours after breakfast.

➤ **Shahida Sultan and Al-Basit Foundation**

After Zuhr prayer today, our donor Shahida Sultan, who resides in the USA and runs an organization called the Al-Basit Foundation, sent her niece, Mrs. Saira Wain, to visit the hospital. She inquired in detail about our ongoing projects and asked a series of rapid-fire questions before she was fully satisfied. On behalf of her aunt, she made a donation for hand pumps in Dadu.

Mrs. Saira Wain is a kind-hearted woman guided by Islamic principles. During the conversation, we discussed Professor Ahmad Rafiq Akhtar and Baba Ji Irfan-ul-Haq. Mrs. Saira has read many of Professor Akhtar's books and attended his lectures. She is inspired by him but has not yet had a proper meeting. She has met him briefly once but wishes for a more detailed

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encounter. I explained our intimate relation with Professor Ahmad Rafiq Akhtar and Baba Ji Irfan-ul-Haq to her.

Alhamdulillah, Zuhr, Asr, and Maghrib prayers were performed in congregation at Noorani Mosque. Offering prayers in the mosque brought deep spiritual happiness. I thanked Allah for granting the blessing of returning home safely and pray that this continuity remains until the end of life.

After Maghrib, we visited the hospital. Patient check-ups were conducted. Mr. Mansha Qazi also came, accompanied by a lady pod-caster, who conducted an interview for her channel.

➤ Yumna's Delicious Meal

Returning from the hospital late at night, Yumna had prepared a wonderful meal. All family member ate together. There is great blessing in eating together. Even a simple meal feels satisfying, but tonight Yumna had prepared a special dish that everyone enjoyed immensely, savoring every bite.

The night brought a refreshing sleep. Early in the morning, Fajr prayer was offered. Following the prayer, a walk and breakfast are part of the usual routine. If the family is resting, I prepare breakfast myself. Today was no different. Sitting in the kitchen, I gathered all the ingredients and made a Saudi-style egg paratha, eaten with Hyderabad pickles. It was truly enjoyable. After breakfast, I rested for a while and completed tasbeehat.

➤ Attending Baba Ji Irfan-ul-Haq's Event

Amjad Bukhari had been insisting since last week that Baba Ji Irfan-ul-Haq was giving a lecture in Lahore and that I must attend. At eleven o'clock, I reached the Eastern Marquee, located by the canal, along with Ilyas Sahib. The stage was beautifully decorated, reflecting a strong spiritual and Sufi ambiance.

From eleven to one, discussions on the philosophy of Sufism took place. Occasionally, Baba Bulleh Shah was mentioned, other times Shams Tabrizi. Towards the end, there was mention of Rumi and his whirling dervishes. Around one o'clock, Baba Ji Irfan-ul-Haq began his address. The central point of his speech was that to improve ourselves, we must attach ourselves sincerely to Allah. He emphasized speaking less, avoiding

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unnecessary comments about others, and focusing on service, which is true worship and leads one closer to Allah.

The hall was packed with both men and women. Baba Ji Irfan-ul-Haq is a spiritual elder. He has a Khanqah in the city of Jhelum, where a beautiful mosque is also located. At the Khanqah, he meets patients and seekers daily. Baba Ji himself says that he is neither a doctor nor a physician. He listens to people's problems and advises them on dietary care and certain types of special condiments. According to him, many ailments are linked to the stomach; if the stomach is healthy, the body remains healthy. In addition, he offers prayers for those who seek his guidance.

➤ **The Healing Staff**

Baba Ji Irfan-ul-Haq, like Professor Ahmad Rafiq Akhtar, gives people Tasbeehat (prayer beads) to recite. People come to him from far and wide with hope. When Allah grants healing, they become devoted to him. This is why the number of his followers keeps increasing. At his dera (spiritual center), he treats everyone equally, regardless of their status. Baba Ji has designated hours for meeting people. Those seeking his guidance have their names registered, a turn is assigned, and then a number is called via computer.

Baba Ji possesses a special healing staff, which he often passes over the affected part of a patient's body. I too was once blessed with one of these staffs.

➤ **Baba Ji's Proven Remedies**

Baba Ji's remedies are highly effective. When Prime Minister Imran Khan fell from the stage in 2013 and got injured, Baba Ji advised him to drink milk mixed with turmeric, which helped heal his wounds and saved him from surgery. After my own accident, I contacted Baba Ji. Whenever I called, he immediately responded, offered prayers, and advised using milk with turmeric and olive oil, along with homemade chicken broth. Alhamdulillah, Allah has granted me a new life, and my health is now fully restored.

➤ **Baba Ji's Simple Advice**

Baba Ji is a humble and straightforward spiritual guide. His words and advice are simple. He recounts that when he first

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settled in his current Khanqah, he used to sell clothes on a bicycle. Initially, he set up his dera on the street, which gradually became accessible to the public and has now evolved into a large Khanqah¹³. Arrangements are also made for Langar (community meal) for visiting guests. Qazi Hamid and Amjad Bukhari are among his devoted followers. Whenever they visited him, he gave them special time, offered prayers, and served them food from the Langar. After sitting for over two hours, it became quite tiring. I left the Hall and returned home.

➤ Prayer at the Mosque

Alhamdulillah, I offered Asr, Maghrib, and Isha prayers in my own Noorani Mosque. It is a great blessing from Allah that He granted me a new life, complete health, and the ability to attend congregational prayers in the mosque—something I had longed for during the past three months. Allah has bestowed countless blessings upon humanity, and undoubtedly the greatest of these is health. With health, a person can worship, be of service to others, and serve the creation of Allah. Considering the accident I went through, Allah showed immense mercy upon me, saving me from a serious calamity and protecting me from any lasting disability.

Ease in Difficult Times

Another remarkable blessing was Allah's mercy during the painful stages—from the moment of the accident, through surgery, and during my time in the ICU. I remained in a drowsy state and never felt overwhelming pain or suffering. Alhamdulillah, Allah restored my complete health and enabled me to resume all my activities. Most of my daily engagements have already resumed, and the most important thing is that I can now attend mosque for prayers again. Care for patients in the hospital and welfare activities continued uninterrupted, and now they are progressing with even more energy. The day's exhaustion led to

¹³. A Khanqah is a spiritual lodge or retreat associated with Sufi traditions, where seekers gather for prayer, remembrance of God, learning, and guidance under a spiritual mentor. It serves as a center for hospitality, charity, and inner purification, nurturing community bonds and promoting love, humility, and devotion in everyday life.

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an early sleep, and I woke up to offer Fajr prayers and complete my Tasbeehat.

➤ **Dr. Yumna: The Favorite of Women and Young Girls**

At the insistence of my children and Asma, I spent the day with them. May Allah keep them well. Insha'Allah, tomorrow I will return to Islamabad. Most of the day was spent at home. I offered Dhuhr and Asr prayers in the Noorani Mosque. After Maghrib, I visited my hospital to see patients. Dr. Yumna also arrived. Most female patients and young girls were eager to consult with her. Alhamdulillah, a few months ago, Dr. Yumna completed her house job at Mayo Hospital and has since been dedicated to dermatology. Skin issues are common among women and girls, and whenever Dr. Yumna visits the hospital, they insist on consultations with her. Alhamdulillah, Dr. Yumna has become a vital part of our service and medical team. May Allah protect her, bless her with a good destiny, and grant her the ability to continue serving humanity.

➤ **Departure to Islamabad with Friends**

On Tuesday morning, after offering Fajr prayers, preparations were made to travel to Islamabad. Rafiq picked up Customs colleague Muhammad Sadiq from Customs Colony, Gulberg, and near the toll plaza, we also picked up Nadeem Ahsan. The journey from Lahore to Islamabad was very pleasant. Along the way, I had a lively conversation with Sadiq Sahib, a senior colleague in Customs with whom I have shared a bond of love and respect for the past 25 years. My children, Yumna, Huzaifa, and Mahnoor, also share friendships with his children since they grew up together in Custom Colony, Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore.

We reached the mess at 10 a.m., prepared, and then headed to the FBR Headquarters. Meeting with FBR Member Admin Bakhtiar Muhammad was a pleasure. He always greets with great respect. We discussed official matters, and I gave him some Corona syrup for his nephew, as the virus is resurging in Islamabad. May Allah protect us. Unfortunately, people have mostly abandoned precautions and SOPs. I also met Tariq Huda, Member Customs. By 4 p.m., I returned and worked in the office until that time.

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➤ Invitation from Gul Rahman

Muhammad Sadiq's elder brother, Gul Rahman, had invited me to his home several times, and Sadiq Sahib urged me to accept his invitation. We went directly from the office via Rawalpindi, passing Dhamial and then Jorian. Gul Rahman was delighted to see us. After a brief rest, his friend, nuclear scientist Dr. Ayaz, also arrived. Gul Rahman treated us to traditional chicken curry, maize flatbreads, and timber herbal chutney, which was very delicious. We returned late at night; the long day made sleep come quickly. Early in the morning, I offered Tahajjud prayer.

For Fajr prayers, I slowly walked to Bilal Mosque with Junaid. Walking to the mosque on my own after about three and a half months felt wonderful. Alhamdulillah, I thanked Allah for granting me complete health and enabling me to return to the mosque. Around 10 a.m., I arrived at the office, starting work as usual with Quranic recitation and translation. I remained busy until noon.

IMC Meeting

I attended the first meeting of the IMC, which consists mostly of private-sector members. While addressing the members, I emphasized that our goal is to make FBR a corruption-free organization, and that we all must work together to achieve this. The meeting continued until 4 p.m. Alhamdulillah, whenever I attend a meeting, people are already aware of my work and reputation. I also discussed with Salim Akhtar, Chief of IMC, ways to make the cell more active.

➤ Professor Rana Arshad's Retirement

Professor Dr. Arshad Rana, the renowned orthopedic surgeon at Mayo Hospital who skillfully reconstructed my shattered and displaced ankle bones, also retired from his professorship on September 30, 2020. As a medical student, one hopes to become a doctor quickly and then pursue post-graduation. Every doctor aspires to head his preferred department. Alhamdulillah, Professor Rana Arshad had served as Head of Orthopedic Surgery at Services Hospital and then for 22 years at Mayo Hospital. During his tenure, he earned a remarkable reputation, treating both poor patients and prominent figures alike, restoring even the most complex fractures. May Allah reward him.

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During the past three and a half months, I personally observed that Professor Rana treats all patients—rich or ordinary—with the same respect. He not only performs surgery expertly but also inspires hope and confidence in his patients. After my ankle operation, he was the first to restore my confidence and encourage me to take steps and walk, which Alhamdulillah allowed me to stand on my feet quickly. I have now even started walking without support.

Asr and Isha prayers were offered in Bilal Mosque. I thanked Allah for the courage and strength given. I also met with Maulana Zulfiqar, the mosque's preacher, who prayed for my complete health. I met Qismat Aslam, a Tablighi colleague, who mentioned that they have been praying abundantly for me after hearing the news of my fatal accident.

➤ **Warm Water and Neem Leaf Foot Soak**

Early in the morning, Junaid woke me up, saying it was time for Fajr. After performing ablution, we went to Bilal Mosque together with Junaid and Muzammil. Alhamdulillah, Fajr prayers were offered in congregation. I thanked Allah for granting me the ability to return home and pray in congregation.

After Fajr, I rested briefly. Junaid brought warm water with neem leaves and salt, and I soaked my feet for about half an hour. This brought great relief and significantly reduced swelling. Abdul Rehman prepared breakfast, and then I got ready for the office. By 9 a.m., I reached the office. Alhamdulillah, my routine of going to the office has now returned to normal. Work began with the recitation of the Quran and its translation.

➤ **Customs Clearance at Angoor Adda**

I met Khayal Muhammad, who had just returned from Wana, Waziristan. Angoor Adda, located on the zero line between Pakistan and Afghanistan, has now officially started customs clearance. Although the station was notified as a customs post in 2004, it had remained inactive until now. Alhamdulillah, imports and exports between the two countries will now pass through legal channels.

I also met AC Customs Tanveer, recently transferred from Karachi to Islamabad, who has a DPT in physiotherapy. I told him about my accident, and he immediately emphasized the

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importance of physiotherapy for me. He guided me through a few exercises that helped relax my muscles significantly.

➤ The Prostration That Meant So Much

The most important event of the day was that, after nearly three and a half months, I was able to perform a full prostration during prayer. Previously, I had only been able to pray with gestures or while sitting. Tanveer encouraged me, saying, “Sir, you can do prostration. Insha’Allah, there will be no problem.”

For Dhuhr prayer, I made the intention and Tanveer stood by to assist. I performed bowing (ruku) easily, then slowly bent down for prostration, feeling a slight fear of falling. Alhamdulillah, with courage, I lowered my head in front of Allah. After so many days, performing prostration brought a surge of emotions; tears welled up in my eyes, and my soul felt uplifted. I continued with the second prostration and completed the remaining units of prayer in the same way.

I thanked Allah for granting me the ability to bow before Him again. Tanveer’s presence was truly a blessing. I expressed my gratitude to him and prayed for his well-being and safety.

➤ Meeting Old Friends

At three o’clock, Brigadier Zia, Khawaja Zafar Iqbal, and Maulvi Riaz, residents of Sargodha, came to visit. We had a wonderful chat, reminiscing about school and college days and the years spent in Sargodha. Brigadier Zia, Zafar, and Riaz were classmates, while Zafar and I did our FSc together at Government College. My connection with Riaz goes back to our college days through the Tablighi Jamaat.

Whenever I meet people from Sargodha, it feels like meeting family. The scent of one’s hometown soil draws you in, bringing a deep sense of belonging.

➤ Patient Check-ups and Treatment After Four Months

At four o’clock, I went to Barah Kahu with Khawaja Zafar. Our welfare and medical activities there continue without interruption. Naheeda, Syed Qadir, and Saqibullah were present. Dr. Imran also joined us. We offered Asr prayer in congregation at the hospital. I was able to pray with full prostration again, with

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Tanveer standing beside me. I thanked Allah for granting me the ability to bow before Him once more.

On June 17, 2020, the day before my accident, I had conducted patient check-ups at Al-Miraj Habib Trust Hospital. Today, after about four and a half months, I repeated the process. I examined the patients who came, Naheeda dispensed medicines, and also served delicious tea. Around Isha time, we returned. Alhamdulillah, I offered Isha prayer in congregation at Bilal Mosque. Karamat brought dinner for us.

➤ Passing of Mehboob Saqib Khan and Participation in His Funeral

Just as I had started my meal, news came from Lahore that former Customs officer and colleague, Mehboob Saqib Khan, had passed away. I had shared a bond of love and respect with him. We worked together in Customs Intelligence. Masha'Allah, he was a highly respected and formidable officer, having served as Collector of Customs in both Karachi and Lahore. He always supported our welfare activities. After the 2005 earthquake, at my request, he donated two dialysis machines for Ayub Medical College Hospital in Abbottabad. Over the years, he continued to provide support whenever needed.

Mehboob Saqib suffered from Parkinson's disease. He even traveled to the United States for treatment and, through sheer willpower, battled the illness for many years. In his final years, he could barely speak, yet he continued his normal routine. He was also an excellent golf player and continued to play until his last days, never letting the disease dominate his spirits. After my accident, he sent prayers and messages full of goodwill.

To attend his funeral, I left the mess at five in the morning. It was a beautiful early morning, with the weather changing and a cool breeze blowing. Only a few vehicles were on the motorway. During the journey, I recited Surah Kahf, praying for the safety and well-being of the country and for Mehboob Saqib's forgiveness. I completed my tasbeehat as Rafiq drove. Inshallah, I would reach the funeral. This was the first time I traveled from Islamabad to Lahore at Fajr; usually, the journey is in the opposite direction.

We reached Lahore at 8:30 a.m., had breakfast at Moon Market, and by 9:30 a.m., I, along with Ilyas Sahib, headed to

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Khalid Mosque at Cavalry Ground. On the way, the railway crossing was closed, causing a brief concern about missing the funeral prayer. Alhamdulillah, we reached the mosque in time and participated in Mehboob Saqib Khan's funeral. A few Customs officers and some of his batchmates were present. I met Saud Imran and Sadiq Sahib there. May Allah grant Mehboob Thaqib forgiveness.

He was a cheerful and lively person despite his illness, he always remained in good spirits. He loved playing golf and enjoyed drinking coffee, even multiple cups of black coffee in the summer. He was always relaxed and happy, trusted his juniors, and shared a special bond with his mother. I visited his home twice for his mother's check-ups. He often said that all his successes were due to the blessings of his mother's prayers.

➤ **Noorani Mosque and Meeting with Aslam Kamal**

I offered Friday prayers at Noorani Mosque. I thanked Allah for granting me the ability to come to the mosque and prostrate before Him once again. As soon as the car reached near the mosque, the globally renowned artist, recipient of the Presidential Award, and author of several books, Mr. Aslam Kamal, was arriving for prayers.

Upon seeing me, he immediately stood up, helped me out of the car, and guided me inside the mosque. Not only did he assist me in entering, but he also picked up my shoes that had been left outside and placed them in a proper spot. Truly, great people are great in every way. He seated me in a corner of the mosque, while his son brought a chair for me.

Aslam Kamal is a nationally acclaimed artist. He has painted Allama Iqbal's poems in his unique style, earning him the title "Painter of Iqbal." Additionally, his work in calligraphy is unparalleled. Even at the age of 82, he remains active and continues to produce remarkable work.

I have shared a bond of love and respect with Aslam Kamal Sahib for many years. He has designed the dust covers for several of my books. Two weeks ago, he visited my home, congratulated me on my recovery and the Hilal-i-Imtiaz award, and prayed for my continued health.

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He said that since the day of my accident, he had been deeply worried and saddened. Meeting me today has brought him peace. He prayed that Allah always keep me safe and grant me ample opportunity to serve humanity.

➤ **Patient Check-ups and Treatment**

After performing Friday prayers, I had lunch with the children and Asma. Enjoying the hot biryani was a delight. After lunch, I rested for a while. I offered Maghrib prayers at Noorani Mosque and then headed to the hospital. Everyone at the hospital was happy to see me. I conducted patient check-ups and provided treatment, while also discussing hospital and society matters. Praise be to Allah, all our service and medical work continues smoothly. Late at night, I returned home from the hospital, had dinner, and, due to the day's travel, went to bed early. I slept well through the night. Early in the morning, I offered Fajr prayers, completed my tasbeehat, and had breakfast.

➤ **Justice Manzoor Hussain Sial and Anjuman Himayat-e-Islam**

Due to travel fatigue, I rested for a while. Most of the day was spent at home, exchanging thoughts with Asma and the children on various topics. I performed Zuhr prayers in congregation at Noorani Mosque. At four o'clock, I attended the "Qal Khawani" ceremony for Justice (R) Manzoor Hussain Sial, father-in-law of former FBR member Raza Baqir, at GOR-1. Justice Manzoor Hussain Sial was a noble and compassionate person. I had met him several times at events organized by Anjuman Himayat-e-Islam, where he served as honorary chairman for many years. May Allah grant Justice Manzoor Hussain Sial a place in His mercy. I offered condolences to Raza Baqir and prayed for the late judge's forgiveness.

➤ **Dinner in Honor of Professor Rana Arshad**

After Maghrib, I went to the hospital with Yumna. We conducted patient check-ups and prescribed treatments until around 7:30 pm. A large number of patients had come. Today, we had arranged a dinner in honor of Professor Rana Arshad, which was attended by Mansha Qazi, Farooq Tasneem, Professor Muzzamil Ahsan, and Professor Yar Muhammad.

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Professor Rana Arshad retired on October 1, 2020, after serving 22 years at Mayo Hospital. Beyond orthopedic surgery, he worked tirelessly to improve Mayo Hospital and King Edward Medical University. He always ensured that all patients in the orthopedic ward received treatment without discrimination. No surgery was ever postponed due to lack of PINS or plates.

Professor Muzzamil Ahsan and Mansha Qazi praised Rana Arshad, stating that by successfully treating Dr. Asif's shattered and dislocated ankle, he and the Mayo Hospital team had done a great service not just to us but to millions of people in Pakistan. Professor Rana Arshad was the first to skillfully align and reconstruct Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah's fractured ankle bones. Other surgeons later assisted in the treatment. Thanks to Professor Rana Arshad and the dedicated attention of Mayo Hospital doctors including Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, Professor Asghar Naqi, Dr. Yaseen, Professor Yar Muhammad, and professors Dr. Farukh, Dr. Zahra, and Dr. Nauman Naseer, Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah is now fully recovered and actively engaged in welfare activities alongwith official assignments.

I also expressed my admiration for Professor Rana Arshad's services, stating that a doctor or surgeon never truly retires. His contributions will continue to benefit the public. We requested him to collaborate with us to establish an institution for surgeries of underprivileged patients. Rana Arshad expressed gratitude for the recognition and assured that his service and charitable work will continue even after retirement.

Finally, Professor Muzzamil Ahsan offered a heartfelt prayer. Professor Rana Arshad was honored with a shield in recognition of his services. The gathering concluded, and due to the day's fatigue, I went to bed early. At Fajr, I woke up, offered prayers, completed tasbeehat, and started the day.

➤ Special Invitation in DHA

I read the newspapers and spent time chatting with Yumna, Huzaifa, and Mahnoor. I offered Zuhri prayers in congregation at Noorani Mosque. For lunch, we headed to Farukh's house in Defence. After several days, Yumna, Huzaifa, and Mahnoor reunited with their cousins Abeer, Dr. Zahra, and Amna. Faheem also arrived with his family. From Karachi, Bilquis came with her daughter, bringing a special dish prepared from Karachi. Around

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four o'clock, everyone had lunch together. The meal was very delicious. I spent some time talking with Farukh and Faheem. This was my first visit to Defence since the accident. Maghrib prayers were performed in congregation at V Block Mosque. After a short stay, I returned home safely. Asma and the children returned late at night.

➤ **Departure for Islamabad**

At 4:30 a.m., I woke up and prepared for the journey. After offering two rak'ahs of Tahajjud, I offered Fajr prayers. Asma served breakfast. Early in the morning, we set off for Islamabad. The car moved along the motorway, which was relatively empty at this hour. The weather was crisp, signaling the approach of winter. Green fields stretched on both sides. The sun had not yet risen. A few people were working in the fields, and a light mist lingered on both sides. It seems, like last year, the smog will be quite thick this season. Rafiq was driving the car, and the journey was pleasant. Today, no other companions were with us, though Aslam Marwat from Peshawar is expected to join later.

Praise be to Allah, my health is steadily improving. I am grateful to Allah for restoring complete health after such a serious and horrifying accident. Walking is still a bit difficult, but Professor Rana Arshad has assured that the swelling in the foot will gradually subside. I am now able to walk normally without relying on a stick. Mentally, I remind myself that I am well and can move like a normal person. Gradually, I must adopt the process of walking steadily. With the doctor's reassurance, half of the patient's worry is alleviated. Insha'Allah, I plan to resume morning walks after Fajr prayers this week.

We reached the mess at around 9:30 a.m., got ready, and headed to the office, where I spent the day handling administrative matters.

➤ **Pathan Doesn't Recite the Kalima Without Tea**

Aslam Marwat also arrived from Peshawar. We spent time talking about everything under the sun. Aslam Marwat always motivates and encourages. Ma'sha Allah, at the age of 70, he is still full of energy. He enjoys conversation and coffee. He has a fondness for Pathan tea, and as Marwat jokes, a true Pathan

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doesn't even recite the Kalima early in the morning without tea—but no one knows how our Marwat became so attached to coffee.

I had asked Qazi Hameed and Jahangir to arrange lunch at Al-Meraj Habib Trust Hospital. I also informed Khawaja Zafar Iqbal, who said he would bring steamed roast chicken from home. Naheeda, Jahangir, and Qadir organized the meal together.

➤ Tanveer and Physiotherapy

After almost four months, I visited the Customs House dispensary. Tanveer conducted physiotherapy exercises there. These exercises helped relax the muscles of my feet and legs, which had become stiff over the past four months. Some mild pain was felt during the session, but Tanveer skillfully carried out the exercises. He is a skilled physiotherapist. I could tell from our first meeting that he is highly competent. Before preparing for CSS, he had spent a long time working at Mayo Hospital as a physiotherapist, treating patients.

➤ Visiting Arham During Illness

At four o'clock, I left the office and visited Nasira's house with Aslam Marwat. Little Arham had undergone minor surgery. We inquired about his health and prayed for his speedy recovery. Nasira was happy to see us and served hot tea and Shami kebabs. Maghrib prayers were offered in congregation at a nearby mosque. Around 6:30 p.m., we took Tanveer from the mess and headed to Barah Kahu.

➤ Lunch at Barah Kahu

Khawaja Zafar and Qazi Hameed also arrived. Rana Javed, a class fellow residing in Saudi Arabia, joined as well. Waheed Shah also came. After a long time, I met Dr. Ramsha, who was delighted to see me. She congratulated me on my recovery. She had last seen me in the hospital connected to tubes and IV drips, and now seeing me walking, she said she could hardly believe it. Naheeda remarked that thanks to Allah, I have regained full health. She added that when she traveled to Lahore, she cried all the way back thinking about my health. I thanked Allah for blessing me with new life and health through everyone's prayers.

Qazi Hameed arranged the meal. After almost four months, we all sat together at Al-Meraj Habib Trust Hospital and enjoyed

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the meal. I praised Allah for giving us the opportunity to meet. After returning from Barah Kahu late at night, I felt the fatigue from walking and the journey. I intended to sleep early. At Fajr time, I woke up, and with Junaid, we walked to the mosque. We arrived at the mosque slowly, taking careful steps. Fajr prayers were offered in congregation. On the way back, I woke Asma and the children for prayers.

➤ Meeting with Dr. Aftab and Sarwat Sultana

At nine in the morning, I headed to the office. First, I went to F-7 to meet Dr. Aftab and his sister Sarwat Sultana. They were very happy to see me. We shared warm and affectionate conversation. Dr. Aftab is deeply passionate about our work and constantly encourages his sister to contribute to the cause. Sarwat Sultana remarked that she did not know what kind of magic I had on Dr. Aftab—he always talks about me. She always says that she had entrusted her personal savings to our work, which helped in purchasing the building for Al-Meraj Habib Trust Hospital.

➤ Quran Recitation for Mehboob Sadiq Khan

Today, a Quran recitation ceremony was held at the Customs House in memory of the late Collector Custom, Mehboob Saqib Khan. Former Customs members, including Ramzan Bhatti, Yasin Tahir, Muhammad Sadiq, and several other officers, participated. Ramadan Bhatti, a renowned officer, paid heartfelt tributes to the late Mehboob Saqib Khan and praised his contributions to the department. He emphasized the importance of remembering our colleagues. Yasin Tahir also prayed for the departed soul. I spoke about Mehboob Saqib Khan's humanity and character. He was a cheerful, kind, and brave officer who faced Parkinsonism for 25 years without losing his spirit. Despite his illness, he continued to play golf regularly and remained cheerful. May Allah forgive his sins and grant him a place in His mercy.

After the recitation, Ramadan Bhatti, Yasin Tahir, and Muhammad Sadiq visited my office. We had a warm conversation, and they congratulated me on recovering from my accident. Ramadan Bhatti surprised me by saying that he had come to Lahore to find me and had tried to contact me, but for many days after the accident, all communications had been

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restricted by the children and doctors. People from all over the world had been praying for my recovery. Yasin Tahir and Ramadan Bhatti shared stories from the old days. Both are stalwarts of the Customs Department, having lived a transparent and honorable life, always striving for the betterment and good reputation of the department. May Allah keep them safe and blessed.

➤ **Physiotherapy at the Customs House Dispensary**

AC Tanveer conducted another physiotherapy session today. Compared to before, my muscles were much more relaxed. Tanveer diligently guided all the exercises with care and attention. Though there was some mild discomfort, the muscles felt significant relief and relaxation compared to earlier. Physiotherapy is crucial after surgery, especially for fractures, because without it, hands and feet cannot function properly. Regular exercises under a skilled physiotherapist are essential. Ma'sha Allah, Tanveer is highly experienced and skilled, and, Insha Allah, he will also become a successful Customs officer.

➤ **Elder Brother Munir Ahmed**

I offered the Maghrib prayer at Bilal Mosque. After prayer, my elder brother Munir Ahmed, along with Uncle Muhammad Hussain, Shahid, and Tahir, arrived from Sargodha and came to the mess. We had a lively and heartfelt conversation until Isha. My elder brother, Munir Ahmed is a straightforward, simple, loving and caring person. From the very first day of the accident until my stay in the hospital, he stayed close, worrying even over the smallest discomfort and offering prayers for my health. By Allah's grace, through the support of family, friends, well-wishers, and the poor patients we serve, I have been granted new life with health and energy. After Isha, we had dinner. Yumna set up a video call, and I spoke with my children and Asma.

I woke up at 4:30 a.m. and, with Junaid, offered Fajr prayer in congregation at Bilal Mosque. On returning on foot, I handed my walking stick to Junaid and walked the rest by myself. Even a little walking causes fatigue, but Insha Allah, the morning walk routine will gradually resume.

➤ **Bouquet for FBR Chairman**

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At nine in the morning, I headed to the FBR headquarters with Shahid, the PRO. We brought a beautiful bouquet for the Chairman. Mr. Javed Ghani welcomed me warmly. I congratulated him on his extension and presented the bouquet. He also congratulated me on my recovery and walking independently. I also met Member Admin, Bakhtiar Muhammad, who is focused on reforming FBR. In this context, I have been appointed In-Charge of FBR's IMC. Insha Allah, our joint effort is to instill awareness and honesty among FBR officers. Necessary steps are being taken, and the IMC has been formed. Officers have also been warned not to use any political influence for postings or promotions.

➤ Arrival of Mansha Qazi and Asim Effendi

During the afternoon, Asim Effendi from *Dawn*, Sardar Syed Murad Ali Khan from *Baitab* newspaper, and Khateeb Pakistan Mansha Qazi visited my office. Asim Effendi belongs to the royal family of Swat and is highly educated and scholarly. His impactful writings appear on WhatsApp and Dawn.com, showing his skill in capturing complex matters concisely. He is a relative of Kiwan Qadr Khan and a supporter of our welfare activities. We had a long and engaging conversation.

I offered Zuhr prayer in my room. Alhamdulillah, I was able to perform it with proper prostration. I thanked Allah for granting me the ability to bow before Him again. AC Tanveer took me to the Customs House dispensary for physiotherapy once more. The exercises made a remarkable difference; my previously stiff leg muscles have started returning to their normal state.

➤ Participation in ATV Morning Show

After Zuhr, I participated in ATV's morning show, which was being recorded in connection with the October 8, 2005 earthquake. During the program, I spoke about the immediate relief and medical activities our team carried out in the affected areas. The show highlighted how people from all over the country rushed to assist the earthquake victims in Mansehra, Balakot, and Muzaffarabad. Before the accident, I used to visit ATV frequently and had recorded several programs about COVID-19 as well. Alhamdulillah, today I performed all four prayers in congregation at the mosque. I was especially thankful to Allah for granting me the ability to return to the mosque and offer prayers in congregation.

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➤ Sukh Chain Park

After Maghrib, I visited Sukh Chain Multipurpose Ground near Serena Hotel, nearly four months after my last outing. The park was lively and very clean, with jogging tracks, grounds for cricket and basketball, and exercise machines. The park seemed excellently managed. I walked a little and observed the park, but could not walk much, which caused a brief moment of sadness seeing others enjoy walking while I was limited. I quickly dismissed the thought and thanked Allah for granting me health after such a serious accident, sparing me from any permanent disability. After Isha, we had dinner, and I slept early. The next morning, I prepared for Fajr prayer, walked with Junaid to Bilal Mosque, and returned on foot without a stick. Insha Allah, I hope to resume my morning walk routine soon.

➤ Memories of the October 8, 2005 Earthquake

Today is October 8, 2020. I offered prayers for the souls of the earthquake victims. Memories of the October 8, 2005 earthquake came flooding back. Two days after the earthquake, my team and I reached the affected areas. At that time, shadows of death were everywhere. Aftershocks were continuous. We served the victims in Muzaffarabad, Mansehra, Balakot, Neelum Valley, Bagh, Oghi, and Kaladakha, traveling even to remote regions without fear. Sometimes, we traveled continuously for 24 hours. It was during Ramadan; we would have sehri¹⁴ and then dedicate the entire day serving the victims, breaking our fast with water or dates on the road whenever available.

It was a period of passion, as people from across Pakistan came forward to help. Alhamdulillah, from October 2005 to 2008, we continued to serve and treat victims in Kashmir and KPK earthquake-affected areas. The service to the earth-quake victims of October 2005 led Allah to expand our work in relief and medical service. We were granted the ability to reach every corner of the country to help the afflicted, poor, and needy. May Allah grant us further strength and courage to ease people's suffering.

¹⁴. Sehri is the pre-dawn meal eaten by Muslims during Ramadan before the daily fast begins at dawn. It provides energy and hydration for the day ahead and is considered a blessed time for prayer, reflection, and seeking forgiveness, as families wake early to share food and spiritual moments together.

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After 2005, our team also responded promptly to the 2008 earthquake in Ziarat, the 2013 earthquake in Awaran, the 2015 Swat earthquake, and the September 24, 2019 earthquake in Mirpur, consistently providing relief. In Awaran, we rebuilt homes for the victims and established a permanent presence to continue support. Details of all these relief and medical efforts are recorded in my book *“Earthquakes, Wounds, and Life.”*

➤ Trip to Peshawar After Four Months

We departed for Peshawar at 9 a.m. On the way, picked up Custom colleague and physiotherapist Tanveer Ahmed, and Additional Collector Khayal Muhammad. The journey via the motorway takes about two hours. Near Mardan, memories of 2009 and 2010 resurfaced, when in 2009 we provided extensive support to IDPs coming from Swat. Medical camps were set up for them, and in Siri Bahlol, Takhtbhai, a maternity home for IDP women was established. Alhamdulillah, even after sixteen years, it is still operational and serving the poor women of the area. In 2010, we stayed permanently in Mardan, building homes for flood victims while living in Sheikh Maltoon Town for months. Traveling from Mardan to Charsadda brought back memories of the widespread floods, with people residing on green belts surrounded by water.

At Customs House Peshawar, Collector Muhammad Saleem and his team welcomed us warmly. All the colleagues were delighted to see me. I had last visited Peshawar a week before the accident, on June 10, 2020, for a Provincial Anti-Smuggling Task Force meeting. Alhamdulillah, today I returned in full health after nearly four months. I discussed the Integrity Management Cell with the officers. Khayal Muhammad had prepared an excellent presentation emphasizing that the integrity of all officers must remain above any doubt in every respect.

➤ Lunch and Meetings in Peshawar

Muhammad Saleem, the Collector of Peshawar, is a highly insightful and intelligent person. He arranged a special lunch in my honor, attended by Dr. Muhammad Akhtar, Director Customs Intelligence, and IRS Chief Commissioner Sardar Ali Khawaja. I have a longstanding friendship with Sardar Ali Khawaja from our academy days. He is a hardworking and honest officer. We were also together in the 107th NMC. Whenever we meet, it is with respect and affection. Sardar Ali Khawaja congratulated me on my recovery.

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Everyone enjoyed the meal together, savoring Peshawari snacks, roasted meat, and vegetables. Around 3 p.m., we began our return journey. Fajr prayer had been offered in Islamabad, Zuhr in Peshawar, Asr in Mardan, and Maghrib back in Islamabad. Alhamdulillah, I am now able to offer my prayers regularly, most of the time in congregation at the mosque. Isha prayer was performed at Bilal Mosque. After dinner, I spent some time chatting with my children and Asma in Lahore. The fatigue from the day's travel made me sleep early.

➤ **Fajr Prayer and the General's Chair**

I woke up at the time of Fajr prayer and, with Junaid, headed to Bilal Mosque. Walking slowly, we reached the mosque. Qismat Aslam helped me move forward and brought the special chair of the late General, placing it in the row. The General had passed away a few months ago and used to pray in this mosque. He had a special chair made for his prayers. Maulana Zulfiqar has now reserved this chair for me. Whenever I go to the mosque, the students of the madrassa—Qismat Aslam, Junaid, and Rafiq—place the chair for me in the front row. May Allah have mercy on the General. This chair has become a continuous charity (Sadaqah Jariyah) for him. Even the smallest act of goodness in the way of Allah can bring immense reward. After prayer, we walked back home, whereas a few days ago we used to travel by car. After a short rest, I headed to the office.

➤ **Return to Lahore with Mansha Qazi**

The office day was spent managing official matters. Mansha Qazi also came to accompany me back to Lahore. During the journey, he shared stories and recalled old times. He recited poetry and impressed us with his eloquent Urdu and wordplay. We offered Asr prayer en route and reached the hospital near Maghrib. After prayer, I met Asma and the children at home. Entering the house brought a sense of joy and contentment. Happiness spread through every vein, and the children and Asma's faces lit up. Asma treated me with hot biryani. After a short rest, I visited the hospital to examine the patients, seeing over fifty of them, which left me somewhat tired. After Isha prayer, I returned home. Since Rana Arshad advised me to walk without a stick, I have stopped using it. May Allah give me strength to walk and run again as I did before. I had dinner with my family.

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➤ **October 10: My Birthday**

Today is October 10, my actual birthday, though official documents record it as May 5. Even though I had fallen asleep, Yumna, Huzaifa, Mahnoor, and Asma at midnight to wish me Happy Birthday. Throughout the day, messages poured in on Facebook, Twitter, Messenger, and WhatsApp groups. Abdul Wadood Khan and Tariq Boss brought a cake and congratulated me. After Maghrib, Mehboob Shah and Assistant Collector Tanveer arrived. They also conducted physiotherapy. Minsha Qazi came as well. On Facebook, Zarq and Sim wrote a detailed column about my philanthropic work and the accident. In the October Urdu digest, my article “Aur Haadsa Ho Gaya” was published, and many friends called after reading it to check on my well-being.

➤ **Asma’s Birthday Celebration**

Late at night, Asma and the children took me to MM Alam Road. At the restaurant “Junoon,” Asma hosted a birthday dinner. The food was delicious. All of us enjoyed the dinner and blessings of family get together. We returned home late at night. On Sunday morning, I woke up for Fajr prayer, offered it, and rested for a while. I completed the Tasbeehat. Alhamdulillah, today I offered all four prayers in congregation at the Noorani Mosque. Walking without support, I went to the mosque with Huzaifa and Taufiq driver. It is a great blessing from Allah that I have resumed going to the mosque as before. Currently, I am sitting on the chair while praying, and Inshallah, soon I will resume praying fully as I did before.

➤ **Meeting with Ilyas Bomb**

After Maghrib, Muhammad Ilyas came to visit, as usual bringing envelopes of fresh fruits. Mr. Ilyas is a retired Deputy Collector of Customs, having served for forty years. He has a fascinating personality—he speaks boldly, cracks jokes, and breaks major news stories from Pakistan and around the world. This is why he is famously known in the department as “Ilyas Bomb.”

➤ **My Books in a London Library**

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After Isha, relatives of Asma—Dr. Faheem Asif's brother and their mother—came to check on my health. During our conversation, they pleasantly surprised me by telling that they had seen my books *Dua, Ghiza aur Shifa* and *Family Health* in a library in London. Alhamdulillah, I am grateful to Allah that my writings have had an impact. My books are appreciated worldwide, and people from different countries call me for advice. Many have also read my Hajj travelogues *Allah, Kaaba aur Banda* and *Rab Rehman ke Mehman*, and after reading them, have undertaken Hajj and Umrah, sometimes even calling from Makkah and Madinah to inform me that my books inspired their pilgrimage.

➤ Meeting with Mehboob Shah

After Dhuhr prayer, my long-time companion in treatment and charitable work, Syed Mehboob Ali Shah, visited. He immediately wished me a happy birthday. We had a detailed discussion. Mehboob Shah has been a partner in service and treatment for the past 25 years. He is generous-hearted and always the first to bring donations when a disaster strikes in the country. If abroad, he sends funds through his son, Rehan. In recent years, he has been ill and underwent treatment in Canada, including a bone marrow transplant. Despite the challenges, he remains mentally and physically active, though not as energetic as before.

➤ Return to Islamabad

On Monday morning, I woke up at five and quickly prepared to leave. First, I offered Fajr prayer and woke the children and Asma for prayer. Asma then prepared breakfast. Yumna gave precise instructions and kept the medicines ready. At six, we departed from home. The children and Asma sent us off with heartfelt prayers, ensuring a safe journey. On the motorway, most vehicles were heading to Lahore. The morning was cool, with light mist on either side of the motorway. Winter is approaching. The gentle breeze felt pleasant, and soft clouds floated in the sky. As we approached the hills of Kallar Kahar, a sense of relief came over me, knowing the journey was about to end within one hour.

Around 9:30, we reached the mess. After a short rest, I prepared to head to the office. Alhamdulillah, I have now begun walking a little on my own. The use of the walker and stick has been discontinued. Rafiq had also brought the wheelchair to

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Barah Kahu Hospital, which had been with me for the past three months. Sitting in the wheelchair brought an odd sense of helplessness and restlessness. Alhamdulillah, routines of life are slowly returning to the normal.

➤ **Participation in a Zoom Meeting**

On Monday. I chaired a Zoom meeting with goods transport owners from across Pakistan. Their concerns were heard, and assurances were given that solutions would be implemented. Collectors and staff were warned not to harass anyone under the pretext of anti-smuggling operations. The transport owners were assured that if anyone causes unnecessary trouble in the future, immediate action will be taken against them. Arshad Khan and Khayal Muhammad also discussed the week's office affairs. Due to travel, I felt considerable fatigue, which made me feel sluggish. Around three o'clock, I returned to the mess. After a short rest, my energy was restored. Maghrib and Isha prayers were offered at Bilal Mosque, led by Maulana Zulfiqar. Maulana Zulfiqar is originally from Gilgit but has lived in Islamabad for many years. He received his religious education here and serves in the Auqaf Department as a Khatib. He is a scholar of the Qur'an and Hadith, teaches after Fajr daily, and has a very engaging way of explaining Qur'an and Hadith. May Allah reward him abundantly.

➤ **Comfortable Walking**

I went to bed early. I slept well and woke at 4:30 a.m. Alhamdulillah, I walked with Junaid to Bilal Mosque for Fajr prayer. By Allah's grace, I have gradually started walking again without difficulty, although my pace is not as fast as before. The day after visiting Sukh Chain Multipurpose Ground, seeing people jogging, running, and jumping had caused some depression. But by Allah's mercy, my health is restored. Junaid and Abdul Rehman bring regularly warm water with neem leaves and salt early in the morning, which helps reduce swelling in my feet gradually and gives a soothing effect.

➤ **General Yousafani and Customs Uniform**

The day was busy at the office with visitors and daily tasks. Khaleel Yousafani, Collector Customs Peshawar, regularly wears the new customs uniform, and he has met the Governor and Chief Minister of KPK in uniform. Hence, I addressed him as General Khaleel Yousafani. Earlier, only inspectors and superintendents

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wore uniforms. Former Member Customs, Dr. Jawad Awais Agha, introduced the uniform in his tenure. On January 26 this year, Customs Day, all officers wore the uniform. Slowly, the practice of wearing uniforms is becoming popular, and new officers are eager to wear the uniform.

➤ Meeting with Amjad Bukhari and Huzaifa

After several days, I met Mr. Amjad Bukhari, former PTV Director. We have shared a long-standing bond. He has always promoted our charitable activities, arranging programs on PTV, PTV Home, and ATV that helped our work reach distant areas, inspiring people to donate. He remained in critical condition due to COVID-19, requiring a ventilator. By Allah's mercy, he recovered. After 18th June 2020 accident, Huzaifa used to talk to him daily, receiving reassurance and prayers. Huzaifa mentioned that hearing Uncle Bukhari's calls gave him comfort and revealed how much he loved his father.

Maghrib and Isha prayers were again offered at Bilal Mosque, walking on foot. Just after Isha, AC Tanveer called, saying he had just arrived from Lahore to conduct physiotherapy. Witnessing Tanveer's dedication and responsibility fills one with prayers for him. May Allah bless him with happiness and success. Tanveer carried out thorough physiotherapy. Due to a two-to-three-day gap, there was some discomfort, but overall the muscles became relaxed, making walking much easier. Inshallah, I will soon be able to walk, run, and travel long distances like before.

After Maghrib, Khawaja Zafar Iqbal and his brother Khawaja Jahangir came to visit. They inquired about my health and offered prayers for full recovery.

➤ Accident and Charitable Activities

I woke at 4:30 a.m. to prepare for Fajr. The prayer was offered at Bilal Mosque, accompanied by Junaid, who suggested I hold the stick for support, saying it's good in the morning. After returning home, I completed my tasbeehat and continued work on writing and compilation. By Allah's grace, my health is improving day by day. Inshallah, very soon I will embark on service and medical trips to distant areas.

Even after the accident, our charitable work has continued without interruption. As soon as I regained consciousness, the

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first thing I asked about was the welfare projects, and upon returning home, I resumed monitoring them as before. Alhamdulillah, in July, when only fifteen days had passed since the accident, our teams were actively working in the flood-affected areas of Sindh and Balochistan. In Dadu, where safe drinking water was scarce and people were forced to drink from polluted ponds, our team installed nearly 100 hand pumps, providing clean water to the poor residents and thus preventing deadly waterborne diseases.

Among those who contributed most sincerely to this effort were Dr. Amna Asghar from the Fisabilillah Group, Erum Nasir from Nai Umeed, Marwa Mirani from KKN, and Shahida Sultan from Basit Foundation. May Allah reward them abundantly and grant us the ability to continue serving humanity together.

➤ **Importance of Physiotherapy**

The office day was busy, handling numerous pending matters. Instructions were given to officers in Peshawar and Islamabad. I had an extended discussion with IMC Chief Saleem Akhtar. Complaints pending over the last one and a half years were reviewed, actions completed, and filed in the office. Since taking over IMC's charge, new complaints have also started coming in.

After Zuhr, I went with AC Tanveer to the dispensary for physiotherapy exercises. Tanveer performs the therapy with dedication and devotion. These exercises are gradually strengthening weak muscles, restoring them toward their normal state. Now that I've begun walking, my condition is improving. Today, Tanveer introduced new physiotherapy exercises aimed at strengthening the legs, feet, and back muscles, helping them recover fully. The session was tiring, so I rested briefly. At 4 p.m., I left the office and returned to the mess, where a short rest significantly improved my condition.

➤ **Visit to Al-Miraj Habib Trust Hospital**

After Maghrib prayer at Bilal Mosque, I headed to Barah Kahu. Alhamdulillah, the dining hall at Al-Miraj Habib Trust Hospital was beautifully arranged. Children from the madrassa and nearby poor residents were seated for food. Zahir was placing fresh hot bread on the tandoor. Witnessing this scene lifted my spirits. I also checked a few patients and provided them medicines.

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Khawaja Zafar Iqbal and his elder brother Imtiaz arrived at the hospital, offering congratulations on my recovery. Khawaja Zafar brought hot tea and jalebis¹⁵ from home. Saqibullah delivered additional food. Although I hadn't intended to eat, the potato and meat dish was so delicious that I couldn't resist. I ate along with Khawaja Zafar Iqbal and others. After the meal, we enjoyed hot tea and jalebis.

I offered the Isha prayer in congregation. Later, Hamid Qazi and I discussed hospital matters in detail. We returned from Barah Kahu late at night, and due to the day's fatigue, I slept early.

➤ Morning Routine and Office Work

At 4:30 a.m., Mahnoor woke me from a deep sleep. I got up to prepare for Fajr, walked to Bilal Mosque to offer the prayer, and completed my tasbeeh. After a short rest, Abdulrehman brought breakfast, and Junaid brought warm water with neem leaves and salt for my feet.

At 9:30 a.m., I went with Shahid to the FBR office. We met respected Chairman Javed Ghani, who discussed IMC matters and provided guidance. At the office, work proceeded as usual, beginning with the name of Allah. By noon, routine office tasks were completed.

➤ Farewell Ceremony for Dr. Jawad Awais Agha

Today, at Islamabad Club, a farewell event was held in honor of former Customs member Dr. Jawad Awais Agha. The farewell had been postponed earlier due to the March COVID lockdown and later my accident on June 18. Guests started arriving at 1 p.m. First were senior Customs officers, former Chairmen, and members like Riaz Malik and Suleman Khan. Dr. Agha also arrived.

The ceremony included many past officers, including Muhammad Siddiq, Dr. Arslan, Ramzan Bhatti, Nazim Saleem, Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, S.A. Alam, and Yasin Tahir. Present officers

¹⁵. Jalebis are bright orange, spiral-shaped sweets popular across South Asia and the Middle East. Made by deep frying fermented batter and soaking it in fragrant sugar syrup, they are crisp outside and syrupy inside. Often enjoyed hot, jalebis are served at festivals, weddings, and breakfast gatherings with tea or milk.

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included my collectors Muhammad Saleem, Khalil Youslani, Junaid Jaleel, Arshad Khan, Khayal Muhammad, Imran Chaudhry, and FBR officers Hamid Ali Shah, Javed Chaudhry, Mubashir Baig, Fayyaz Rasool, Dr. Saeed Jadun, Naeem Khan, among many others.

After lunch, in the Banquet Hall, Dr. Jawad Awais was honored for 33 years of service in Customs. Riaz Malik also spoke, entertaining the audience with his anecdotes. Dr. Agha expressed his gratitude, saying, "I am proud to be part of the Customs family. I devoted 33 years of my life to this department, always striving for its betterment and good reputation."

Finally, senior officers presented Dr. Jawad Awais Agha with shields and gifts. The ceremony concluded around 3 p.m. I returned to the mess to rest. Alhamdulillah, today I offered all four prayers in congregation at Bilal Mosque.

➤ **Dinner at Lebanese Restaurant ARZ**

After Isha, senior Customs officer and close friend Muhammad Sadiq came to the mess with his son Hasan. Together with another friend, Zahid, we went to the Lebanese restaurant ARZ for dinner. The food was very delicious. At the end, we enjoyed a cup of cinnamon, fennel, and cardamom-flavored coffee, which was delightful.

During the meal, Sadiq Sahib and I had a long conversation about both official and personal matters. He is a kind, competent, and honest officer. Alhamdulillah, he is fully proficient in Arabic, and our discussions are always scholarly and practical. He surprised me further by revealing his fluency in Turkish. After the day's busy schedule, I slept earlier and enjoyed a sound sleep.

➤ **Morning Routine**

I woke up at 5 a.m., prepared for prayer, and walked with Junaid to Bilal Mosque, where I offered Fajr in congregation sitting on General Sahib's chair. After returning, I rested briefly, had breakfast, and prepared for the office. The day passed productively at the office. I also examined patients at the dispensary. Tanveer conducted my physiotherapy exercise. Friday prayers were offered at Masjid Al-Riyadh Al-Jannah.

➤ **Friday Prayers**

The mosque was packed with worshippers. Rows extended

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outside and onto the street. Many worshippers brought their own prayer mats and laid them in empty spaces to pray. As soon as the Imam finished the prayer, most people left to return to their offices or shops, as the Divine command encourages resuming daily work after Friday prayer. Once the prayer ended, I got into the car, and the plan to go to Sargodha was confirmed.

➤ Visiting Parents in Sargodha

In my heart, I hoped not only to meet family but also to pay respects to my parents. Rafiq drove swiftly on the motorway, reaching Sargodha in just two and a half hours. I offered Asr prayer at a mosque on Kot Farid Road. Upon arriving at home, the family was surprised and overjoyed to see me. My parents looked especially happy. I met Dr. Naveed, Awais, Shehroz, and the rest of the family. Seeing me without the walking stick, everyone congratulated me on full recovery.

Whenever I visit Sargodha, news of my arrival seems to spread far and wide, as Abaji often says. While sitting and talking at home, Khawaja Umar Farooq arrived unexpectedly. We were very happy to meet. Maghrib prayer was offered at home in congregation with Hafiz Ubaidullah leading. I thanked Allah for enabling me to pray in congregation. After spending two hours with the family, I sought permission from Abaji to return. Khawaja Umar Farooq accompanied me; I thought he would get down on the way, but he stayed with me.

➤ Journey to Lahore with Khawaja Umar Farooq

Khawaja Sahib said he would travel to Lahore with me. I could hardly believe it, but I was delighted to have a companion. Traveling with a long-time friend makes the journey pleasant. From Sargodha to Lahore, we shared heartfelt conversations, recalling old times. I have known Khawaja Umar Farooq for several decades. We took the scholarship exam together in primary school, studied five years at Ambala Muslim High School together, and also met at Government College. His other brothers were also students of my father. Their father, Haji Mushtaq, was a successful businessman and an avid reader. Whenever we met, it was with great affection and respect. May Allah have mercy on him.

Upon reaching Lahore, Khawaja Sahib said, "Now please drop

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me off; I'll return back to Sargodha. I only came along to chat with you." Our conversation was complete, filled with nostalgia for the days gone by. Khawaja Umar Farooq returned to Sargodha that very evening, and his arrival went unnoticed by the family.

➤ Mahnoor's Affection

At home, Mahnoor, Huzaifa, Yumna, and Asma welcomed me warmly. Mahnoor clung to me as she used to as a little child, bringing back memories of when she would run to sit in her father's lap. May Allah always keep her happy along with her siblings. We had a meal together, and due to travel fatigue, went to sleep early. The night's sleep was deep and refreshing. I woke at 5 a.m., offered Fajr prayer, rested briefly, had breakfast, completed the Tasbeehat, and chatted with the children and Asma. At 11 a.m., I discussed our NGO matters with Ashfaq.

➤ Participation in Hakim Muhammad Saeed Shaheed's Anniversary Event

At 3:30 p.m., I attended the 22nd anniversary of Hakim Muhammad Saeed Shaheed at the local *Point Four* hotel on Egerton Road. The program had already begun. Governor Punjab Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar was present. Bushra Rehman, Speaker of Hamdard Shura, called the speakers. Justice Nasira Javed Iqbal, Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Shami, Muhammad Aslam Dogar, Justice Nazir Ahmed Ghazi, Amjad Islam Amjad, and Hakim Naseem Rahat also paid rich tributes to Hakim Saeed.

Bushra Rehman called my name and spoke of Hakim Saeed as a beacon of healing and service, who dedicated his life to humanity and gave his life serving patients. We, following his footsteps, continue to serve humanity and will do so as long as life remains.

After Maghrib, I attended to patients at the hospital. A good number of patients had come, who usually wait the whole week. Alhamdulillah, my daughter Yumna is managing the hospital efficiently. She comes daily, and the patients are happy with her care. It is always reassuring for a doctor when patients are satisfied, as mental harmony between doctor and patient makes treatment easier. By Isha, I had seen sixty patients and then returned home.

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➤ Mega Medical Camp at Quran College

Today, for the first time after the accident, a medical camp was organized. Professor Muzammil Ahsan had chosen Quran College in Phool Nagar for this purpose. Hundreds of boys and girls study at Quran College, which is affiliated with Medina University in Saudi Arabia.

For the camp, Dr. Zahra, Huzaifa and his friend Zubair, Dr. Nauman, Abu Bakr, Dr. Yumna, Mahnoor, Ashfaq, Dr. Abid, Pashmina, Miskan, Ali Haider, Tufail, and Safdar Bhatti all gathered. Around noon, we reached Phool Nagar. Seeing the spacious and beautiful Quran College building and its adjoining grand mosque was heartening. Yumna took Asma along. Yumna, Zahra, and Mahnoor went with Asma to the girls' and women's section. Mahnoor started preparing slips, while Yumna and Dr. Zahra began examining patients. Dr. Abid set up his Eye Clinic, which quickly became crowded with patients, showing that many had vision issues. Huzaifa and Zubair established a Dental Clinic, and Dr. Nauman and Abu Bakr began examining students in our mobile hospital setup. We set up our clinic outside the mosque.

By noon, hundreds of patients had been examined and given medicines accordingly. We offered the Zuhr prayer in the mosque. Performing prayer in such a spacious, beautiful, and grand mosque brought joy to the heart. Even after prayer, the stream of patients continued. By 2 p.m., lunch was served, which was delicious. Introductions were also exchanged during the meal. The principal of Quran College, Maulana Sohaib, introduced the institution, explaining that it provides full religious education along with Tajweed and Qirat of the Quran, and is affiliated with Medina University. We also introduced our organization. Maulana led a prayer, asking Allah to grant us more opportunities to serve religion and humanity. Seeing such a well-organized institution for Quranic education, equipped with modern facilities, was deeply satisfying.

The medical camp continued after lunch. Around 500 patients received checkups and treatment throughout the day. Alhamdulillah, Allah granted us the opportunity to once again organize a medical camp in a remote area and serve the students and teachers dedicated to Quranic education. Due to the day's

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exertion, sleep came early and deeply.

➤ Return from Lahore to Islamabad

Early in the morning, preparations were made to leave. Fajr prayer was offered at Nooran-i-Masjid. Permission to depart was sought from the children. Asma, Yumna, Huzaifa, and Mahnoor gave heartfelt prayers and farewells. The journey continued on the motorway. The weather was pleasant with a gentle breeze. Two months ago, when I had just resumed office, such travel used to cause great fatigue, but now Alhamdulillah, my health has improved. Though there is some tiredness, it is minimal. Allah's grace has protected me from a major accident and granted full health.

Around 10 a.m., we reached the mess. After breakfast, we proceeded to the office. A busy day followed, resolving pending matters for the week. Today, the FBR Board-in-Council meeting could not take place for unavoidable reasons. AC Tanveer spent significant time at the Custom House Dispensary providing physiotherapy. A short break of three to four days had caused some muscle stiffness, but physiotherapy helped greatly. May Allah bless Tanveer for his dedication; he conducts physiotherapy with such love and care that walking has now gradually resumed. After Asr prayer, we returned from Custom House to the mess. After a short rest, Maghrib prayer was offered on foot at Bilal Mosque. Isha prayer was also performed there in congregation, Alhamdulillah.

➤ Lonely and Melancholy Evenings in Islamabad

After returning home, a certain melancholy naturally sets in. Today, the evening in Islamabad feels particularly lonely and quiet. The company of the children and Asma is a blessing. Evenings in Lahore are usually cheerful, but in Islamabad, especially after the accident, spending time alone feels difficult. Mahnoor, as always, asks daily, "Baba, how are your evenings in Islamabad?" When I told her they feel lonely and sad, she proposed me to write a book titled *"Lonely Evenings of Islamabad."* That book has yet to be completed, but after the accident, a new book began—*"Accident, Healer, and Life,"* which you now hold in your hands. The day's travel and activity ensured a good, restful sleep. Early in the morning, I woke at Fajr time. Together with Junaid, I offered the prayer in congregation, even

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though the mosque's congregation time had passed.

➤ **Morning Walk and Tasbeeh After Four Months**

After prayer, Junaid and I enjoyed a morning walk outside the house. This was the first morning walk since June 18. We walked slowly, taking measured steps, for about fifteen minutes along the road near the mess. Alhamdulillah, there were no problems, no fatigue, and no muscle pain. During the walk, I completed my tasbeehat as before June 18. Allah's special grace has restored my health gradually. Insha'Allah, very soon all activities will resume as before.

➤ **Mahnoor on the Dean's Honour List**

Mahnoor delighted us by sending the LUMS notification at night, announcing that her name is included on the Dean's Honour List again this year, just as it was last year. Heartfelt congratulations were given to Mahnoor. May Allah continue to bless Mahnoor, Yumna, and Huzaifa with even greater successes. Hearing of the children's achievements bring peace and satisfaction, and prayers naturally follow for their continued success.

➤ **A Busy Day at FBR Headquarters**

Most of the day was spent at FBR Headquarters. Meetings were held with Tariq Huda, Member Customs, and Bakhtiar Muhammad, Member Admin FBR. A meeting with Member Customs included Chief Collectors Faiz Ahmed Chadhar, Saifuddin Junijo, and collectors from across the country. Member Customs addressed the gathering, emphasizing that together we must eradicate the cancer of smuggling to ensure the country's economic stability. The meeting continued until 3 p.m.

Afterward, I proceeded to Custom House, where AC Tanveer was waiting at the dispensary. Physiotherapy was conducted first. Tanveer informed me that my muscles are now stronger and more relaxed than before. After physiotherapy, I discussed office matters with Khayal Muhammad and Arshad Khan. I left the office at 5 p.m., offering Maghrib prayer on the way. After a short rest at the mess, I offered Isha prayer in congregation at Bilal Mosque. After dinner, watched the news on TV to stay updated on current affairs and the political scenario in the country. A restful sleep followed.

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The next morning, I woke at 5 a.m., prepared for prayer, and walked with Rafiq and Junaid to Bilal Mosque.

➤ **Morning Walk at Sukh Chain Multipurpose Ground**

After prayer, as before June 18, I went to Sukh Chain Multipurpose Ground with Rafiq. Many people were walking, jogging, or doing light exercises. Children and elderly alike were active; women, men, and children ran about or focused on their workouts. Alhamdulillah, we also began walking. Taking Allah's name and walking slowly, we completed one round of the ground. Then, we tried one of the exercise machines and did some cycling. The pleasant weather and the clean, well-maintained ground refreshed the mind and body. I felt peace and gratitude to Allah for restoring my ability to walk. Slowly, daily routines are returning. When a person falls ill, recovery is by Allah's grace, but effort is also necessary. Treatment and medication are essential, and with proper medical care, coordination between doctor and patient, and the patient's own willpower, healing is achieved. After four months, walking in Sukh Chain Multipurpose Ground felt wonderfully invigorating. Insha'Allah, this morning walk will now continue regularly.

After breakfast, I rested briefly and prepared for office, leaving around 9 a.m. The office day was busy, with visitors coming and going.

➤ **Meeting at the Ministry of Finance**

Members of the Khyber Chamber came to discuss import and export issues at Torkham Border. Immediate instructions were given to the collector for quick resolution of their problems. At 3 p.m., I attended a meeting in the office of Dr. Mujtaba Ahmed Memon, Additional Secretary at the Ministry of Finance. Dr. Memon, a senior colleague from Customs, has been with the Ministry for the past three to four years. He is a highly capable and competent government officer. We discussed complaints received at FBR and the various government and private committees set up for their resolution. Dr. Memon congratulated me on my recovery and assured that everyone has been praying for my health. After returning from the meeting, I rested briefly at the mess. Maghrib and Isha prayers were offered at Bilal Mosque. After dinner, I went to bed early.

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➤ Exercise on the Machines

I woke at 5 a.m. After Fajr prayer, we went to Sukh Chain Multipurpose Ground with Rafiq. The sun had not yet risen. Only a few people were in the ground, while crows and doves pecked at grains. A cool breeze blew through the park. Taking Allah's name, we walked two rounds and also tried exercises on the machines. Strength lost over time is gradually returning. After two rounds, I felt light and refreshed, wanting to walk more. Four months ago, I could easily do 8–10 rounds. Insha'Allah, my energy and strength will gradually be fully restored. Morning walks are like an elixir for health, keeping the mind cheerful and focused throughout the day. Appetite improves, and work becomes more enjoyable. For this reason, moderation in food is important. Nowadays, instead of a heavy lunch, I often have just some fruit, while tea, coffee, and herbal beverages continue throughout the day.

After a long time, I also contacted Aslam Marwat. He is a person who acts according to his own rhythm—if he wishes, he can cut off contact, otherwise he can call fifty times a day. The office day remained busy, with people coming in for work or consultations.

➤ From Singapore to Japan

At the FBR Headquarters, I met NMC course-mate and Additional Secretary Finance, Mohsin Chandna, as well as Dr. Mujtaba Ahmed Memon. I also met the Chairman of FBR, Mr. Javed Ghani, and Member Customs, Mr. Tariq Huda. We discussed customs matters. Member Custom Tariq Huda mentioned that today's meeting included a detailed discussion on the Torkham. Federal Minister Hammad Azhar praised the customs performance. Alhamdulillah, Torkham Custom Station operates twenty-four hours a day, with imports and exports steadily increasing.

Whenever I meet Mohsin Chandna, we talk about the Japan trip. During NMC, I traveled with Mohsin Chandna to Singapore and Japan. He always recalls Roppongi while talking about Japan. The experiences from those days in Japan are recorded in my book *"From Singapore to Japan"*.

➤ Meeting with Faisal Edhi

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Around midday, I received a call from Dr. Saeed Elahi, former Chairman of the Red Crescent, that he and Faisal Edhi, head of the Edhi Foundation, were coming to meet me. After returning from FBR, Tanveer conducted physiotherapy exercises for me at the Custom House dispensary. Alhamdulillah, the muscles in both legs and feet are gradually strengthening. Walking has become easier day by day. During my morning walk, I experienced no pain or discomfort. Junaid noted that there is a marked improvement—earlier, I lifted my feet slightly while walking, but now my gait is becoming normal. Praise be to Allah for this progress.

At 3 p.m., Mian Nadeem Mahmood, Advocate, and Muhammad Ilyas came to meet me. At 4 p.m., Dr. Saeed Elahi arrived with Faisal Edhi. Faisal Edhi, like his great father, is a straightforward and humble person, with no trace of pretense in his demeanor. I told him that after Edhi Sahib passed away, we dedicated a well in Thar in his name, providing sweet water to the people and animals there.

We discussed various Edhi Foundation projects, and I also shared details about projects run under the Customs Health Care Society. Dr. Saeed Elahi mentioned that there is potential for collaboration between Edhi Foundation and Customs Health Care Society projects. Faisal Edhi is successfully leading the organization after his father, with Dr. Saeed Elahi also involved. I presented Faisal Edhi with a bouquet of flowers and a set of my books. May Allah always support and bless those who dedicate themselves to serving humanity.

➤ Treatment and Service in Barah Kahu

At 5 p.m., I left the office and headed to Barah Kahu. By Maghrib, we reached Al-Miraj Habib Trust Hospital. Maghrib prayer was offered in congregation, led by Dr. Suhaib, the physiotherapist. After prayer, I attended to patients' check-ups, and other doctors also arrived. Chips were distributed among the children. Soon, dastarkhawan was set up. Children, women, and men gathered, and students from the nearby mosque also came with their teacher. Everyone enjoyed the meal enthusiastically, while patient consultations continued simultaneously.

Khawaja Zafar Iqbal arrived with hot fish and jalebis. We shared the fish, and finishing with jalebis along with hot tea was a delight. Isha prayer was offered in congregation. It felt like winter

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had begun in Barah Kahu. Around 8 p.m., we returned to the mess, witnessed the news briefly, and planned to sleep after 9 p.m.

➤ Morning Walk in Yasmin Garden

At 5 a.m., I woke up and prepared for Fajr prayer, which was offered in congregation at Bilal Mosque, led by Maulana Zulfiqar. Afterwards, Junaid, Rafiq, and I went for a morning walk at the famous and expanded Yasmin Garden in Islamabad. By early morning, people start arriving for walks. The park has walking and jogging tracks. As the sun rose, more visitors joined. The open space and trees made the atmosphere pleasantly cool—it felt as if winter had started in Islamabad.

We walked at a leisurely pace, gradually increasing our speed. Alhamdulillah, we completed two laps on the jogging track. During the walk, I recited Tasbeehs as usual. After the first lap, I sat on a bench and recited Surah Kahf, praying for goodness, blessings, well-being, and safety. Afterwards, we returned, had breakfast, and prepared for the office and travel to Lahore.

➤ Walking and Mobility: A Great Blessing

The day began as usual with the name of Allah and with the recitation of the Quran, including translation and Tafseer. Alhamdulillah, daily routines are gradually returning to normal. I walk to the mosque on foot. At the Custom House, I climb the stairs, enter the building, and walk to my office instead of using the lift. The journey from wheelchair to walking stick, to walker, and finally to walking freely has been a joyful as well as painful experience.

Junaid remarked that earlier, I took small, careful steps like a child and walked cautiously. Now, I have regained a normal gait. The past four months have taught me how great a blessing it is to walk, move, run, and enjoy a stroll. After the accident, the first two months were spent lying in bed, changing positions gradually. Then, for a month, I relied on a wheelchair and walker. Alhamdulillah, since early October, I have been able to carry out charitable and service activities on my own.

➤ From Islamabad to Lahore

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Friday prayers were offered at Masjid Al-Riyadh Al-Jannah, as usual, with hundreds of worshippers present inside and outside the mosque. Since the accident, I have resumed attending Jummah prayers here after coming to the office. After prayer, we set out for Lahore. Seated in the back with the seatbelt fastened, I stretched my legs and began the journey comfortably. Sarfraz Sepoy accompanied me. On the way, we offered Asr prayer at the beautiful mosque in Sukheki Rest Area.

At home, Mahnoor greeted me warmly, and so did Huzaifa, Yumna, Abu Bakr, and Asma. The accident has reinforced the importance of wearing a seatbelt while traveling—Allah forbid an accident occurs, it provides significant protection. Mahnoor and Asma and I discussed events and situations from the past week.

➤ Fajr Prayer at Noorani Mosque

It has always been a routine that whenever I was in Lahore, Fajr prayer was offered in congregation at Noorani Mosque. The accident had interrupted this routine. At 5 a.m., I woke up with the intention of going to the mosque alone, as the children and Asma were still asleep. Performing ablution, I headed to the mosque, taking Allah's name with me. I brought some fruits for Baba Sharif. Near the mosque entrance, Baba Sharif came running and supported me inside. Alhamdulillah, the prayer was offered under the leadership of Qari Riaz. The return journey was also comfortable. When I told Yumna, she was upset that I went alone and didn't take Huzaifa with me—her concern and love for her father is unparalleled and amazing. May Allah always keep her happy and healthy.

➤ Meeting with Shafqat Mahmood

Most of the day was spent at home. In the afternoon, I visited Defence Phase VIII to meet Shafqat Mahmood, a former Customs colleague, senior officer, and companion for the past 28 years. First, I met his daughter, Dr. Cena Ali, who expressed concern about her father's health. Cena Ali is a dedicated and courageous doctor who has accompanied us on trips to Thar and also served in our charity hospital.

Since joining Customs, the person I have had the closest connection with is Shafqat Mahmood. We first worked together at Faisalabad Dry Port in 1995, and since then, multiple

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opportunities to collaborate have arisen. Over the years, a deep bond of affection and respect has developed. Whenever a departmental issue arose, he was the first person I contacted, and his guidance helped resolve many problems. He played a key role in Yumna and Nauman's medical college admissions.

Shafqat Mahmood is currently unwell. We spent a long time together, and he mentioned that he is trying to learn Arabic and encouraged me to do the same. After two hours with him, I returned home.

➤ Operation in the Mobile Theatre

Alhamdulillah, today we had an Eye Camp program in Nankana Sahib, Village Chak No. 5. Professor Dr. Arshad Mahmood, Abid, and Ashfaq accompanied me, and we reached Nankana Sahib as scheduled. Alhamdulillah, our new mobile hospital includes a fully equipped Eye Operation Theatre, which had its official inauguration today. Taufiq driver transported the mobile hospital, and Dr. Arshad and his team arrived. Operation Theatre Assistant (OTA) had the operation theatre ready.

Professor Dr. Sadia has generously donated a hospital built on four kanals of land in Nankana Sahib, which, InshaAllah, will be developed into both a hospital and school. Abid had pre-screened patients, and Dr. Arshad's team successfully performed operations on twelve patients throughout the day. By evening, returning home, the hospital was bustling with patients, and it was a very active and productive day.

➤ Meeting with Sheikh Parvez

After a long time, social worker and driving force of the Rotary Club, Sheikh Parvez, came to meet. We discussed various welfare projects together. Returned home late from the hospital. Sunday was spent at home. Visited Dr. Tahir in Mughalpura, and we had a long, friendly chat over a shared meal. Meeting Tahir always brings back old memories—he has been a dear companion for the past forty years, and our bond is built on love, respect, and mutual admiration. Alhamdulillah, all prayers today were offered in congregation at Noorani Mosque.

➤ Trip to Islamabad

Woke up early at 5 a.m. to prepare for Fajr prayer, which was

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offered at Noorani Mosque. Custom—Colleague Mr. Ilyas arrived to accompany the trip to Islamabad. The children and Asma saw us off with great love and care. Yumna checked every item, organized medicines, and gave instructions. Seatbelts were fastened. Asma recited prayers while bidding farewell.

On the motorway, traffic was light early in the morning. Few vehicles were visible. Rafiq drove swiftly. The weather is gradually cooling; a chill is in the air. Nights are growing longer, with Isha prayer now around 7:15 p.m. After about five to six hours of sleep, morning comes.

Arrived at the mess around 10 a.m. The office day was busy, managing daily tasks. At 2:30 p.m., physiotherapy was conducted at the dispensary with Tanveer. After a three-day break, muscles had weakened and stiffened slightly. The session brought significant relief. Tanveer's dedication is remarkable—coming from Lahore to ensure physiotherapy continues without interruption. After Maghrib, returned to the mess; fatigue from travel made sleep come quickly.

➤ Meeting Jaleel Akhtar

After Isha prayer, old colleague and dear friend Jaleel Akhtar visited. We exchanged detailed thoughts on domestic and international developments. This was the first extensive meeting with him in Islamabad since the accident. Recently, his wife, respected Hanaf Bhai, passed away, and I had gone to Rashidpur to attend her funeral. Jaleel Akhtar is a person of great patience and resilience. He manages work and family responsibilities with calm determination. He reminded me that life brings both good and bad circumstances, and one must never lose courage.

Jaleel had visited Lahore Mayo Hospital the day after the accident and had come to the house later with Wajid. I have known Jaleel Akhtar for the past forty years. May Allah sustain this bond and grant us the ability to help each other in times of need.

➤ Walk and Exercise at Sukh Chain Multipurpose Ground

After Fajr prayer, I went to Sukh Chain Multipurpose Ground with Junaid and Rafiq. Only a few people were walking and jogging there. We walked slowly, completing one round of the park. I tried out various exercise machines, which relaxed my muscles and made walking easier. Morning walk is an elixir for

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good health, especially after illness or an accident. The office day was busy. Visitors came throughout, and work continued. By afternoon, I had heard everyone's concerns and issued instructions for immediate resolutions.

➤ Second Wave of COVID-19

At 3 p.m., I participated in ATV's *Voice of Pakistan* program with renowned pulmonologist Dr. Shazli Manzoor. Faraz Ahmed was the anchor. Dr. Shazli is well-known in Islamabad for successfully treating hundreds of COVID-19 patients during the pandemic. Globally, the second wave of COVID-19 is spreading rapidly, affecting thousands daily. While Pakistan's case numbers remain relatively low, caution is still necessary. Observing SOPs, wearing masks, and using sanitizers remain the most effective preventive measures until vaccines are widely available.

➤ Passing of Shafqat Mahmood

I had met Shafqat Mahmood the previous Sunday. We spent hours talking, discussing prayers, Tahajjud, and the virtues of reciting Darood Sharif. He massaged my ankle, prayed for my recovery, and shared heartfelt advice. He seemed innocent and devoted, and I never imagined that would be our last meeting.

At Dhuhr prayer, I went to the sector mosque, but his phone calls started coming one after another. When I returned, he asked why I had gone—he wanted to lead the Dhuhr congregation. He brought an Arabic primer, taught me, and advised listening to Qari Basit's recitations to understand the Quran. He explained that he had now devoted himself entirely to Allah, and I congratulated him, noting Allah's grace on him. After some time, he accompanied me to the gate, bidding farewell in his graceful manner.

His talented daughter, Dr. Cena Ali, shared that over the past three to four months, he had completely changed, constantly speaking of prayers, Tahajjud, supplications, seeking forgiveness, and reciting Darood Sharif. On 12th Rabi' al-Awwal, Friday, he had been well and had cooked food for the poor in celebration of Eid Milad-un-Nabi. He loved jalebis, which were prepared and distributed to people that evening.

Tragically, he passed away that very day. Despite attempts at CPR and being on ventilator support, he had departed for Allah on 12th Rabi' al-Awwal. Shafqat Mahmood had been a lifelong mentor and guide, particularly in matters concerning custom, children's admissions and other life decisions.

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On 2nd November 2020, in Miami Bhira, he was laid to rest. His former colleagues, Muhammad Siddique and Yunus Khan, were present. On the way, we spoke of his remarkable life and service. In Islamabad, a Quran recitation ceremony was held with respected officers and colleagues, who highlighted his character and his indelible contributions to the department.

On Sunday, we attended another recitation at his home, meeting his children Talha, Hamza, and Cena Ali. They are enduring their father's loss with great patience and courage. Shafqat Mahmood had been a loving father, treating his children like friends, with a special bond with his daughter Cena Ali. May Allah protect his children and support them in all matters.

➤ **Second Wave of COVID-19**

Currently, Pakistan as a whole, and Islamabad in particular, is facing the second wave of COVID-19. This has caused widespread concern. Government and private hospitals in Islamabad are filled with patients. Several acquaintances, Customs colleagues, and relatives have already been affected. Globally, COVID-19 continues to claim hundreds of lives every day. In November, deaths from the virus are rising in Pakistan as well.

My special prayer to Allah is that He protects the people of the world from this deadly disease. May He send winds that disperse the virus completely. The only effective preventive measures remain the use of masks, maintaining social distancing, and frequent handwashing.

➤ **From Signs and Tayammum to Visiting the Mosque**

The accident occurred on 18th June. Praise be to Allah, my life was spared. After regaining consciousness, my greatest concern was about performing prayers. My entire body was bound in bandages and tubes. Mahnoor brought me a magic stone, and in the hospital and later at home, I would perform tayammum on it, facing the Kaaba, and pray in that manner through gestures.

About a month and a half later, when I began walking with a walker, I resumed performing ablution (wudu), with Huzaifa and Asma helping me. Around three months later, when the plaster

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was removed, Allah enabled me to stand on both feet. A month after the accident, I resumed attending Friday prayers at the mosque regularly. Travel between Lahore and Islamabad also resumed. Walking with a stick became part of the routine, and I gradually returned to the mosque.

Initially, I would sit on a chair while praying. Thanks to Tanveer's physiotherapy, my stiff and weak muscles became active again, and I began standing for prayers. About four months after the accident, when I performed my first sujood¹⁶, I felt overwhelming emotion, and the spiritual experience lingered for a long time. Now, almost five months later, by Allah's great mercy, I am able to perform prayers regularly in congregation at the mosque.



¹⁶. Sujood is the act of prostration in Islamic prayer, where a believer places the forehead, nose, hands, knees, and toes on the ground in humility before Allah. It represents the highest form of submission, closeness, and devotion, allowing the worshipper to express gratitude, seek forgiveness, and experience deep spiritual connection.

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(5) Service and Treatment in the Chilly Airs of South Waziristan

Besides prayer, I had a strong desire to resume trips to the far-flung areas of the country for service and medical care. Without this, life felt dull and incomplete. Service to humanity is such an intoxicating experience that once it touches the heart, it stays for life. My spirit had been restless for the past month. After one mobile hospital, preparations for a second mobile hospital with an eye operation theater were ready. Camps had already been held at the Patoki Quran Institute. Under the supervision of Dr. Arshad Mahmood Mian, an eye camp had also been conducted in Nankana Sahib, where Dr. Arshad and his colleagues, Drs. Faisal and Umar, successfully operated on many patients. Several patients had already been screened in Islamabad and were awaiting their operations once the mobile hospital arrived.

On Tuesday, Taufiq and Parvez set out for Islamabad, undeterred by roadblocks and local protests. By the time they reached Bara Kahu, it was night. The following morning, Dr. Ashfaq's team arrived, along with Abid, Dr. Faisal, and the operation theater assistants. Jahangir went door to door to bring patients to Al-Miraj Habib Hospital.

Eye Operations in Islamabad

The OTA worked for hours to prepare the operation theater. The doctors, with dedication and care, performed eye surgeries of ten underprivileged and poor patients. These patients could never have afforded treatment otherwise. They were brought from their homes with dignity and respect, and the surgeries were conducted in a VIP manner. High-quality IOL lenses were implanted. After the operations, we returned to Al-Miraj Habib Hospital with Mr. Amjad Bukhari. The hospital was bustling with activity; patients continued to arrive, and the operation theater was full of doctors focused on their work. Outside, the patients and their families waited respectfully. After the surgeries were completed, the team finally had dinner late at night.

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➤ The Challenging Journey to South Waziristan

Exactly five months after the accident on 18th June, I gathered courage for the long, arduous, and dangerous journey to Wana, South Waziristan. Tufeeq and Parvez were sent ahead at night. I traveled with Hamid Qazi, Tanveer, Aslam Marwat, OTA, and Khayal Muhammad. With Hamad came Dr. Ashfaq Abid, Dr. Faisal, and Dr. Umar. Our route took us from Islamabad through Chakwal, Talagang, Mianwali, and Chashma Barrage toward Dera Ismail Khan.

The long journey stiffened my legs, but Aslam Marwat's lively conversation kept boredom at bay. His plane had only arrived the previous evening at G6/4; yet he joined the trip despite the long road. The motorway portion was easy, but beyond that, the road was narrow, bumpy and broken, making the journey even more challenging and difficult.

➤ "I Won't Move Ahead Without Tea"

On the way, we stopped at one point, and Aslam Marwat said, "I won't move ahead without tea." He always craves tea as soon as he wakes up in the morning. After Fajr, Junaid had already fulfilled Aslam Marwat's request. Considering his insistence, we paused along the route and enjoyed a strong, flavorful cup of tea. After straightening our backs, we resumed our journey. At Dera Ismail Khan, Shahid Jan, the Additional Collector, along with Ali Asif AC and other staff, welcomed us at the National Club Hotel.

➤ Meeting with IG FC

After performing the Zuhr prayer, we proceeded to the office of IGFC South, Major General Muhammad Umar Bashir. The General greeted us warmly and with great respect. We thanked him for initiating trade from Angoor Adda. I informed him that within one and a half months of starting import-export here, over 200 million rupees in revenue had been collected, with more than 3,000 trucks exported. General Umar is imbued with a strong spirit of integrity. I shared that alongside our official responsibilities, we also engage in welfare and medical service. The General instructed his staff to provide full protocol for Dr. Asif Jah's team and arranged their accommodation at the army mess in Wana. After the meeting, we returned, with Khayal Muhammad

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ensuring all arrangements were in order.

➤ **Physiotherapy in Wana**

Despite the long journey and fatigue, Tanveer did not neglect his duties. On arrival, he conducted physiotherapy in the room, which brought some relief, as every part of the body ached from the long travel. We offered Asr, Maghrib, and Isha prayers in congregation at a nearby mosque. Later, we had dinner with our service and medical companions, Khayal Muhammad and Shahid Jan, who had arranged an excellent meal. During the journey, Dr. Arshad and other doctors enjoyed the scenic beauty around Chashma Barrage. Late at night, Aslam Marwat was called to spend time in conversation. Aslam spoke and narrated many stories and shared his experiences as a social worker.

➤ **Departure for Wana**

At the break of dawn, darkness still lingered outside. After performing Tahajjud prayer and offering supplications for a safe journey, we began our journey toward Wana. A few years ago, traveling to Wana and South Waziristan was almost unimaginable. The Pakistan Army, with remarkable courage, had sacrificed hundreds of lives to restore peace to this region, and now life here was moving forward.

➤ **Hira, Migration, and Service**

In 2014, when millions of IDPs from North Waziristan had settled in Bannu, Lakki Marwat, and Dera Ismail Khan, we had continuously served them. In the IDP camps, we met little Hira, a blue-eyed girl who later became part of our team and a permanent chapter in my book *“Hira: Migration and Service.”* After Fajr, we went to a nearby mosque and then began preparations for the next journey. Inspector Habib-ur-Rehman arrived with breakfast. All companions were ready. At seven o'clock, the Army QRF team, led by Lieutenant Ammar, joined us. As usual, Mr. Marwat led the prayers, invoking Allah for protection, wellbeing, and safety.

With Allah's name, the convoy for service and medical care, led by the undersigned, set out toward Wana. As we moved past Tank, the mountain ranges of Wana began to appear. Along the route, military vehicles and soldiers were engaged in demining operations, risking their lives. Ammar briefed us on the security

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plan for Wana, with military vehicles positioned ahead and behind. General Umar had arranged complete security.

➤ Approaching Wana

We admired the stunning Gomel Zam Dam, a 30-square-kilometer natural lake, while Khayal Muhammad narrated its geography and history. As we approached Wana, greenery and crops became visible everywhere. Wana, situated at an altitude of 5,000 feet, is one of South Waziristan's most beautiful regions. A few years ago, no one could imagine visiting these areas due to terrorism, bomb blasts, and violence. The courageous officers and soldiers of the Pakistan Army had sacrificed hundreds of lives to restore peace.

Traversing the hilly valleys, we noticed occasional wildlife and, gradually, herds of children and animals. Life was moving forward. At Wana Adda, hundreds of trucks were visible, transporting goods to and from Afghanistan. The local markets were bustling, and poverty was evident on many faces. Locals wearing yellow turbans were also visible, adding a distinctive cultural touch to the landscape.

➤ Medical and Eye Camp in Wana

At the District Headquarters Hospital in Wana, MS Abdul Wali and the medical team were present to receive us along with army officers and soldiers. Following local tradition, we were first welcomed with turbans. Work began immediately. Ghulam Ishaq from Bannu had also arrived and took charge of the mobile hospital setup. Our OPD stations were ready.

Of course, with Aslam Marwat around, there was never a dull moment. We had brought plenty of masks, and as Aslam Marwat began distributing them, the local people hesitated at first. It seemed the tall, fair-skinned people of Wana were not used to eye checks. Everyone was eager to consult the eye doctors. The DHQ hospital in Wana was in poor condition. Though 42 doctors were assigned, very few actually reported. The eye operation theater existed, but its machines had been nonfunctional for two years.

The medical camp began, with children, elderly men, women, and other patients arriving for check-ups. Aslam Marwat started distributing gifts among the children, brightening their spirits.

➤ Distribution of Quilts at Angoor Adda

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Tanveer, Saifullah, and Shahid Jan reached Angoor Adda and, along with army officers and soldiers, distributed the quilts sent by Azhar Majeed. The poor locals were delighted to receive these soft, warm blankets in the cold weather. One elderly man shouted with joy, while another wrapped the quilt tightly around himself to ensure no one could take it. An army officer praised the service of the Customs Healthcare Society, noting that such efforts would earn the trust of the people of Angoor Adda. The medical camp continued until evening, with 350 patients examined during the day. Five hundred eye patients were seen, and vision glasses were distributed among 300. Patients continued to arrive until late evening.

➤ Visit to Ummah Children Academy

On the way back, we visited the magnificent Ummah Children Academy. Nestled among the mountains, the academy building was truly impressive. Currently, 670 orphaned children study there. The principal gave a tour of the academy's facilities, which provide high-quality education for orphans and needy children, including technical education. A donation was also made for the students. Throughout Wana's mountains, signs encouraged children to pursue education, emphasizing that education is their true ornament.

Development is progressing in Wana; new schools are being built. The army is also constructing a beautiful mosque and madrasa. Beyond establishing peace, the army is actively contributing to the welfare of local people, earning their goodwill and support.

General Umar Bashir had instructed his staff to ensure the best possible arrangements for the guests. We stayed at the Wana Cantt Officers' Mess, which is a self-contained facility with schools, mosques, and hospitals. Asr and Isha prayers were offered in a nearby mosque, which was crowded with hundreds of worshippers, reminiscent of the rush at Friday prayers. Aslam Marwat noted that Rangroots were present for training, and the five daily prayers are an integral part of their routine.

Dinner was shared with all companions, and after a long day, we slept soundly.

➤ Morning in Wana

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The early morning was quiet and chilly, with the moon still visible in the sky. A cold, piercing wind cut through the air, and the stars were shining brightly in the clear sky. Fajr prayer was offered at the mosque, which was filled with worshippers both inside and outside. Young Rangroots and soldiers were present, starting their day in the name of Allah. Observing their dedication, it was clear that these young men, with such training, would become devoted defenders of Pakistan and Islam, willing to sacrifice their lives when needed.

The cold in Wana was intense; hands and feet felt icy. A cup of tea brought warmth and energy to Aslam Marwat. Early in the morning, Shahid Jan, Tanveer Ahmed, and Saifullah departed for Peshawar. Lieutenant Ammar led our team. While standing in the sunlight, it was a pleasure to meet former Customs colleague Nasrullah Wazir, a respected local of Wana. He shared detailed insights about South Waziristan's history, geography, culture, and traditions. The region has a population exceeding six hundred thousand, with prevalent poverty and lack of awareness. Gradually, people are becoming more conscious, and the Pakistan Army has established peace while supporting local government institutions. The residents are simple, polite, hospitable, and friendly. With proper facilities, the chances of extremism diminishing are high. At 9 a.m., Lieutenant Ammar arrived with the QRF team to lead the group.

➤ **Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak Hospital Medical Camp**

Our first visit was to the Sheikh Fatima bint Mubarak Model Hospital, established with support from the Dubai government. The hospital's MS, Colonel Tajammul Hussain, welcomed us and gave a tour of the facility. The hospital offers excellent medical services, including a dialysis center, neonatal wards, and separate wards for men and women. The laboratory is fully equipped for all diagnostic tests. Although there was no formal eye department, all the necessary ophthalmic equipment was available. Colonel Tajammul had already arranged for us to conduct surgeries there, and Dr. Faisal, seeing the modern equipment, immediately started his clinic.

➤ **Eye Surgeries in Wana**

Hundreds of men, women, and children gathered for eye check-ups. It appeared that eye problems were highly prevalent

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in South Waziristan. A total of 250 patients were examined, and 200 were provided with spectacles to restore proper vision. Dr. Faisal and Dr. Umar had pre-selected patients for surgery. Dr. Usman prepared the operation theater, and together with Dr. Umar, conducted several surgeries by evening. Alhamdulillah, our efforts restored the eyesight of many impoverished locals. Patients continued to arrive throughout the day. At the hospital's main gate, we set up a small clinic in the pleasant sunlight and attended to 150 patients by noon, providing medicines for complaints like cough, cold, headache, fever, indigestion, and respiratory issues.

➤ Visit to Angoor Adda

At noon, we headed toward Angoor Adda with Lieutenant Ammar's QRF team, who ensured security along the way. Khayal Muhammad and Hamid Qazi accompanied us, providing continuous insights into the region's geography. South Waziristan is rich in pine nuts and wild olive trees. The pine nuts from this region are especially famous and delicious. A large processing plant operates here. Traveling through hilly, undulating valleys and historic green mountains, we finally reached our destination after about an hour and a half.

Life in Angoor Adda was bustling. Hundreds of vehicles for import and export were on the roads. Colonel Atif and Colonel Zahid welcomed us at their office, offering a well-organized tea break. We attended Friday prayer at a nearby mosque, and afterwards visited the Pakistan-Afghanistan border point. Military officers and Customs staff stationed at the Zero Point greeted us warmly, and hundreds of trucks were lined up on both sides. After this, we began our return journey.

➤ Meeting with Brigadier Ubaid

The weather in Angoor Adda was very pleasant. Though the sun was strong, cold winds provided a comfortable chill. On the way, we stopped at Khamirang to meet Brigadier Ubaid, who hails from Astore. He received us with warmth, respect, and genuine hospitality. We expressed our gratitude for his services in the area and for facilitating Customs work. Brigadier Ubaid was very pleased to hear about the welfare work being carried out. He vowed that, Allah willing, after his retirement he would also

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dedicate his life to philanthropic efforts.

➤ **Return Journey**

After meeting Brigadier Ubaid, we began our return journey. By around 4 p.m., we reached Shamlam, where the full team was waiting. At 4 p.m., we officially departed from South Waziristan. A QRF escort vehicle accompanied us for security. On the way, we paused near Gomal Zam Dam for Maghrib prayer, where Major Sadiq insisted we have tea before continuing. Our journey had begun at noon from Angoor Adda, and since leaving Wana at 4 p.m., we had been traveling continuously. Except for a brief tea break, neither lunch nor dinner had been taken. The drivers and team members showed remarkable endurance, happily continuing the long journey despite hunger.

➤ **Jhal Chakiyan's Lentils and Hot Tandoori Bread**

At 1 a.m., near Sargodha, we stopped at Jhal Chakiyan to enjoy the area's famous lentils and tandoori bread. The lentils, served piping hot with freshly baked tandoori bread and pickles, were a delight. Everyone, hungry after a long day, ate heartily. Dr. Faisal and Dr. Umar particularly enjoyed the meal. The stop also lifted the spirits of the drivers.

Bypassing Tank, passing through Lakki Marwat, Mianwali, and Sargodha, after a long and challenging journey, we finally reached Lahore around 3:30 a.m. Khayal Muhammad and Hamid Qazi, Khan Baba, along with a driver, departed from Mianwali for Islamabad and arrived safely around 3 a.m.

Alhamdulillah, after five months since the accident, I was able to stand on my own feet and travel across the country's distant and dangerous roads to provide medical care and serve humanity. I pray to Allah that as long as life remains, He grants us the strength to continue serving those in need in every nook and corner of the country and abroad.

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From Chief Collector of Customs to Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO)

On 7 September 2021, I was attending to my routine work at the Chief Collector's office. Visitors kept coming, and I continued resolving the issues of petitioners. After the Zuhr prayer, while work was going on as usual, I received a call from the Prime Minister's House. It was the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister of Pakistan. He informed me that the Government of Pakistan intended to appoint me as the Federal Tax Ombudsman. For this, I would have to leave my Customs service and submit my resignation.

I immediately called Shahid, my PRO, who is always with me. Hearing this news, Shahid Nawaz's face lit up with joy. First and foremost, I thanked Allah for granting me this opportunity. After Asr, I returned home and again expressed gratitude to Allah Almighty for His countless blessings and kindness. I offered thanksgiving prayers.

The next day, I went to the Prime Minister's House to meet Mr. Azam Khan, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister at his office. Many prominent figures were coming and going there. The Principal Secretary said that the Prime Minister was entrusting me with a very important responsibility and that I must carry this burden successfully. I assured him that, Allah willing, I would use all my abilities to improve and strengthen the institution of the Federal Tax Ombudsman.

In Lahore, I shared the news with Asma and the children. They were overjoyed. Huzaifa said, "Baba, there was a time when we were praying to Allah just for your life, and now there is a time when the Prime Minister of Pakistan himself is calling you and offering you the position of Federal Tax Ombudsman." We thanked Allah, gave charity, and shared the news with family members. Relatives in Sargodha were also delighted.

That night passed in deep thought. Sleep came and went. With every breath, I kept thanking Allah. Early in the morning, I woke up and offered Tahajjud prayer, expressing gratitude for His

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blessings. Allah is indeed kind, generous, and full of grace. Yesterday, Huzaifa said that even if we thanked Allah a million times, it would still be too little. When the accident happened on 18 June, we were begging Allah for your life. Allah accepted our prayers. You recovered, then Allah honored you with the country's second-highest civil award, Hilal-e-Imtiaz. Baba, when you stood up to receive the award from the President of Pakistan, I remembered how you were taken into the operation theatre. When the doors of the operation theatre closed, we all cried out in fear. Those three hours felt like the Day of Judgment as we cried and prayed. And today, Allah is again giving you the opportunity that Baba will take the oath of Federal Tax Ombudsman from the President of Pakistan.

After offering Fajr prayer at Bilal Mosque, I rested briefly. At 9 a.m., Shahid arrived, and we headed to the FBR. I met Hasan Saqib Sheikh, who promptly prepared the retirement application and placed it before me for signature. Before signing, memories from 31 October 1992 to 15 September 2021 flashed before my eyes. I remembered how my career began at the Civil Services Academy and then at the Multan Collectorate. All the collectors, members, and chairmen came to mind, especially the late Riaz Hussain Naqvi. During my service, Allah granted me the ability to work with honesty. He bestowed honor, dignity, position, respect, and recognition. With trembling hands and tear-filled eyes, I signed the retirement application.

The entire day was spent preparing the application and summary. Until late at night, emotions remained intense. After Isha prayer, dear friends Jalil Akhtar, Khawaja Zafar, and Mumtaz Ali arrived. They congratulated me warmly. Mumtaz Ali brought corn bread cooked in butter from Swat. We ate together and talked at length. My friends expressed great happiness. In his own way, Jalil said that Allah's grace was upon me, that when I came to Islamabad, Allah showered His blessings on me. Mumtaz Ali said this was Allah's reward because I serve His creation. Khawaja Zafar Iqbal was also very happy and said he had always wished that I would stay in Islamabad after retirement.

The night passed between sleep and wakefulness, lost in thought. With effort and determination, Shahid Nawaz managed to get the file to the Finance Minister's office. Once the matter

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emerged from the FBR, it spread like wildfire. Friends and colleagues shared the news on Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. Congratulations poured in from all sides.

On Thursday at 3 p.m., there was a lecture by the renowned Qur’anic scholar and numerology expert, Professor Ahmed Rafiq Akhtar. I met him; he embraced me, offered prayers, and was very happy to hear about the FTO appointment. May Allah grant him a long life. I also met Maulana Zulfiqar, who offered prayers upon hearing the news.

After Isha prayer, Syed Qadir, Saqibullah, and Shayan brought the mobile hospital and dastarkhwan. Amjad Bukhari also joined us. Near Melody and Polyclinic, we distributed food among poor laborers. The people there are familiar with our mobile hospital and said they also needed medicines. We set up a medical camp on the spot. Amjad Bukhari continued distributing food. Until 9 p.m., patients were examined and meals were served. Jalil Akhtar also arrived. We ate together and talked at length.

As soon as I lay down, thoughts began to crowd my mind. Scenes from the past thirty years appeared before my eyes. The journey from Assistant Collector to Chief Collector had been truly fulfilling. Alhamdulillah, I worked with honesty, contributed to increasing national revenue, and stood firmly against smugglers and tax evaders.

I always placed the national interest above everything else. At every stage and in every difficult moment, Allah granted success and dignity. I stood up to powerful mafias and served Allah’s creation with full commitment. The President of Pakistan honored me with two of the country’s highest civil awards. Allah blessed me with righteous children and kept my parents’ shade over my head. No amount of gratitude can ever be enough.

Lost in these thoughts, I finally fell asleep. I woke up at the time of Tahajjud, offered the prayer, and supplicated humbly before Allah. I prayed for the security of the country, the well-being of my children, and for the long life of Imran Khan, asking protection from unforeseen calamities. After the Fajr prayer, I went for a short walk and recited Surah Al-Kahf. Allah willing, its blessing would bring goodness and protection throughout the

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week, and the notification would also be issued.

After Friday prayers, the Chief Collectors' Conference was held, where all Chief Collectors from across the country presented performance reports of their respective regions. When my turn came, I spoke emotionally and said that this was my last presentation as Chief Collector of Customs. I expressed pride in being part of the Customs family. Chairman FBR, Dr. Muhammad Ashfaq Ahmed, also congratulated me on being nominated as Federal Tax Ombudsman. Other colleagues paid their tributes as well. The Chairman said it was a matter of pride and satisfaction that someone well-versed in tax matters was becoming the FTO, and expressed hope that FBR would grow stronger with my appointment.

Throughout the conference, memories of the past thirty years kept passing before my eyes. Moments of joy and some moments of sadness resurfaced. I especially remembered my closest colleague and compassionate friend in Customs, Shafqat Mahmood. Whenever there was an issue, he was the first person I would turn to. Had he been alive, he would have been overjoyed at the news of my becoming FTO.

The conference continued till evening. For the past five days, Shahid had been tirelessly following my file so that the retirement notification could be issued quickly, followed by my appointment as FTO. Messages and prayers were pouring in from across the country through social media. All of this was purely Allah's grace.

After the Isha prayer, I visited the home of the late Rana Khalid to offer condolences to his children. I fell asleep around 10 p.m., woke again at midnight for Tahajjud, and spent some time talking with the children and Asma. After Fajr, I rested briefly. At eight in the morning, we departed for Lahore. Junaid Khan had arranged the mobile food service in a poor area. After distributing food among the needy, we left for Lahore.

On 22 September 2021, the retirement notification was issued, and thus the journey from Assistant Collector to Chief Collector of Customs came to an end.

On 29 September 2021, while sitting in the office, I received a message from Azam Khan containing the notification of my appointment as Federal Tax Ombudsman. The same evening,

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Tariq Najmi, Principal Secretary to the President of Pakistan, arranged the oath-taking ceremony. Along with Khaldoon Haq and Shahid Nawaz, I reached the President's House. The oath-taking ceremony was held, and President Dr. Arif Alvi administered the oath.

After the ceremony, I had a one-on-one meeting with the President, where I pledged that, Allah willing, I would make the institution of the Federal Tax Ombudsman active, effective, and responsive, and one that resolves taxpayers' issues promptly. In November, I met the Prime Minister and reiterated the same commitment.

By the grace of Allah, over the past eight months, from October 2021 to June 2022, the FTO institution has been transformed into a people-friendly body that provides relief and ease to the public. Hundreds of taxpayers have been given relief, and their problems have been resolved. The President of Pakistan has appreciated the performance of the FTO in his messages. I am grateful to Allah for granting me the ability, after taking the oath as Federal Tax Ombudsman, to serve taxpayers, resolve their issues, and provide ease and relief to them.

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Once again in the Surgical Tower, Farukh Azhar also returned to the Almighty

At the beginning of February 2022, the health of Farukh Azhar, the children's maternal uncle and a close relative, deteriorated. He had been on dialysis for the past six months and also faced several other health issues. With great courage and endurance, he had been fighting every illness. He was a man of noble character and refined manners. He was brought to the emergency department of Mayo Hospital. Once his condition stabilized, he was shifted to the nephrology ward, where Professor Anees and his team provided treatment.

His health continued to fluctuate. After a week, when he felt

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slightly better, the doctor considered giving him leave, but within a day or two, his condition worsened. He was then moved from nephrology to the Surgical Tower. Poor Farukh ended up on a ventilator. Yumna remained on duty day and night with him, leaving no stone unturned in his care. When a patient goes on a ventilator, almost all hope seems to fade.

Being in the Surgical Tower brought back memories of the day of accident. Every single moment of treatment came to mind. Praise be to Allah, who granted me life. In the ICU of the Surgical Tower, Farukh Azhar's condition continued to decline. He was moved from a single ventilator to triple support. Finally, on the night of February 17, at midnight, he surrendered his soul to the Creator. He was freed from all his sufferings.

On Friday, February 18, 2022, he was given the funeral bath along with his son Abeer and brother Faheem. His funeral prayer was held at the DHA V Block mosque, attended by a large congregation. The children bore the grief of losing their father with immense courage and resilience.

His youngest daughter, Amina, shared a very special bond with Farukh Azhar. She was deeply attached to him and would often cry alone, remembering her father, though she suppressed her emotions in front of others. Amina's condolence post on Instagram about her father's passing is so heart-wrenching that anyone who reads it feels her grief as his own. You should read it too:

The inside of an ambulance feels unsettling in a way that is hard to explain. When the sirens start, the lights seem to dim, and a heavy anxiety settles in, mixed with the sharp, familiar smell of medicines. Or maybe that feeling comes from within me, my own fear spilling into the space around me.

Life is strange, random, and often cruel in its logic. One moment you are laughing, dancing, taking pictures with friends, and just a few hours later you are in the back of an ambulance, watching your father struggle to breathe. Life shifts without warning, like drops of colored ink spreading through water, quietly changing everything they touch, including the people caught inside those moments.

A clear ending, painful as it is, brings a certain calm. It hurts,

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it takes time to accept, but it does not carry the same torment as the space between life and death. That waiting, that suspension, is unbearable. Watching an ECG screen, fearing the moment it might go flat, is agony. There are no softer words for it. The pain of placing my hand on your chest and feeling your heartbeat slow, one beat at a time, is the deepest pain I have ever known.

And yet, despite all of it, despite a grief so vast I cannot even fully grasp it, I feel at peace. It is okay that you never saw my first semester GPA, or my graduation. It is okay that you never saw my career begin, or my life settle into place. I know you are at peace now. And because of that, so am I.

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Part Five

**Neelum Valley, Mirpur (Azad Kashmir), Chitral,
Gilgit, and Hunza : Accounts of Service and
Medical Trips**

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Service and Medical Trips

During the stay in Islamabad, the work of service and medical assistance continued in Neelum Valley (Azad Kashmir), Chitral, Gilgit, and Hunza. Despite difficult and challenging journeys, efforts were made to serve the local residents, including setting up medical camps. On September 24, following the earthquake in Mirpur, relief goods and tents were immediately transported to assist the victims. Despite the threats of Indian aggression and firing, trips were made close to the Line of Control to help Kashmiri brothers. In Sargan and Sharda Valley, aid was provided to people affected by glacier bursts, reaching Neelum Valley in sub-zero temperatures (minus 10°C) to assist the victims. Earlier, assistance had been extended to the affected in Larwa Valley. Support was also provided to the poor communities of Hunza and Gojal. Medical camps were organized in Chitral and the scenic Kalash Valley to serve the local population.

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Lonely and Quiet Evenings in Islamabad

“Baba, what do you do in the evenings?” asked Mahnoor.

“My dear daughter, in the evenings, I feel lonely and quiet here in Islamabad. At the moment, there isn’t much to do,” he replied.

“Then start a novel called *Lonely Evenings in Islamabad*,” she proposed. Though he didn’t begin a novel, but decided to start a book. The first few days in Islamabad were spent in sadness. After returning from the office, time passed slowly. There was a persistent unease, a restlessness. What should I do? Where should I go? For the past twenty-nine years, my routine had been fixed—between Maghrib and Isha, he would devote myself entirely to serving the poor and needy patients, whether they came from Sargodha or some far-off disaster-affected area. Maghrib prayer was offered at 449 Jahan Zeb Block, Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore, and after that, patients would arrive—getting recovered, taking medicines, giving prayers. By the blessings of these prayers, Allah had always shown mercy and grace.

➤ The Growing Tree of Service

The tiny seed of service I had planted twenty-nine years ago had grown into a mighty tree, its branches spreading across the country and even across the world. Alhamdulillah! Whenever disaster struck—earthquake, flood, or other calamity—teams from the Customs Health Care Society would reach out immediately to help.

To give purpose and joy to the lonely evenings in Islamabad, I started working right away. With the support of Collector Seema Raza Bukhari and Additional Collector Ashfaq Ahmed of Islamabad Collectorate, a dispensary was established for the officers and staff of the Customs House. Its inauguration was carried out by the esteemed and renowned, ... Officer, Muhammad Ramzan Bhatti.

Alhamdulillah! On the same day, another dispensary was also set up in PHA Flats, G-10, for the underprivileged residents. Yusuf Shah, originally from Shangla and associated with an NGO, had

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established a connection years ago that still continued. During the 2016 earthquake in Shangla, he had assisted in helping the victims. For this dispensary, Yusuf Shah arranged a flat in the PHA Flats, which was ready in a few days.

On 8th February 2019, in the presence of Senator Talha Mahmood, Dr. Saeed Alahi, Chairman Hilal Ahmar, Mumtaz Haider Rizvi, former FBR Chairman and Muhammad Ramzan Bhatti, the 43rd dispensary of the Customs Health Care Society was inaugurated. Alhamdulillah! Patients began arriving immediately.

➤ Camp in Ali Pur

That same evening, a camp was set up in Ali Pur, on the outskirts of Islamabad. From Lahore, Ashfaq, Dr. Shahroz, Ali Haider, Abid, and Rafiq had arrived. Aslam Marwat, as usual, did not leave anyone behind and was present with his turban and stick. When the camp started in Ali Pur, it felt as if they were in Hunza, Gilgit, or Baltistan. Children, the elderly, young boys and girls—all were Balti and Hunza people. Jafar Shah, the driver, explained that this entire area is populated by people from Gilgit and Baltistan. Hundreds of patients were treated until late at night. It became clear that such a large population had no health care centre in the area. The locals were very happy about the camp. Even late at night, patients kept coming. Aslam Marwat continued, as always, to distribute gifts among the children, spreading joy.

➤ Customs Mess Colleagues

In Islamabad, a residence was established in the G-6/4 area where other officers from Lahore—Fazal Yazdani, Zahid Khokhar, Nayar Shafiq, Haroon Malik—and Javed Ghani from Karachi were staying. Bilal Mosque is nearby, where, Alhamdulillah, we had the opportunity to offer prayers in congregation. A small madrasa in the mosque housed children from various parts of Kashmir. Medicines were arranged in the dining hall of the mess, and the children from the madrasa began coming to receive treatments for their ailments. Gradually, patients from the surrounding areas also started coming.

The climate and atmosphere of Lahore and Islamabad are very different. Lahore is a city of ordinary people, bustling with life.

➤ A City of Officers and Grades

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Islamabad, on the other hand, is a city of officers and grades. Sometimes it feels as if the city is inhabited not by people but by human-shaped grades. At night, the streets are almost deserted. People raised in these bureaucratic surroundings often head to Islamabad Club, discussing grades and salaries from morning till evening. Walking in the streets of G-6/4 at dusk, one often gets the impression that the city goes to sleep as soon as the sun sets.

Nonetheless, Islamabad is the most beautiful city of the country. Its roads are clean and transparent, and even after heavy rain, there is no waterlogging. Early in the morning, one can walk in any street or park, enjoying the open air and deep breaths.

Alhamdulillah! After establishing three dispensaries in Islamabad, living here has become pleasant. From the start, Allah has granted the opportunity to serve the poor and needy patients. Staff at the Customs House receive medical care, the surrounding underprivileged residents are helped through the PHA Flats dispensary, and the children at the madrasa in G-6/4 continue to be cared for. The service to the poor in the surrounding areas is ongoing.

➤ Meetings in Islamabad

From Monday to Friday, the stay is in Islamabad, with Friday eagerly awaited for the return to Lahore. Arriving early on Friday allows immediate attention to patients at the hospital, where check-ups and treatments begin. Throughout the week, patients wait patiently for care. On Monday morning, the return journey starts.

Customs colleagues and respected friends like Syed Ahmed Alam visit occasionally. He has written a remarkable autobiography, and heartfelt conversations were shared with him. In the evening, a visit was made to meet the renowned Islamic scholar, researcher, and thinker Dr. Sajid Rahman in Bahria Town. A meeting with Dr. Sajid Rahman had occurred several years ago. He is a progressive scholar of Islam, a gaddi-nashin, and belongs to a devout family. His particular area of interest is the Seerat-un-Nabi. He had participated in the book launch of *Allah, Kaaba, aur Banda*, where his impactful address mesmerized the audience.

During the meeting, discussions turned to the journey of Hajj,

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sharing reflections on the spiritual experiences of Makkah and Medinah.

Dr. Rahman mentioned that reading *Allah, Kaaba, aur Banda* feels as if one is traveling through the streets of Makkah and Medinah alongside Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah, involving oneself in devotion and love for Allah and His Prophet.

On the way back, a conversation took place with Dr. A.J. Khan, the 92-year-old principal of Frontier Medical College. Upon introduction, it was discovered that he too is a Kemcolian. Talking about King Edward Medical College brought back years of memories and heartfelt exchanges. He requested me to visit Abbottabad as early as possible.

➤ Supporters of Goodwill and Welfare

Alhamdulillah! Thousands of people worldwide contribute to our acts of service and medical care, enabling this work to continue. In Islamabad, the elderly Dr. Aftab Habib Khan has been regularly sending donations for the past five years. A conversation with him brought great joy. He inquired about Asma and the children—Yumna, Huzaifa, and Mahnoor. Dr. Aftab has memorized my books, which include mentions of Asma and the children, so he is familiar with them.

In the evening, a visit was made to Dr. Aftab's home. At the age of 85, he resides with his elderly sister in a large house in Islamabad. Upon seeing me, he was overjoyed and repeatedly expressed gratitude, asking about the children. The day before, he had sent a donation through Ashfaq. Upon sitting, cash was immediately presented for the mosque. Recently, three mosques had been constructed in Thar. Nazir from Thar kept calling and sent images of a mosque under construction. He mentioned that despite being poor, they had been collecting funds for five years to complete the mosque, hoping to hold Tarawih¹⁷ prayers there during Ramadan¹⁸, though much work remained.

¹⁷. Tarawih is a special voluntary prayer performed by Muslims during the nights of Ramadan after the Isha prayer. It involves recitation of long portions of the Quran and offers a time for reflection, spiritual renewal, and community worship, helping believers strengthen faith and deepen their connection with Allah throughout the holy month.

¹⁸. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, observed by Muslims worldwide as a time of fasting, prayer, reflection, and charity. From dawn to

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Dr. Aftab sent funds for the mosque and immediately contacted Shafqat to begin the work the next day. He sent additional funds the following day. His noble sister, Sarwat, also contributed. Alhamdulillah! Construction began and was completed before Ramadan. A madrasa for children was also established. MashaAllah, now five daily prayers are offered in the mosque, and the village children—both boys and girls—are learning the Quran.



sunset, believers abstain from food and drink, seeking spiritual growth, self-discipline, and closeness to Allah while strengthening compassion, gratitude, and community bonds through worship and generosity.

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Serving and Treating the Victims of Leswa in the High and Melancholy Skies of Neelum Valley

It was early in the morning, the clouds hovered in the sky, and mist lay over the mountains, carrying a cool freshness in the air. Muzaffarabad city seemed asleep. From the first floor of the Grandeur Hotel, the entire city spread out in view—a mesmerizing scene. Though the atmosphere was silent, the sound of the Neelum River flowing and crashing against the stones was not jarring; rather, it was a soothing melody to the ears, like the gentle resonance of flowing water.

A similar morning had occurred on October 8, 2005. People, having eaten their pre-dawn meal (Sehri), had gone back to sleep. At precisely 8:55 a.m., just as children were reaching school, calamity struck. In an instant, the entire Muzaffarabad, Balakot, and surrounding areas were flattened. Joyful, young faces wilted in the blink of an eye. Hundreds of children and their teachers were buried alive under the rubble. The then Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir, upon witnessing the devastation of Muzaffarabad, remarked, “I feel as though I am the Prime Minister of a graveyard.”

➤ The Clouds of Leswa Broke

A similar fate though of less magnitude and restricted to a specific area befell the residents of Leswa last week. Naeem explained that the day had been pleasant, the skies clear, with no sign of rain. People had returned home after their daily work. Slowly, the Leswa market was closing as shopkeepers secured their stores. At the local mosque, young Tablighi students had just finished a sermon following Maghrib prayer. One student, studying under Maulana Tariq Jameel, delivered a profound message reminding everyone of mortality. He said that this life is only a few days long, after which comes an eternal life in the Hereafter. He emphasized the importance of sacrificing one’s life in the way of Allah. After the sermon, the students prayed, “O

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Allah, let us live our lives devoted to Your path, and grant us death in Your cause.” They then exited the mosque.

Around 8 p.m., suddenly, dark clouds gathered over the mountains. In the very next moment, lightning struck violently. Though darkness had already fallen, the lightning cracked like a massive explosion. Almost simultaneously, a torrent of water rushed down the mountains at bullet-like speed, carrying enormous boulders. In minutes, centuries-old trees, mosques, and shops were swept away, obliterated from existence. Nazir was walking along the riverbank with his daughters. Hearing the roar of the water, he screamed at them, clutched them tightly, and ran in the opposite direction, saving their lives. All the Tablighi members who had just left the mosque were caught in the flood. They became martyrs in the way of Allah, and their prayer was answered. Where houses once stood, it seemed as if they had never existed. Over thirty people lost their lives, and hundreds were rendered homeless.

Brave young soldiers of the Pakistani Army, local residents, and police immediately arrived to assist the victims. Helicopters airlifted people to safe locations. Alhamdulillah, the distinction of the Customs Health Care Society has always been that whenever a disaster strikes, its teams reach the site and dedicate themselves entirely to rescue and relief operations.

On the third day of the incident, a call was made to classmate Khawaja Tahir Aziz to check on the situation. He was asked to purchase rations for 100 families. Tahir’s friend suggested increasing it by 15 more packs. The Deputy Commissioner of Neelum advised preparing 150 packs so that everyone would be covered. Khawaja arranged for 150 ration packages. Early in the morning, from Lahore, Professor Arshad Mahmood, Professor Muzzamil Ahsan, Abid, Ashfaq, Ali Haider, and Rafiq arrived with medicines and gifts. Aslam Marwat arrived by noon.

The team immediately began serving the flood-affected residents, continuing the tradition of selfless relief and medical care that has always been the hallmark of the CHCS.

➤ Journey to Muzaffarabad and Leswa

After finishing breakfast early in the morning, we set off for Muzaffarabad. Sadaqat brought another vehicle for the convoy.

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Alhamdulillah, the service and medical relief team headed toward the Leswa Valley via Muzaffarabad to assist those affected by the disaster. Passing through the scenic areas near Murree lifted our spirits. Clouds hung low in the sky, a light drizzle fell, the air was cool, and the mesmerizing scenery made one wish to settle there.

After three hours of pleasant travel, we reached Muzaffarabad and picked up Dr. Tahir near Chehla Bridge. Khawaja Tahir has been a friend since the KE days—a harmless, cheerful person. Though it had been many years since we last met, our bond of affection and respect had never wavered; in fact, it had only deepened with time. Meeting him brought back memories of our youth and the days spent at KE.

We then proceeded toward Leswa. The weather remained delightful. Khawaja had brought Kashmir's famous piping-hot Baqar Khanis. We crossed the Noseri Bridge near the Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Plant, which generates over 100 megawatts of electricity. From Chehla Bridge, passing through Panjgran, Balgran, and Noseri, we soon reached the Tetwal check post. Upon arrival, our mobile phones automatically adjusted half an hour forward, since India lies just beyond this checkpoint. Hearing the word "India," an elderly Kashmiri remarked, "Baba, it is not India; it is our Occupied Kashmir." From the checkpoint, Occupied Kashmir was visible—similar landscapes, the same culture, a shared history—but the paradise-like valley had been reduced to a site of suffering by oppression and atrocities.

Beyond Noseri, we reached Jura, and half an hour later, we arrived at Zero Point. Near the Leswa bypass, the signs of destruction were immediately apparent. Collapsed houses and uprooted trees revealed the scale of devastation. As soon as our vehicles stopped, large numbers of women and children gathered around. Gifts were distributed among the children, and beautiful shawls were given to the women. Tents were set up at various spots. Locals introduced us to women and children whose fathers and husbands had been swept away by the floodwaters; the search for their bodies was still ongoing. The bodies of the young Tablighi students who had left the mosque were also yet to be recovered.

➤ Medical Relief and Service in Leswa

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After leaving the bypass, we proceeded toward Leswa Bazaar. The market had been completely destroyed by the flood; not a single shop remained intact. As soon as the affected people saw our vehicles, they gathered around. We set up supplies in an open space. The locals came forward to assist immediately. Mushtaq arranged an empty tent for us, where we stored medicines, and Ashfaq quickly organized the dispensary. Aslam Marwat began distributing rations to the affected families and shawls to women at Zero Point. Initially, there were few patients, but gradually our work gained momentum.

Professor Arshad and Abid set up their eye clinic. Soon, patients began arriving, sharing tearful stories of illness and devastation. Hot tea was served shortly after. Khawaja Tahir, Professor Muzzamil, and two local helpers took a truck loaded with rations to affected areas, distributing supplies house to house. On the way, they met the Chief Justice of the Azad Kashmir Supreme Court, who was pleased to hear about the relief work carried out by the Customs Health Care Society. Meanwhile, our camp continued operating, and a large number of patients gathered within a short time.

➤ Professor Muzzamil Ahsan and Aslam Marwat

Professor Muzzamil Ahsan set up his own herbal medicine station, while the elderly and middle-aged patients first approached Professor Arshad for eye checkups. Once they learned that eye drops and glasses would also be provided, everyone hoped to receive spectacles. Professor Mazmil simultaneously offered guidance and herbal treatment. Selected individuals were given Qur'ans brought from Lahore by Professor Muzammil. By evening, around 300 patients had been examined and treated.

Aslam Marwat's generosity sometimes caused minor disputes. During distribution, those who missed out raised complaints. Coordinating with local helpers, Aslam Marwat and Khawaja Tahir compiled lists. Alongside patients, children received gifts, women received shawls, and rations were distributed among the affected families.

➤ Kashmiri Cuisine

Although Khawaja Tahir had already provided piping-hot

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Baqar Khanis, everyone was hungry after the day's travel and work. Around 5 p.m., Mushtaq brought fresh corn flatbreads and saag from his home. Everyone enjoyed the meal, accompanied by hot tea. After Asr prayer, we departed from the beautiful but devastated valley. Alhamdulillah, our mission was accomplished: 350 patients were treated, rations were distributed among 150 affected families, cash was given to orphaned children, shawls were given to women, and gifts handed over to children.

On the way back, we offered Maghrib prayer at a mosque near Muzaffarabad. After consultation, it was decided to spend the night in Muzaffarabad. We checked in clean, well-kept rooms at the Grandeur Hotel. At Khawaja Tahir's home, his kind-hearted wife quickly prepared delicious Kashmiri dishes. We enjoyed the meal and spent quality time chatting with Khawaja Tahir, recalling old memories.

➤ Memories of King Edward Medical College and the Chakar Valley Journey

Memories of the years spent at KE hotels came up, along with enjoying some excellent food. Early in the morning, we set out in search of a mosque and offered Fajr prayer at a city mosque, reciting Surah Kahf and thanking Allah for granting us the opportunity to serve His creation. Our companions were tired after two days of travel and work, so everyone was allowed to rest until 9 a.m. Although Professor Arshad Mahmood was feeling unwell, his spirit remained strong. We contacted Maulana Fazal Rabi, who said he would come to Chakar Valley to help organize our camp.

Around 10 a.m., we left Muzaffarabad. The city now is lively and thriving, a stark contrast to memories of the 2005 earthquake when despair and death shadows had engulfed it. Today, Alhamdulillah, Muzaffarabad is vibrant, with wide, clean roads in its beautiful valleys. The Kashmir Valley truly is a paradise on earth, with lush, rolling green landscapes and beautiful mountains. The scenery of Neelum Valley is so enchanting that one can easily lose oneself in its beauty. With peace restored, tourists from all over the country and abroad now visit the most beautiful valley.

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➤ Journey to Chakar Valley

Currently, Muzaffarabad and Neelum Valley hotels are bustling with visitors. Chakar Valley, about 77 kilometers from Muzaffarabad, has an open and well-maintained road, though the climb requires skillful driving. In Kashmir, the weather changes like a chameleon—clouds can gather in an instant, bringing cool winds and drizzle, and just a few kilometers later the skies look clear. Chakar Valley is familiar territory for my companion Rafiq and me. After the 2005 earthquake, we had visited this area with our team and Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman.

Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman hails from Chakar Valley, Salmiya, but has spent his childhood in Lahore. He comes from a scholarly and religious family, with his grandfather and father being well-known Islamic scholars in Kashmir, whose guidance people sought for Quran and Hadith studies. Meeting Fazal-ur-Rehman brought back memories from the KE days. He oversees the Masjid on Nisbat Road and also served as an Arabic teacher at Crescent Model School. He is a kind-hearted and deeply learned scholar, well-versed in the Quran, Hadith, and contemporary religious guidance. He has been selflessly participating in our medical and relief work for several years.

On our way, we experienced intermittent clouds and light rain and reached Chakar Valley around noon and then proceeded via Rawal Gali to the beautiful Sudhan Gali toward Salmiya, where we met Maulana Fazal Rabi en route.

➤ Medical Camp in Salmiya

In Salmiya, a beautiful lake developed after the 2005 earthquake which added to the area's charm. Arriving at Fazal Rabi's home brought back memories of serving earthquake victims and praying for those who had lost their lives. Fazal Rabi noted that very few people were home, so it was decided to start the camp after Friday prayer. Aslam Marwat formally announced the camp in the mosque, complementing Fazal Rabi's prior announcement. Alhamdulillah, patients began arriving immediately.

Professor Muzzamil Ahsan set up a small herbal medicine

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station, while Abid started the eye clinic. Ashfaq and Ali Haider organized the dispensary in the mosque room with the help of locals. Children and women eagerly approached Aslam Marwat, who distributed gifts generously. News of the camp reached nearby towns as well, bringing patients from surrounding areas. After eye examinations, many requested glasses, and medicines were provided. By Friday prayer, around 200 patients had been treated. The prayer was led by Maulana Fazal Rabi, after which I also had the opportunity to address the residents. I told them that the tragic event in Leswa Valley was a reminder of Allah's displeasure, and that we must turn toward Him, cultivate fear of Allah, seek forgiveness, and respect one another's rights.

After Friday prayer, Maulana Fazal Rabi arranged a hot meal, which everyone enjoyed. The relief work then resumed, and by 4 p.m., 150 patients had been treated. Once all patients were attended to, we prepared to depart. Before leaving, Maulana Fazal Rabi led a prayer, thanking Allah for granting us the opportunity to serve our brothers and sisters in this remote region.

➤ The Return Journey

As soon as the return journey began, heavy and continuous rain started. The weather turned extremely pleasant and cool. Clouds floated across the sky, and the lush green mountains appeared even more vivid and clear after being washed by the rain. Rafiq and Sadaqat skillfully navigated the vehicles through narrow and hazardous roads.

Near Chakar Valley, a sudden landslide occurred. Rocks and soil tumbled down rapidly. Memories of the 2005 earthquake surfaced, when a massive boulder had brushed past our vehicle near Bagh. Everyone quietly offered prayers as the intensity of the rain increased.

Around 6 p.m., we reached Muzaffarabad, then continued toward Islamabad. After an hour, we entered the beautiful valley of Murree. From Muzaffarabad to the Kahsar Valley, the rain continued relentlessly, but Rafiq and Sadaqat maintained full control of the vehicles. Alhamdulillah, we reached Islamabad safely around 11 p.m.

Upon arrival, we unloaded the supplies and medicines at the mess and prepared to depart for Lahore. In Chakri, Abid Gilani

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hosted a feast for the team at his restaurant. By the time we reached Lahore at Fajr, we were grateful to Allah for a safe return.

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Medical Aid and Service in Kashmir's Paradise Along the Line of Control

We recited the declaration of faith and offered prayers. Beyond that, the next moment was uncertain. The journey ahead was long, difficult, and perilous, winding through stunning valleys that twisted like snakes. Towering, rocky, rugged mountains—brown, black, and lush green—surrounded us, and every moment brought the risk of enemy fire. Over the past several months, Kashmiri Muslim men, women, and children living along the Line of Control had already faced this threat, some even paying the ultimate price.

Our route took us from Chakothi to the village of Khelana. Khelana Union Council lies at 6,000 feet above sea level, cradled in a breathtaking valley. The tall, green mountains reaching toward the sky define the area. The road was narrow, steep, and uneven, requiring utmost attention. Bashir Ahmed and Parvez, our drivers, drew on all their strength and alertness to keep the vehicles moving. A single mistake could have sent us plunging into the deep gorge below. Each turn was perilous; at two or three points, the vehicles had to stop abruptly. Army officers instructed us to proceed with extreme caution, and only after careful evaluation were we allowed to continue, as Indian check posts stood directly ahead, often firing at the area.

On days when firing erupted, the local population became trapped, facing injuries or death. An army officer informed us that a target had been engaged today, warning of possible retaliatory fire. Despite these dangers, the impoverished Kashmiri Muslims living near the Line of Control demonstrate remarkable courage and resilience against Indian aggression. Men and women work hard to sustain themselves, never begging or yielding to despair.

Along the way, we saw several impoverished women walking on foot. We stopped and offered them gifts. Initially, they hesitated, repeatedly asking why we were giving them anything. When we explained it was from Pakistanis, they accepted with

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gratitude.

➤ Medical Camp in Khelana

After a difficult one-and-a-half-hour journey under constant threat of gunfire, we reached Khelana. There, the staff of the Rural Health Center (RHC) and the young in-charge female doctor, Dr. Fakhra, welcomed us warmly. From the center, the valley offered a breathtaking view. A respected local resident shared that the people of Khelana had been facing Indian firing for the past 72 years and had never abandoned their homeland. He also mentioned that this was the first time since the October 2005 earthquake that any relief had arrived from Pakistan for those living along the Line of Control.

Dr. Tahir Rahim Mughal, a young doctor full of energy, compassion, and empathy, had been appointed by Dr. Farooq Awan, the DHO of Chakothi, as the coordinator for the Customs Health Care Society's relief team serving the Line of Control victims. Upon arrival, Dr. Tahir quickly integrated with the team. At Chakothi, the RHC staff received us warmly. A Kashmiri elder had a badge on his chest reading, "*Kashmir Seeks Attention*." We embraced him, and he shared that the paradise of Kashmir had now turned into the embers of Angaar Valley due to Indian brutality.

➤ Angaar Valley Under Indian Oppression

The oppressed yet courageous Muslims of Indian-occupied Kashmir have been confined to their homes for months due to curfews imposed by the Indian army. Every day, young Kashmiri Muslims defy these restrictions, stepping out of their homes to sacrifice their lives for their homeland's freedom.

Dr. Fakhra, the in-charge doctor at Khelana RHC, grew up in Karachi and earned her MBBS degree there. It was her father's wish that she return to serve the people of Khelana. For the past two years, she has dedicated herself serving the local Kashmiri population. At Khelana RHC, a large number of poor men and women had gathered.

The medical team from Lahore, including classmates and former hostel roommates—Dr. Mohsin Jawad, Dr. Faisal (Eye), Tariq Boss, and Ashfaq Rafiq—arrived in Islamabad early morning, while Aslam Marwat had already been there since the

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previous day. On Friday at noon, the Prime Minister and other officials showed solidarity with Kashmiri Muslims. For practical relief work, the team departed early morning for Muzaffarabad. Bashir Ahmed brought a vehicle from Peshawar, carrying Aslam Marwat, Jahangir, and Tariq Boss, while Jaleel Abdullah, Mohsin, and driver Parvez accompanied him.

Before setting out, prayers were offered: “O Allah! Assist the Kashmiri Muslims and grant us the ability to do as much as possible for them.” After a three-hour journey, we reached Muzaffarabad. From the Riverview Hotel, we picked up Khawaja Tahir Aziz, who had brought fresh, warm *Baqarkhani* bread for breakfast. After eating, we proceeded toward Chakothi.

The plan to visit Kashmir had been in place for several days. Once the team informed friends and supporters, donations began arriving. Generous women from the *Fi Sabilillah* group, especially Dr. Amna and Sahar, posted about the relief efforts in their groups, prompting a steady flow of contributions. Erum Nasir from the *New Hope Foundation* also collected and sent donations. Haji Gulzar, who frequently performs Hajj, arrived in Islamabad on Thursday with cash. Khawaja Tahir Aziz arranged ration packs for 200 families. Dr. Farooq called 50 families from the Chakothi area to receive aid. Ration and cash were distributed, along with beautiful shawls for women and gifts for children. The women and children were overjoyed to receive these supplies.

➤ **Captain Ghulam Sarwar Shaheed – Nishan-e-Haider**

Opposite Khelana in the important Chakothi area lies Pataraj, the burial site of Pakistan’s first Nishan-e-Haider recipient, Captain Ghulam Sarwar Shaheed. The local population is around 30,000–35,000, mostly poor and reliant on manual labor. Women and girls appeared frail and anemic. Dr. Fakhra expressed her satisfaction in serving these underprivileged people but noted the scarcity of medicines and other challenges. We promised her that, Allah willing, monthly medicine supplies would be sent to Khelana RHC.

Dr. Tahir and Dr. Fakhra had planned the distribution of rations inside the center. Outside, a crowd had gathered, and people were called in one by one. Ration bags were handed over, and Dr. Fakhra, Abdullah, and other team members also gifted shawls to women. Sweets and biscuits were distributed among children.

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After the distribution, medicines for a month were handed over to Dr. Fakhra and the in-charge of the medicine center, Mushtaq.

Dr. Fakhra had arranged a hearty meal: corn flatbreads, saag, country-style chicken, okra, and salty lassi—a delightful feast. In the evening, preparations to leave were made. Dr. Tahir reminded everyone to hurry, as military officials had instructed departure by 4 p.m. to reach Muzaffarabad by Maghrib. Dr. Fakhra and her team bid us farewell warmly, and she resembled a caring daughter, with her hand placed gently on our heads in blessing.

Navigating the perilous routes and avoiding active gunfire, we passed through Khelana and Chakothi's stunning valleys and mountains, eventually reaching Muzaffarabad late at night. Driver Parvez independently contacted the Secretary of Tourism of Azad Kashmir, Midhat Shehzad, sister of Customs' senior colleague, Ms. Tharwat Tahira Habib. Within a short time, Ms. Mdhat arranged rooms for us at the State Guest House. Truly, when one sets out in the way of Allah, help, honor, and respect come from every direction.

After decades, I spent the night with Mohsin, recalling the days when we had first arrived together at King Edward Medical College hostels 40 years ago, staying in a room in Broom Hostel. The memories of those times were vividly revived. Indeed, a true friend remains ever-present; when life allows, meetings naturally happen.

➤ Stay at the State Guest House

After Fajr, we stepped out for breakfast. The area around the State Guest House houses all major government offices and buildings, including the grand Presidency building. Interestingly, there were no barriers or police posts outside any office in Muzaffarabad. After the devastating 2005 earthquake, Muzaffarabad was completely destroyed. The then Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir remarked, "I feel like I am the Prime Minister of a graveyard."

The State Guest House building was constructed by Turkey's prominent and humanitarian President, Tayyip Erdoğan, with other government offices built later. Early in the morning, we set out for Pandoh Mountain, located 9,000 feet above sea level. Pandoh Mountain holds immense strategic importance for

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Pakistan, providing defensive and tactical advantage over India. It was liberated in 1948 by mujahideen and tribal fighters, though India attempted to reclaim it.

Reaching Pandoh requires traversing long, arduous, and life-risking paths. The lush green mountains, enchanting valleys, and mesmerizing views captivate anyone who sees them. Breathing the clean, pollution-free air under the clear sky makes one feel the freshness of pure oxygen entering the body.

➤ **Camp on the Sky-High Pandoh Mountain**

Dr. Tahir had obtained special permission from the Pakistan Army. He shares a close friendship with Captain Dawood of the Baloch Regiment's RME. As we approached Pandoh Mountain, multiple army check posts came into view, where identification was verified. At that moment, the reality of being in a war zone became clear. Numerous check posts, armed with guns and artillery, stood ready against the cowardly enemy. Bunkers and trenches were strategically positioned throughout the area.

At the top of Pandoh Mountain, Captain Dawood and his team welcomed us. The arrangements for the medical camp and ration distribution were excellent, with several cabins prepared. First, Captain Dawood gave a tour of the ground-level medical dispensary, a beautifully built bunker with all the features of a small hospital. Soon, patients began to arrive.

- In Cabin 1, Khawaja Tahir Aziz attended to children.
- In Cabin 2, Dr. Faisal conducted eye examinations.
- In Cabin 3, Dr. Mohsin handled ENT patients.
- In Cabin 4, I began work.

Gradually, patients kept coming, while Parvez and the ambulance driver went to nearby villages to bring more patients. By Zuhr, 150 patients had been examined and provided with medications. A tea break was organized with *pakor*as, *jalebis*, and *namak paray*. Asr prayers were offered in the small mosque of the unit. Colonel Mujtaba, the unit CO, helped distribute rations—over twenty-kilogram bags were handed out to more than 100 impoverished families, along with cash for the needy.

After Zuhr, the camp continued until the last patient was treated. For lunch, we went to the mess where Colonel Mujtaba

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welcomed us warmly. He first thanked the entire team for traveling to this remote area to serve the underprivileged. On behalf of our team, gratitude was expressed to Colonel Mujtaba and his unit for facilitating the camp at such a high altitude. He arranged a delicious meal, and while eating, the team also enjoyed the breathtaking views regarding security of Pakistan.

➤ **Salute to the Pakistan Army**

Colonel Mujtaba pointed out nearby areas like Hittiyan Bala and Garhi Dupatta. On the other side of Pandoh Mountain lies India's Uri sector, where incidents frequently occur. Observing the vigilance, bravery, and dedication of the Pakistani Army here, it is clear how courageously and selflessly they defend the nation under extremely challenging conditions. Living here, always on alert, and placing one's life on the line is a remarkable feat of the young soldiers.

Colonel Mujtaba explained that the enemy often opens fire, and they respond with stones to bullets, always ready to tackle any threat. After lunch, doctors were given souvenirs from the 31 Baloch unit, and the other team members received caps. Everyone paid tribute to the valor and sacrifices of the Pakistan Army. With such a courageous, vigilant, and fearless army, no one dares cast a hostile eye on Pakistan.

- Salute to the Pakistan Army
- Salute to the martyrs and heroes of the Pakistan Army
- Salute to the soldiers and officers serving in remote areas and sky-high mountains

➤ **Return Journey**

As we settled into the vehicles to depart, another car approached the medical camp site, carrying women, children, and men. The driver explained that they were coming from a village below and had learned about the camp too late. Once again, we set up the camp, attending to the patients who had traveled a long distance.

Dr. Tahir repeatedly urged us to hurry, while the patients were examined calmly. Ashfaq, along with a military personnel, distributed medicines. The remaining supplies were handed over

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to the dispensary in-charge and Dr. Tahir. Beautiful shawls were distributed among the women.

As we proceeded, Asr time arrived, and we offered prayers at a mosque near a check post with the brave soldiers. In the evening, we began the return journey, enjoying the stunning views of Chham Waterfall along the way. Nestled in the foothills, the waterfall's beauty was mesmerizing. Surrounded by mountains and witnessing such breathtaking scenery, one could not help but recall the verse from the Qur'an: "Which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?"¹⁹ Every turn in the heavenly Kashmir Valley revealed Allah's power and blessings.

Late at night, we reached Muzaffarabad. On Parvez's suggestion, we stopped at a restaurant for dinner but, to our surprise, there was nothing available. As a result, Aslam Marwat and Bashir Ahmed continued toward Peshawar, while Dr. Mohsin and Ashfaq departed for Lahore with their team. By 2 a.m., we safely reached Islamabad, offering gratitude to Allah for bringing us back unharmed after a long and perilous journey.

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¹⁹. "Which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?" is a recurring verse in Surah Ar-Rahman that invites reflection on countless blessings bestowed by Allah. It reminds believers to recognize divine mercy, remain grateful, and acknowledge the signs of creation, encouraging humility, awareness, and a deeper appreciation of life's visible and unseen gifts.

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Serving and Treating Victims in the Snow-Capped Ladden Valleys and Freezing Winds of Sargan Sharda (Neelum Valley)

It was early morning. All around, as far as the eye could see, there was nothing but snow. Even wrapped in four blankets, the cold could not be kept at bay. Every team member shivered from head to toe. The water was icy cold, seeping into the bones with every touch. Performing ablution in that freezing water was a struggle; as it touched the body and beard, ice crystals formed instantly. When the door was opened for the call to prayer, Marwat Sahib and Iftikhar had to rely on *tayammum* because of the severe cold. The chill penetrated every part of the body, from the hair on the head to the nails on the feet. All taps were frozen, as the pipes would burst when water inside them froze. The hotel had provided hot water the previous night, but it had long since turned to ice. Summoning courage, ablutions were performed with the remaining frozen water.

The morning in Neelum Valley brought memories of the soldiers on duty in Siachen. May Allah protect them—they defend the homeland under some of the harshest conditions imaginable. Everywhere outside, a white blanket of snow stretched endlessly. Stars twinkled in the sky, and the moon was visible in the clear blue expanse. As dawn broke, the landscape became even more enchanting. Despite the bitter cold and icy winds, the Fajr prayer was offered.

The journey through Neelum Valley included stops at Muzaffarabad, Nawari, Uthmqaam, Keran, Lawat, Dawarian, and Changin. Traveling through the night via Doodh Niala, we finally reached Sharda. We had left Muzaffarabad after breakfast, expecting to arrive by evening, but entering Neelum Valley delayed us, and it was evening when we reached Uthmqaam. There, we met Deputy Commissioner Raja Shahid Mahmood and SSP Asif Daraz. The PA of the Session Judge greeted us warmly,

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asking about our purpose. Upon learning about the relief efforts, he was pleased and offered prayers.

Old friends and classmates, Khawaja Tahir Aziz from Muzaffarabad and young Dr. Tahir Rahim Mughal, accompanied us. Although the sun had risen early, its full glow reflected on the snow, making it sparkle like silver. In some places, a striking contrast appeared—snow on the right side and completely bare mountains on the left. As we left Uthmqaam, the intensity of the cold and snowfall increased. Everywhere—the road, the mountains, the peaks—snow dominated the landscape in all directions.

➤ The White Blanket of Snow

Allah had spread a white blanket of snow all around. Parvez drove the vehicle forward with great skill and courage. Whenever the car slipped on the ice, he carefully reversed, applied the brakes, and maneuvered it back in reverse gear. Everyone in the back seat whispered prayers, asking Allah to bring them safely to their destination. The plan had been to finish the relief work on Saturday and return, but the journey seemed endless. From Uthmqaam, the vehicles moved slowly through Keran, Lawat, Dawarian, Changin, and Dorhiyal, like a tortoise's pace.

The Asr prayer was offered in Keran, after a strenuous attempt at ablution. It was here that the utility of *tayammum* became truly evident. Marwat performed *tayammum* and joined the prayer. Near Sharda, representatives from the administration and tourism department received the team. Marwat gave the call to prayer in Keran. Locals were freely walking on the snow, with little children playing joyfully in colorful attire, while the cold seeped deep into our veins. After a grueling nine-hour journey from Muzaffarabad, the team finally reached Sharda.

➤ Warming by the Fire

Near Sharda, hot tea was served, bringing a little relief. Khawaja Tahir Aziz explained a local saying: if you want to honor someone here, you say "*Aag taap lein*"—literally, "warm yourself by the fire." Indeed, in this weather, fire is a true blessing. Sitting near a fire in Keran, the team warmed themselves while having their meal. Marwat met a pious elder who lent him a walking stick; without it, he felt incomplete. Marwat offered the ration to the

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elder, as the bags had been carefully packed by Khawaja Zafar Iqbal. Junaid had come from Islamabad with the ration truck, and Soheil and Mama Rauf brought the quilts. By Uthmqaam, the entire team had gathered.

➤ Quilts by Azhar Majeed's Continuous Support

Azhar Majeed had been sending aid packages for the last three months, which were distributed in Balochistan, Chitral, Kalash Valley, Garm Chashma, Hunza, Gilgit, and Sust. Alhamdulillah, as soon as news came of avalanches in Neelum Valley causing destruction and casualties, the team decided to head there. Allah provided the means and resources. Ashfaq had procured the medicines in Lahore. Aslam Marwat was in Lahore, and Iftikhar, Muhammad Ali, Professor Muzzamil Ahsan, Taufiq Jahangir, and Shehzad joined the journey. After Friday prayers in Islamabad, they set out, passing the snow-covered Malka Kohsar in Murree on the way to Muzaffarabad. Truly, the Queen of Hills wore a blanket of white snow. Secretary Tourism, Ms. Midhat Shehzad, had arranged the bookings at the State Guest House, and meetings were also held with Shehzad Sahib and Dr. Shakeel. After Fajr, Marwat and Iftikhar stepped out for the day, enjoying breakfast of *naan* and *baqarkhani* at the Pakistan Hotel before setting out on the mission.

➤ Journey on the Snow-Covered Road

From Uthmqaam onward, the serpentine snow-covered road made the journey extremely challenging. Parvez carefully maneuvered the vehicle forward, while the second vehicle carried the young doctor, Tahir Rahim Mughal, who was assisting with the relief mission. At that moment, the temperature read -9°C, though it felt more like -19°C. Khawaja Tahir Aziz wore a thermal jacket, while Marwat mentioned that even with four blankets at night, the cold had seeped into his bones. Khawaja Tahir noted that in these regions, being invited to "*warm yourself by the fire*" is considered a great honor. Slowly, the sky was clearing, the sun struggling to rise, with the blue heavens above and a sparkling white blanket of snow below. SubhanAllah, the ice was so clear it looked like glass.

Last night, a long line of vehicles had been stuck at Sharda, with snow blocking the way. Cranes and dumpers worked to clear

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the road, and walls of snow rose on both sides. After breakfast, the team had to walk to the guesthouse. The Tourism chief held my hand to prevent slipping, yet I stumbled several times; the icy surface made even shoes unreliable. Parvez had left jogging shoes in the car, and Ashfaq brought more from Keran, making walking somewhat easier.

➤ Prayer Through Tayammum

Although the team had worked in disaster-affected areas for over 30 years, this was the first time they had faced such extreme cold and snow. Water in buckets was frozen solid, leaving many to perform *tayammum* instead of ablution. When they had arrived the previous night, the hotel attendant kindly left a bucket of warm water, but it froze within an hour. By Allah's mercy and with courage, the team reached these remote areas—arriving here was comparable to confronting a lion. Alhamdulillah, no other team had made it to this location. Relief had previously been dropped by helicopter, but no welfare organization had yet dared to reach the area.

➤ Wood Fires and Survival

In this cold, the only source of warmth is a wood fire. Every hotel, home, and shop has a dedicated room for a hearth. Locally made fireplaces burn wood with a metal pipe chimney to release smoke. Sitting around the fire, with frozen hands and shivering bodies, brought some comfort. The team enjoyed warm parathas and omelets for breakfast beside the flames. Neelum Valley is rich in trees, yet the poor rely entirely on wood they cut from the forests to survive in the freezing cold. This practice depletes valuable timber and causes significant economic loss. A practical solution would be free coal distribution from Pakistan, which would preserve forests, maintain the environment, and help stabilize local weather conditions.

After breakfast, the team proceeded to the relief camps. Ms. Midhat Shehzad had arranged for the Tourism chief to guide us. Stepping out from the hotel, the sun shone brightly, and its rays reflected off the snow like silver, making the surface glitter like glass. Despite occasional slips on the icy road, the team continued, with the Tourism chief holding hands to steady and walk. The sun reduced the cold slightly, but even with two jackets and a coat, the chill still made the body tremble.

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➤ **Medical Camp in the Snowy Valleys**

Across the distant mountains and along the paths, snow stretched as far as the eye could see. Streams and rivulets were frozen, though sunlight had begun to melt some sections, letting clear water flow in places. Upon reaching Sharda Bazaar, the team set up camp in the hotel veranda. Dr. Shehzad began examining eye patients, while Professor Muzzmil Ahsan, also known as Luqman Hakim, arranged his medicine stall and shared advice with the visitors. Smokers were first scolded and made to discard their cigarettes before receiving guidance, and they complied immediately, respecting his wisdom.

Khawaja Tahir and the team started their clinic as well. Initially, patient numbers were small, but soon the camp became bustling. Elderly men and women, middle-aged women, and children all arrived. The extreme cold brought cases of chest infections, cough, cold, fever, stomach irritation, and pneumonia. When patients learned that spectacles were also being distributed, Dr. Shehzad was surrounded with requests. Alhamdulillah, the mission for which the team had undertaken a dangerous, exhausting journey had begun successfully.

DHO Neelum Ghulam Nabi and AC Sharda, the young and energetic Iqbal Ahsan, also joined. AC explained that since the first day of the glacier tragedy, his team had been clearing snow from the roads from morning till late at night.

➤ **Serving and Treating in Sharda**

The roads to Sharda had only just opened. The worst-hit areas were Sargun Bakwali and Sargun Seri, where most casualties occurred, followed by Kil, Dahaki Chiknar, and Plowar. Injured from Kil were airlifted to Muzaffarabad. Dr. Tahir Rahim Mughal, full of energy and dedication, arrived to help. With the sun providing some warmth, patients began arriving. Rauf Mama brought warm clothing for children and adults, which was distributed immediately. Women and girls were delighted with new sweaters and jerseys. Aslam Marwat distributed candies, biscuits, and other gifts, delighting the children.

A 70-year-old man arrived shivering with a chest infection. After examination, he was given a new Swati blanket, which made him tremble with joy rather than cold. Asma, who had earlier insisted that the blanket from Suhail Fida be given to someone in

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need, saw her belief fulfilled. Alhamdulillah, 500 patients were treated and provided medicines during the day.

Ashfaq, Marwat, and Mama Rauf, along with the local administration and AC, distributed rations and blankets. The relief supplies from Arzoo Textile's Azhar Majeed and Khawaja Zafar Iqbal's ration packets were given to the most affected families. The poor were happy to receive warm blankets, new sweaters, and a month's ration. Everyone expressed gratitude, saying this was the first time someone had come to console them after the glacier tragedy. Relief was also distributed in Dowarian before the team began the return journey.

➤ Returning from Sharda

Departing the beautiful, chilly region of Sharda, the vehicles carefully traversed snow-covered mountains. The journey took approximately two hours through Doodh Nial, Changan Dowarian, Lawat, and Keran, finally reaching Uthmqaam in Neelum Valley. Along the way, Asr and Maghrib prayers were performed. Near Uthmqaam, while stopping for Maghrib, soldiers arrived immediately, warning that an Indian check post was nearby and could open fire at any moment. By Allah's grace, the team safely continued.

After one to two hours, reached Muzaffarabad and breathed a sigh of relief. Grateful for a safe journey, the team enjoyed delicious Kashmiri and Pakistani meals at Pakistan Hotel. From Muzaffarabad, the team traveled through Kohala and the snow-covered Malika Kohsar (Murree) valleys, finally reaching Islamabad late at night. Alhamdulillah for the opportunity and ability to reach disaster-stricken areas and assist those in need in times of calamity.

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Medical Service and Relief in the Frozen Heights of Hunza and Gojal

Early in the morning, the cold was biting. Despite wearing warm overcoats and layers of blankets, the chill penetrated to the bones. At four in the morning, after performing Tahajjud, prayers were offered for the country's security, its progress, and for the freedom of Kashmiri Muslims. Complete silence enveloped the surroundings. The sky was full of stars, and distant snow-clad peaks glimmered under their light. The team was stationed in Sust Gojal, on the upper floor of PTC Hotel, where all members of the Customs Health Care Society had assembled. Collector Customs Gilgit-Baltistan, Dr. Tahir Qureshi, was also present.

➤ Remembering October 8, 2005

October 8, 2019, revived memories of the catastrophic earthquake in Kashmir and Balakot fourteen years prior, which claimed nearly a hundred thousand lives. At that time, while serving the earthquake-affected communities, some people recalled how they had gone to bed after Suhoor, only for disaster to strike at 8:55 a.m., shattering the earth, destroying buildings, and taking the lives of countless children, women, and men.

To welcome the team, the people of Sust Dry Port had arranged a grand ceremony. Their style of hospitality is unique, marked by warmth and tradition. The stage was beautifully decorated, followed by the recitation of the Quran and Naat. Local dignitaries presented the team with traditional Hunza caps, honoring local traditions.

➤ Warm Welcome at Sust Dry Port

As the chief guest, I was also presented with a regional jacket. In my address, I reflected on the last visit to the area nine years prior, and earlier, in 2010, during the Atta Abad Lake disaster. On those occasions, the team had served the communities of Hunza, Shishkat, and Gilmet under challenging conditions, contributing to relief work. Coordination for relief efforts had continued through Shehnaz Khan, helping during floods and heavy rains in Shishkot

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and adjoining areas.

This time, the program was planned from Lahore, with Professor Dr. Arshad Mahmood Mian, Abid, Ashfaq, Iftikhar Saeed, along with cameramen Suhail and Rafiq, accompanying the team. They stayed en route at Naran, enjoying the stunning views of Lake Saif-ul-Malook. Ashfaq noted the extreme cold and heavy snow on the mountains.

By PK605 flight, the team departed Islamabad early in the morning for Gilgit. During the flight, the pilot pointed out the majestic peak of Nanga Parbat to the left. Within an hour, we landed in Gilgit, where Collector Gilgit-Baltistan Dr. Tahir Qureshi and Additional Collector Customs Shahid Jan, along with their team, welcomed us. After breakfast at the Custom House, the journey to Hunza commenced.

➤ Significance of the Karakoram Highway

The Karakoram Highway has dramatically eased travel between Gilgit and Hunza, reducing a journey that once took a week to a few hours. Carved through steep valleys and mountain faces, the highway is a testament to the tireless efforts of Pakistani and Chinese engineers. Beyond its engineering marvel, it serves as a lifeline for local communities and a crucial trade route between China and Pakistan, generating billions in revenues.

The journey through Hunza and Gojal highlighted both the beauty and the challenges of the region, where extreme cold, snow-covered peaks, and isolated communities demanded not only resilience but also meticulous planning and dedicated service to provide relief and medical care.

➤ Memories of Attabad Lake and Medical Service in Sust

In Hunza, the formation of Attabad Lake was a vivid reminder of nature's force. A landslide into the river had created the lake, submerging hundreds of homes. During those days, relief goods were flown by helicopter from Hunza to Shishkat. The helicopter left but did not return on time. Despite serving the local population all day, the team had to undertake a risky boat journey late at night to reach Gibnet, only to find the valley partially submerged.

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These memories remained fresh as the team reached Murtaza Abad, where Dr. Tahir Qureshi showed the land designated for a new travel facility for customs officers and staff.

We also visited a beautiful school where young children were studying. The principal guided the visit and explained that the school had been built by an American woman in memory of her daughter, who had loved visiting this region. After her passing in the United States, her mother constructed the school to honor her memory. Continuing onward, the team passed through the Attabad Tunnel. The lake has gradually been shrinking over time.

➤ The Remarkable Attabad Tunnel

The tunnel, a collaborative effort between Chinese and Pakistani engineers, spans 7.5 kilometers in four sections. Remarkably, it was completed in just five years, while the construction of the Lowari Tunnel took nearly forty years. This tunnel has made travel far easier, reducing the journey from Hunza to Sust to just one hour. Upon arrival, the team was warmly welcomed in a reception. Tea, local dishes, and dried meat were served, filling the team before lunch.

➤ Medical Camp in Sust

The Aga Khan local dispensary was the starting point of the medical camp. Ashfaq and Suhail organized one room as a dispensary, while Dr. Arshad set up an eye clinic in another. The team settled into their designated space, and Dr. Tahir Qureshi was handed a stethoscope to resume his medical duties after several years. Patient registration had already been completed, slips were issued, and scouts were stationed at the doors to manage the crowd.

The arrival of patients soon began. The team quickly picked up some words of the local language, which helped immensely in communication. Scouts managed the camp efficiently, ensuring smooth operations. The remote location added a sense of purpose; helping people in such isolated areas brings its own satisfaction.

The news of the camp had reached even the farthest villages, drawing a large crowd. The Aga Khan center in Sust explained that no permanent clinic or dispensary existed nearby. Occasionally, medicines would arrive, but services were limited.

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Many tourists injured in accidents also came here for initial care before being referred to Hunza or Gilgit. This highlighted the urgent need for a dedicated trauma center in Sust.

The camp saw a large turnout from both local and distant communities. Children, elders, men, women, and students all came to receive care. Local council officials had informed surrounding villages through community networks, ensuring that the camp served the maximum number of people in this remote region.

➤ Professor Arshad's Eye Clinic and Sust Dry Port Visit

The largest crowd at the camp gathered around Professor Arshad's eye clinic. Patients not only received eye examinations but were also provided with corrective glasses for near and far vision. Literacy levels in Hunza and Sust are impressively high, around 95 percent, so both children and elderly came for check-ups. Professor Arshad and Abid examined nearly 300 people, distributing around 200 pairs of glasses. Many students complained about not being able to see the blackboard clearly in the mornings, and appropriate glasses were provided after testing their vision. Gifts were also distributed among the children.

Beyond eye care, the medical team treated hundreds of patients with ailments including headaches, fever, back pain, jaundice, high blood pressure, diabetes, and joint pains. Some patients were unaware that they had conditions like diabetes or hypertension, so they were examined carefully, provided medication and advised for regular use. The clinic remained busy until evening. Maghrib prayers were held in the mosque, led by Qari Naeem. Plans were made for the inauguration of a new mosque the next day. That evening, the team had dinner at the customs mess with Collector Tahir Qureshi, Shahid Jan, and Chief Accounts Officer Naveed Zafar, before retiring early due to fatigue. The next morning, everyone woke at 4 a.m. for Tahajjud prayers amid the piercing cold.

➤ Sust Dry Port Visit

After Fajr prayers at the mosque inside the customs area, the team had breakfast at PTDC hotel. The day dawned clear and bright in Sust, with the mountains capped in glistening white snow, reflecting the sunlight like silver. The air carried a refreshing

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fragrance of apples, cherry and apricot typical of the region, despite the icy winds. Preparations were quickly made to visit Sust Dry Port.

At the port, the team observed the processes of import and export clearance. The expansive facility was constructed by the Chinese government in 2005. Prior to this, pilgrims from China used Sust as a transit point to Pakistan since 1984, before continuing on to Makkah. The port later facilitated barter trade, and with its formal opening in 2005 and the establishment of the Collectorate of Customs Gilgit-Baltistan in 2013, it became a major hub for both import and export. The port has provided local employment and economic opportunities to the local businessmen and traders. The visiting team addressed the customs staff, praising their dedication and noting that despite harsh conditions, they continue to perform their duties with excellence.

➤ Medical Service and Exploration in Gojal

After visiting Sust Dry Port, the team proceeded to the medical camp in Gojal, where a large number of patients had gathered. Registrations were already complete. Professor Arshad's eye clinic was operational, with patients being examined and provided glasses. The atmosphere was lively and joyful. Alongside Dr. Tahir Qureshi, the team began examining patients, including elderly men and women aged 80 to 90, many with multiple ailments. Volunteer boys and girls managed their duties with discipline, ensuring patients were attended to in an orderly manner and received their medications efficiently.

➤ Educated and Healthy Community of Hunza

Hunza is known for its educated, courteous, and well-mannered population. The region's clean environment, fresh air, nutritious fruits and vegetables, and healthy lifestyle contribute to the longevity of its residents, many living into their 80s and 90s while remaining active and independent. By midday, the medical camp had examined and treated around 300 patients. Women and girls particularly took care in presenting themselves well for the camp. After the morning sessions, the local community hosted a meal featuring Hunza's special dishes—Malbedha, yak meat, lassi, vegetables, and salad—after which Zuhr prayers were

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offered.

➤ Visit to Khunjerab Pass

Later, the team traveled toward Khunjerab Pass, located on the Pakistan-China border. The journey through steep, snow-covered valleys was challenging. The freezing cold pierced deep into the bones, and the higher altitude made breathing difficult due to lower oxygen levels. Sultan, the driver, had wisely carried dried apricots, which helped alleviate the breathlessness when eaten along the way.

➤ Search for the Markhor

Markhor, a rare mountain goat species, descends from the high peaks during the winter. Hunting is regulated with special licenses, costing foreign hunters around ten thousand dollars or more. Locals preserve Markhor skins by stuffing them for safekeeping, and the meat is highly prized. Along the route, binoculars revealed Markhors feeding on distant slopes. Upon reaching near Khunjerab Pass, the team experienced the icy winds firsthand, their extremities going numb, and breathing became difficult. From there, the gate leading into China was clearly visible, and travelers paused to capture photographs amid the breathtaking, frozen landscape.

➤ Travel to China Without a Visa

Shortly after arrival, a special gate was opened for the team, allowing entry into China without visas. Chinese customs officers welcomed us, and gifts were exchanged. The office provided all necessary facilities, and the team was offered traditional Chinese tea. After a brief stay, the return journey began. On the way, at the KSF location, we met eminent scholar, historian, and author Dr. Shafiq Nadeem, a federal secretary and writer of 75 books, which was a moment of great joy.

Late at night, we reached Karimabad, Hunza, where officials from the Hunza and Nagar Chambers of Commerce, along with importers and exporters from Sust Dry Port, hosted a dinner in our honor. Traditional Hunza gifts, including the customary Chogha and a camp, were presented. The dinner featured local and other traditional dishes. Afterward, the team returned to Sust

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and stayed again at PTDC Hotel. Early next morning, woke up for Tahajjud prayers.

➤ Inauguration of the Mosque at Sust Dry Port

Fajr prayers were offered at the mosque adjacent to the customs mess. Meetings with Qari Naeem and colleagues highlighted the region's need for additional mosques, as existing small mosques often fill up during Friday prayers, requiring outdoor arrangements. This prompted the foundation of a new mosque, with construction to start within a day or two.

Breakfast was at PTDC Hotel. The medical camp, which had seen heavy crowds over the past two days, resumed. Patients from distant villages attended for checkups and received medications. Alongside the camp, the Aga Khan Health Center offered maternity services, staffed with LHV and medical assistants, providing deliveries at reasonable fees. Though today's turnout was lower than the previous days, over 700 patients had been examined over the prior days. Serving patients in the breathtaking valleys and high-altitude villages of Gojal proved deeply satisfying, allowing the team to experience both the natural beauty and the warmth of its people. With lighter patient load, the Lahore team was sent back home.

➤ Another Medical Camp

The team, along with Dr. Tahir Qureshi, resumed the medical camp. Patients began arriving steadily, and by 11 a.m., a significant number had been examined. Hosts Husain and Maliha had taken excellent care of the team over the past two days, serving tea, fresh potato chips, and the local "namrooq" tea. After seeing all the patients by 11 a.m., the team prepared to depart.

The local people of Gojal, honoring their traditions, held a small ceremony, presenting sweet, juice-filled apples as gifts. Hunza is renowned for its apricot production, with over sixty varieties cultivated locally. The aroma of apples and apricots pervades the region, and apricots are considered particularly beneficial for liver health. Some apricots are dried on rooftops to preserve them, and many medicinal products for liver protection are derived from this fruit in China and the U.S. Husain picked dried apricots directly from the tree, and Maliha washed and neatly arranged them on a plate for presentation.

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During the previous day's visit to Khunjerab Pass at 13,000 feet, the altitude and freezing cold had made breathing difficult. Sultan suggested eating apricots, which helped alleviate oxygen deficiency and the chilling effect of the cold. Later, drinking Chinese tea inside the customs office revived energy and warmth. Husain arranged fresh potatoes from nearby fields, which Maliha sliced and fried, serving them alongside the "namrooq" tea to the guests. The combination of bright blue skies, winter sun, and the warm, hospitable atmosphere created an inviting environment.

The health center staff expressed their gratitude with letters of thanks and presented fresh, juice-filled apples from Gojal as a parting gift. On the return journey, the team briefly rested at the customs mess after an early start. Additional Collector Shahid Jan and Chief Accounts Officer Naveed Zafar joined from Gilgit, both enthusiastic about the trip and experienced in travel and administration.

Shahid Jan's organizational skills were widely praised, as he had ensured flawless arrangements for both the official duties and the medical camps at Sust Dry Port. All doctors and team members agreed that the people of Hunza and Gojal, including children, were exceptionally polite, disciplined, and educated. Despite heavy crowds at the camps, there was no disorder, and hundreds of patients received checkups without any incident.

On the way back, a former customs soldier stopped the vehicles midway on the road. He first apologized for the interruption and then presented gifts of sweet, juice-filled apples and dried apricots, reflecting the hospitality and generosity of the local people.

➤ Return Journey from Sust

The team set out from Sust, traveling through Gilgit, Shishkat, and the Attabad Tunnel toward Nagar. The Attabad Lake, formed years ago due to a landslide, is gradually receding. Chinese engineers, working in collaboration with Pakistani counterparts, carved through the mountains to construct an excellent tunnel, divided into four sections with a total length of approximately eight kilometers. Remarkably, it was completed in five to six years, while the Lowari Tunnel took nearly forty years to finish. Passing through Karimabad, Husainabad, and Murtazaabad, the team

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reached Hunza in about two hours, moving through stunning valleys, tall rocky and sometimes green mountains, and picturesque winding roads. The weather was pleasant, with cold air, bright sunshine, and a crisp atmosphere. Sultan, the experienced driver, drove the vehicle skillfully, sharing insights about the regions along the way. The sight of Rakaposhi, gleaming under the sunlight, was truly mesmerizing, reflecting the natural beauty of Hunza, Nagar, and Gilgit. After a three-hour journey, the team arrived in Gilgit.

➤ Honors and Birthday Celebration in Gilgit

Gilgit's weather was mild compared to Hunza and Nagar. After a brief rest at the office, Maghrib prayer was offered at a city mosque. The team visited the local market, purchasing gifts including some fabrics for waist-coat. Tahir Qureshi ensured every aspect of hospitality was handled with care. In the evening, a dinner was arranged at the scenic Camo Hy Restaurant by the banks of the Gilgit River. Updates were shared with friends via Facebook throughout the day. After dinner, Shahid Jan presented a birthday cake, evoking memories of my children—Yumna, Mahnoor, and Huzaifa—who celebrate birthdays every year with great enthusiasm. Yumna often bakes her own cake, and the children, along with Asma, had sent birthday messages the previous day. Enjoying the delicious meal and cutting the birthday cake added a joyful note to the evening. Tahir Qureshi's colleagues, including Bechmate Joia from Nawabshah, joined in, providing an opportunity for in-depth conversations on national affairs.

The team retired early due to three days of strenuous activity. I woke up at 3 a.m. to offer Tahajjud prayer. The valleys of Gilgit were serene, with only the gentle murmur of the river and occasional birdcalls breaking the stillness.

Alhamdulillah, the recent visit to Gilgit, Hunza, and Sust Gojal was successful. Alongside fulfilling official duties, the team experienced spiritual satisfaction in serving the people of Sust Gojal, examining hundred of patients, and providing the medical care. The local communities extended warm hospitality, offering meals and presenting gifts. May Allah keep Pakistan and its beautiful valleys safe and flourishing. Pakistan Zindabad!

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And Then the Earthquake Struck

Until 4 a.m., everything was normal. Life was moving along its usual course. The town was bustling, shops were open, and children had returned from school to recite the Quran in the mosque. The sky was clear, with no sign of rain or storm. Baba Khair Din had returned home late after offering Zuhr prayer at the mosque. Suddenly, the animals grew restless, moving erratically, and birds gathered in the sky, flying together toward one direction—a natural premonition of the earthquake. At 4:02 a.m., a sudden, violent rumble shook the ground. People froze in place, mistaking it for an explosion. Baba Khair Din had just stepped onto the threshold of his house when the four-story building collapsed. Amidst the dust, he called out frantically to his wife, who emerged, disheveled and panicked. His children, fortunately, were away attending to their tasks, and they all survived. In mere seconds, magnificent homes and palatial structures were reduced to rubble, alongside simpler houses. As Amma Bashiran later recounted, it felt as if the Day of Judgment had arrived.

Destruction in Jatlan

The town of Jatlan was completely devastated. Over 40 lively, smiling residents lost their lives, and more than 500 were injured. Immediately after the quake, locals rushed to search for family members and loved ones under the debris. Injured survivors were rescued as the government quickly mobilized. Army teams arrived within hours, but roads were destroyed, bridges collapsed, and vehicles overturned. Tremors continued one after another. Thousands in Mirpur spent the night outside their homes, fearful of aftershocks.

➤ Relief Efforts

Alhamdulillah, the Customs Health Care Society has always prioritized swift action during disasters and remained in forefront in the earthquake hit areas. As soon as the earthquake struck, preparations were already underway—Ashfaq had been informed on the evening of September 24. Calls and donations poured in

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from friends and philanthropists. Ejaz Sikka inquired about the team's arrival, while Erum Nasir of the New Hope Foundation mobilized women volunteers. Dr. Amna from the Fi Sabilillah Group joined immediately. Funds collected by female members and friends were sent promptly for purchase of relief goods and medicines.

From Lahore, Taufiq and Parvez departed early with a mobile hospital, carrying supplies, medicines, and gifts for women and children. Professor Dr. Mian Arshad Mahmood, a regular team member, arrived with his colleagues. From Peshawar, Aslam Marwat and Abdul Rehman joined, while Suhail and Abdul Rauf came from Mardan. From Islamabad, Ebrahim Kiani, Nazmin, Yusuf Shah, Jaleel Akhtar, Wajid Rasheed Advocate, and the author joined the convoy. The team set off for Mirpur on Thursday morning.

Along the way, the quake's tremors were still being felt. Reports from locals confirmed the devastating impact in Mirpur. Despite the fear, the team pressed on, guided by faith. Aslam Marwat led the recitation of prayers during the journey. Zuhr prayer was offered near Dina. Traveling along Sarai Alamgir and alongside canals, the team reached Jatlan, which, along with surrounding towns, had suffered severe damage.

On the way, broken roads, collapsed bridges, and ruined buildings were evident. Many houses belonged to residents living abroad in the UK, France, and Germany, marked with large letters displaying "UK" on their façades. Most of these houses were large, multi-story homes but were largely empty, occupied only temporarily for weddings or when a deceased relative was brought from abroad. The earthquake rendered these homes uninhabitable. In Mirpur, even the Radio Pakistan building collapsed, though the dedicated staff continued their work from temporary tents. Passing through Jatlan, the team reached the neighboring town of Sahang, one of the worst-hit areas.

The devastation was profound, but the swift mobilization of local and external aid marked the beginning of relief and recovery efforts in the affected regions.

➤ Commencement of the Medical Camp

Upon arrival, the boards of the relief and medical teams were

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immediately visible. Camps had also been set up by the administration, and ration distribution was underway. Young members of the army were present as well. Thanks to Jaleel Akhtar and his nephew, Advocate Wajid Rasheed, we were able to secure a spot for the camp with ease.

The camp started immediately. Initially, few patients arrived, but once word spread that a team of doctors from Lahore had come and that eye examinations were also being conducted, more people began to come. When Professor Arshad Mahmood started the eye check-ups, elderly women and men gathered around him. Along with the examinations, glasses were also being distributed, which encouraged even more people to attend. The medical camp quickly became fully operational. Patients with body aches, fever, diarrhea, indigestion, and chest infections began arriving. Professor Muzzamil Ahsan Sheikh set up his own advisory and medicinal station, where visitors first listened to his guidance and then received herbal as well as homeopathic medicines.

➤ Distribution of Relief Goods

Ashfaq, Jaleel Akhtar, Wajid, and Abdul Raouf constituted four teams to visit the affected households and distribute rations. Afrahim Kiyani, Nazmeen, and Atif were sent to other villages with medicines, where they set up camps with the assistance of local LHVs. By evening, 160 patients had been examined and treated. Asr prayer was performed in the local mosque. Here, the power of Allah's will was clearly visible: the surrounding houses—both brick and mud, two-storey and four-storey buildings, all built with great effort and resources—had collapsed within moments, yet Allah's house, the mosque, remained completely intact. Not a single wall was cracked or broken. Abdul Raouf mentioned that only a few tiles on one side had come loose. The medical and relief camp continued late into the night.

➤ Stay in Rasheed Pur

On the way back, we stayed at the large home of Wajid Rasheed, Advocate, who is the son-in-law of Jaleel Akhtar's brother, Pervaiz Akhtar Advocate. Upon arrival, We were served an elaborate meal. Beds had already been arranged in the open courtyard, and all team members had a restful sleep. Early in the morning, Allah woke us for Fajr prayer which we offered at the

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mosque in Rasheed Pur. Rasheed Pur, the ancestral village of Jaleel Akhtar, no longer feels like a traditional village; all modern facilities are available. Alhamdulillah, just like his large home, Wajid's heart is equally generous, and he left no stone unturned in making our stay comfortable.

The whole day was extremely hot and humid. While attending to patients, everyone was drenched in sweat due to the lack of airflow—it felt like the height of June or July. From the morning, light rain and a cool breeze made the weather more pleasant. Wajid Rasheed's family went above and beyond in their hospitality, serving breakfast early in the morning: flatbreads cooked in desi ghee, salty lassi, butter, omelets made with desi eggs, homemade yogurt, and chicken curry. Everyone enjoyed the meal thoroughly.

Early in the morning, we departed Rasheed Pur for further medical service and relief work in the earthquake-affected areas. Jaleel Sahib headed to Islamabad, while Kiyani, Nazmeen, and Yousaf Shah also left for Islamabad the previous night. Although Wajid Rasheed normally practices in Islamabad, today he dedicated his day entirely for the sake of Allah's service.

➤ **Professor Muzamil's Wisdom Clinic**

Before leaving, Professor Muzzamil Ahsan offered prayers, asking Allah to help the disaster-affected people of Kashmir and the besieged and oppressed Muslims in occupied Kashmir, and to accept their efforts in checking on and serving them. Wherever Muzzamil Sahib goes, he sets up his "wisdom clinic," offering both Homoeopathic medicines and traditional remedies. He also provided medicine to Wajid's father. Alhamdulillah, in our medical camps, alongside modern medicine, traditional and herbal treatments are also available.

Women and girls naturally gravitate toward Professor Muzzamil's clinic, sharing their concerns without hesitation. Alongside treatment, he also offers spiritual guidance, emphasizing faith in Allah and the importance of regular prayers. The women listen attentively to his advice.

From Rasheed Pur, we traveled along the canal by Sarai Alamgir and entered Bhimber district of Azad Kashmir via Iqbal Pur. The roads were lined with cracks and damage caused by the

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earthquake. Since the night before, the weather had been pleasant, with a cool breeze and light drizzle, which later turned into heavy rain.

➤ Service and Treatment for the Earthquake Victims

Following directions from locals, we reached Dalo Chak village, where Khurshid, an LHV, had set up a camp at her home. Despite the ongoing rain, patients began arriving as soon as the camp opened. People from far-off villages, having heard of the medical camp, came to Khurshid's house. Professor Muzzamil's clinic quickly became busy, especially with women and girls surrounding him. Aslam Marwat brought medicines, sweets, biscuits, and candies for the children, who immediately flocked around him. The LHV's stock of diabetes medicines had run out, but thankfully, additional supplies were found in the vehicle, and gratitude was expressed to Allah.

By midday, 150 patients had been examined and given medicines. The LHV served hot tea, and we moved toward Jatlan, heading to Sahang, the most affected area, where our mobile hospital had been set up overnight. A camp was established at the home of Chaudhry Wasim Afzal. As soon as the announcement was made, people began arriving from far and wide. Although some had already come early in the morning for ration distribution, Chaudhry Wasim carefully organized a house-to-house ration distribution program.

Friday prayers were held at the Jamia Mosque in Sahang, where electricity and water systems were disrupted. The Imam repeatedly asked the youth to bring water from their homes for ablutions. The young men carried water from nearby homes to accommodate the guests. During the prayer, the Imam tearfully prayed to Allah for relief and protection.

After Friday prayers, the camp resumed. Professor Muzzamil's clinic continued operating, while Professor Arshad Mahmood set up his eye clinic. Muhammad Ahmed checked eyesight and distributed glasses, attracting elderly and young alike. Chaudhry Wasim provided a generous meal for the entire team. Even after the meal, patients continued to arrive, and by evening, 413 patients had been examined and treated.

Most patients showed symptoms such as headaches, fever,

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throat infections, diarrhea, high blood pressure, sleep disturbances, tremors from fear, and depression. The combined efforts of modern medicine, traditional remedies, and spiritual guidance ensured comprehensive care for the affected community.

➤ **Psychological Support for Earthquake Victims**

A few young girls arrived at the camp who were suffering from intense fear and trauma caused by the earthquake. Their parents explained that since the evening of September 24, 2019, they had neither eaten nor spoken. Gentle hands were placed on their heads, and small gifts were given to help bring back a sense of happiness and normalcy.

A young woman, whose father had died in the earthquake, would suddenly burst into crying and screaming, then fall silent. Her husband explained that four days had passed since the earthquake, yet she had not slept even for a minute. While the earthquake itself had passed, its effects remained—and would remain—for those who lost loved ones. At such times, alongside relief goods, psychological support is crucial. Offering care, attention, and emotional reassurance often serves as the most effective form of therapy.

➤ **Meeting with Habib-ur-Rahman, Devotee of the Prophet**

In the evening, after leaving Sahang, one team led by Aslam Marwat traveled to Peshawar. On the way, we met with Habib-ur-Rahman, a devoted supporter of our relief work in Wazirabad. Our acquaintance with him dates back to the previous year. He warmly welcomed the team, and a grand dinner was arranged at a well-known Wazirabad restaurant.

Habib-ur-Rahman runs a bakery established in 1932, known throughout Gujranwala for its high-quality, pure ingredients. Before we departed, he presented gift packs of his bakery products to all team members, including the drivers.

The next morning, we spoke with Farhaj Sarwar of Sheikh Nooruddin & Sons, who generously donated 150 tents for earthquake victims, which were distributed among those earthquake affectees whose houses have been devastated by the

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earthquake. Subsequently, relief items continued to be sent to Mirpur to support the survivors.

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Gilgit, Baltistan, and Balaw in Islamabad

Alhamdulillah! Since arriving in Islamabad, a series of medical camps have been ongoing in various underprivileged and remote areas. Some time ago, a camp was organized in the Mehrabad Colony of G-13 with Dr. Nosheen and Dr. Shah Rukh, where hundreds of patients received check-ups and treatment. Many residents of this area cannot afford to visit doctors, so serving and treating them brought immense satisfaction.

Immediately upon arriving in Islamabad, the first camp was held in the Farash Town area of Ali Pur, organized through our driver, Jafar. Our full team had come from Lahore, and hundreds of patients were treated. Before leaving, we promised that, Insha'Allah, we would return soon to continue serving the residents.

➤ Medical Camp in Ali Pur

For this reason, today we headed to Ali Pur again. Jahangir Afrayim Kiani and LHV Nazmeen arrived early to inform the community. After Asr prayer, accompanied by Syed Yousaf Shah from Shangla, we reached Ali Pur and started the camp immediately. Initially, few patients arrived, as word had not yet spread. Once Jahangir began distributing chips among the children, people started coming from all directions.

Most of the patients were women, girls, and elderly women. Some recognized us and greeted with respect. Though Ali Pur is part of Islamabad, being there gives the impression of being in Gilgit or Baltistan. About 90 percent of the patients hail from these regions. Jafar explained that much of Ali Pur's population consists of people from Gilgit and Baltistan, who came to Islamabad 30–40 years ago seeking employment and gradually brought their families and built homes. Most residents are poor, working hard to provide for themselves and their children. Many from Gilgit and Baltistan are employed in Islamabad as drivers, guards, and other support staff.

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➤ Gilgit and Baltistan Communities in Islamabad

FBR and the Islamabad Customs Collectorate also employ inspectors from Gilgit. People from these beautiful regions are known for their good manners, calm demeanor, and cleanliness despite limited resources. Many households in Islamabad employ individuals from Gilgit and Baltistan, as domestic staff and cooks. Our mess cook, Karamat Khan, hails from Baltistan and, Ma'sha Allah, prepares delicious meals with great skill.

As the camp progressed, the number of patients steadily increased. Since Dr. Nosheen had apologized for today's camp, I had to examine patients alone. Most cases involved itching, stomach pain, cough, cold, fever, and digestive issues. Elderly men and women faced breathing difficulties and high blood pressure. Patients continued to arrive late into the night, taking medicines and offering prayers. After the last patient was examined, Jahangir confirmed that no one else remained.

Kiani Sahib and Nazmeen worked diligently, distributing medicines and explaining their proper use. Most people in the area communicate in Gilgit or Balti languages, though they understand Urdu, so no communication issues arose during the camp.

A sustainable solution would be to establish medical dispensaries in every union council, managed by local residents. Such facilities could resolve up to 90 percent of the health issues for the poor.

During the camp, Islamabad experienced intense heat and humidity from morning till evening. We set up the camp in the informal settlement of Mehrabad, F11/1. Patients began arriving around 3 PM. The primary goal of these camps in underserved areas of Islamabad is to provide quality healthcare to the poor and needy.

Throughout the stay in Islamabad, multiple medical camps have revealed that, like remote areas of the country, several neighborhoods in Islamabad lack sufficient healthcare services. Residents often have to travel to PIMS or other hospitals, where receiving attention can be difficult. The medical camp officially began at 4 PM.

➤ Treatment and Service for the Needy

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Young doctors Dr. Nosheen from Rawalpindi Institute of Cardiology and Dr. Shah Rukh from NESCOM also joined the camp. Qari Sadiq announced the camp from the mosque, which encouraged patients from nearby and surrounding areas to come. Hamad, the driver, and Yousaf Shah arranged the venue at a mineral water factory.

The factory, run under the brand *Hunza Water*, was well-prepared for the camp. Soon, a large number of patients arrived—children, elderly, young men, and women—all in groups. When they learned that the check-up included medicines, gifts, and shawls, many crowded around Dr. Nosheen, each wanting to be examined first and receive a gift. The morning heat gradually increased, and after Asr prayer, tables were arranged on the lawn while Dr. Nosheen and Dr. Shah Rukh attended to patients. The humidity intensified along with the heat, making it hard to breathe, yet patients kept arriving.

➤ **Nationwide Welfare Initiatives**

Alhamdulillah, welfare work continues across the country. In Thar alone, over 2,500 wells have been dug so far, providing water for thousands of people and animals daily. Under the *Thar Green Campaign*, desert lands are being converted into fertile farms, with more than 200 green farms established so far. These farms produce vegetables, wheat, and fodder, helping fulfill the nutritional needs of local communities. Other parts of the country also see similar welfare projects, made possible through Allah's blessings and support from generous donors.

➤ **Medical Camp Amidst Heat and Humidity**

During the camp, Dr. Khalid's sister visited to contribute for wells in Thar on her behalf. The heat continued to rise, making it hard to breathe, but then a sudden heavy rainstorm began. Despite the rain, patients continued to come. Arrangements were made for meals; Hamad and Jahangir ensured everyone was seated properly. Children and adults enjoyed hot biryani. By Maghrib, over 250 patients had been examined and treated.

Meanwhile, Iftikhar Saeed and his friends from Lahore departed for Neelum Valley to serve the flood-affected residents of Leaswa, with medicines and gifts prepared for them. Alhamdulillah, our teams respond promptly to any disaster across

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the country to serve affected people. In Islamabad, the rain continued for the past three hours, but thanks to proper drainage, water did not accumulate on the roads, unlike in Lahore and other cities where even light rain causes flooding.

➤ A Divine Call

It seemed another divine call had arrived. Alhamdulillah, once again, Allah summoned us to His presence. There was no initial plan, yet for the *Road to Makkah* program's inauguration, we were informed two weeks prior at Islamabad Airport. Initially, no decision was made. Two days later, upon return to Islamabad, Wajid Zaman reminded us of the need to go for Hajj. Soon after, Shahid confirmed that my Hajj visa was approved. Although the passport was nearing expiry, a new one was quickly issued, and all arrangements fell into place. Asma had already been prepared, and the Saudi ambassador kindly approved her visa as well. Insha'Allah, both of us will be present at Allah's court.

➤ Labbaik Allahumma Labbaik

Alhamdulillah! Hajj was performed, and the spiritual journey is documented in my book "*Rab-ur-Rahman ke Mehmaan.*"

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Medical Care and Service in the Beautiful Valleys and Highlands of Chitral and Kalash

It is a pleasant early morning. A cool breeze is blowing, carrying a sharp freshness in the air. The clear, blue waters of the Swat River rush onward, cutting through rocks, roaring and producing rhythmic, musical sounds. Dawn is slowly breaking. The sun is trying to emerge from behind distant clouds. We have just finished the Fajr prayer. In the beautiful valleys of Dir, Fajr was offered under the leadership of Hafiz Muhammad Huzaifa, with prayers for the safety and security of Pakistan.

Swat and Dir are among the most beautiful regions of Pakistan. Alhamdulillah, peace and calm have returned to these areas. There is harmony, and people are living their lives with contentment. Compared to Islamabad, the weather here is far more pleasant. There is a real chill in the air, and even the water feels icy cold. It feels as if winter has already arrived.

For several days, Huzaifa had been reminding me that his holidays were coming to an end and that we should plan a trip to Chitral. Abu Bakr, Nauman, Abeer from Defence, and Dr. Zahra also kept insisting. Eventually, I gave in to the children's wishes. We departed from Lahore with Abeer, Yumna Ismail, Mahnoor, Dr. Zahra, Amina, and Rafiq. Ashfaq and Huzaifa had already reached Islamabad. From Sargodha, we picked up Bhabhi Robina, Novera, Ayesha Nauman, and Abu Bakr. We reached Islamabad around eleven in the morning.

We rested briefly and had breakfast at the mess in G-6/4, which took longer than expected. We finally set off around one o'clock. Along the way, we offered Friday prayers and then continued our journey toward our destination.

➤ **Swabi–Swat Motorway**

One of the major achievements of Imran Khan's government is the construction of the Swabi–Swat Motorway. Because of this,

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the journey from Islamabad to Swat has been reduced from four to five hours to just two and a half hours. Although work on the motorway is still ongoing, with roads and bridges being expanded in several places, the effort is remarkable. Roads have been carved through mountains, and three open, airy, and well-lit tunnels have been built by cutting straight through the mountains.

We reached Chakdara in about an hour and a half from Swabi. Previously, traveling from Islamabad to Chakdara via Mardan, Dargai, Sakhakot, Malakand, Batkhela, and Thana used to take over 5 to 6 hours, often stretching to seven due to heavy traffic. The motorway is truly a blessing. It shortens distances, makes travel easier, and improves the economy by enabling faster movement of essential goods.

We arrived in Chakdara around four o'clock and picked up Suhail Khan from there. We stopped for lunch at a local hotel. Pathans use tomatoes generously in their cooking, with less salt and red chili. As a result, many of their dishes have a reddish color. Within half an hour, chicken karahi was ready, and hot rotis were served. After the bumpy stretches of unfinished motorway and long travel, everyone was hungry and exhausted. When the steaming chicken karahi arrived, everyone dug in with enthusiasm.

Around five o'clock, after offering Asr prayers, we set off again. Passing through Chakdara and various areas of Lower Dir, we moved through winding valleys that twisted like a snake. Rafiq, Zahir Gul, and Sadaqat drove with great skill. As soon as Upper Dir began, the air grew cooler, and a refreshing breeze set in.

We stopped to offer Maghrib prayers. Pathan hospitality is well known. When we asked about tea, we were told there was no hotel nearby, only a small store next to the mosque. We bought a few items from there. The shopkeeper insisted that he would not let us leave without tea. He immediately arranged strong, hot tea from his home, which helped revive our spirits and restore our energy.

When you ask a Pathan for directions, he tells you that your destination is just five minutes away. Those five minutes often turn into half an hour. We entered the limits of Dir city, but it took another hour to reach Green Hills Hotel, where Inspector Abdul

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Rahman from the Peshawar Collectorate and his colleagues welcomed us.

Plans were made for the next day. The hotel staff took hours until eleven at night to prepare dinner, but the vegetable rice, vegetables, lentils, and hot rotis were well worth the wait. Around midnight, we finally lay down to rest. Overcome by exhaustion, everyone fell asleep almost instantly.

➤ Morning in Chitral

It is a beautiful early morning. There is a chill in the air, and the sky is covered with clouds. The atmosphere is filled with the fragrance of apple blossoms and pear trees. Silence surrounds everything, yet the flowing water of the Chitral River breaks this stillness with its soft, musical sound. Birds are offering praise in their own language at the start of the day. These lines are being written while sitting on the lawn of the Governor House rest house in Chitral. Tall, long, earthy brown, green, and historic mountains spread out in all directions. Greenery lies at their base, and patches of lush grass appear everywhere, adding to the beauty of the landscape. From between distant mountains, the sun is trying, unsuccessfully, to show its face.

We first came to Chitral in 2014, and since then we have remained engaged in serving the people of Chitral and the Kalash Valley.

Early in the morning, we left Green Hills Hotel. The cool breeze made the weather pleasantly refreshing. Small, cheerful children, schoolbags in hand, were walking toward their schools. Abdul Rahman had already arranged a camp in a remote village of Upper Dir. Moving forward through the beautiful, winding valleys of Dir, we enjoyed the scenic views along the way. Dir's green valleys are surrounded by graceful mountains, with a blanket of greenery spread across their slopes. Some parts of the road were unpaved, while others were properly constructed.

➤ Medical and Relief Camp in Dir

After a kilometer of ascent, there would be a descent of two kilometers. Passing through different scenic areas of Dir, we reached the school in Abdul Rahman's village, Pakka Qila, where patients were already waiting. Yumna, Zahra, Asma, Robina,

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Ayesha, and Novera set up a camp for women. Zahra and Yumna began examining patients. Ashfaq, Suhail, and Abdul Rahman quickly arranged the dispensary. Initially, the lack of familiarity with Pashto caused some difficulty, but soon a rapport developed with the Pathan women. Punjabi women blended easily with them, and gifts began to be distributed among the women.

I, along with Nauman, started seeing patients outside. It was Nauman's first experience, and he examined patients with great enthusiasm and dedication. Schoolchildren and teachers also joined in. After many years, a camp of this kind was set up for the first time in this remote area. Patients began arriving not only from Pakka Qila but also from nearby villages such as Ashari, Seri Pal, and Kandro. The camp continued until noon, during which more than 700 patients were examined and treated. The poor residents of the area were overjoyed to receive medicines and gifts.

Pakka Qila in Upper Dir is a poor and underdeveloped area. Its natural beauty is breathtaking. Tall, green mountains seem to touch the sky, and the sight of snow-covered peaks gives the impression of a white sheet above and a green one below. Despite this beauty, the region suffers from poverty and a lack of basic medical facilities. Allah willing, there is an intention to establish a dispensary in this area.

The school headmaster, Khalil Rahman, told us that there were no first-aid facilities available at the school. We provided essential medicines and a first-aid box. All the teachers, students, and local elders expressed their gratitude for the camp and took a promise from us that we would continue to visit and serve their area in the future.

➤ Journey to Chitral and the Lowari Tunnel

Around noon, we set off for Chitral. A long and demanding journey lay ahead. Sadaqat, Zahir Gul, and Rafiq took the lead, moving the vehicles forward. We continued along uneven and broken roads, enjoying the scenery as we went. After about two hours, we reached near the Lowari Tunnel. Even now, the road leading to the tunnel is partly unpaved and partly developed, though construction work is progressing quickly.

The foundation of the beautiful Lowari Tunnel was laid during the time of the late Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. At times the work stopped,

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at times it resumed. Significant progress was made during Musharraf's era, after which it again came to a halt. Finally, the tunnel was completed in 2017 and inaugurated by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The tunnel is 10.5 kilometers long and consists of two sections. The first tunnel is 8 kilometers long, and about half a kilometer beyond it lies the second tunnel, which is 1.9 kilometers in length.

It took us two hours to reach the tunnel entrance. Vehicles were coming from the opposite side, and only after the last one exited were allowed to proceed. The long, elegant tunnel is truly a marvel, carved straight through the heart of the mountains. It took 44 years to complete, but it has made travel to Chitral far easier. Built with great skill and care, the tunnel is bright and well ventilated. As soon as you enter, a refreshing coolness greets you. The road inside is perfectly straight, and one hardly feels that they are passing through the depths of towering mountains. The eight-kilometer stretch was covered in just minutes.

After exiting, the second tunnel appeared half a kilometer ahead, stretching 1.9 kilometers. Before reaching the Lowari Tunnel, road construction is still ongoing, though in some places long, well-paved sections already exist. The weather was extremely pleasant. Along the way, we encountered rain in some areas and bright sunshine in others.

In the Drosh area, our guiding spirit, "Zindagi," met us and led us through difficult terrain to the clinic established in Drosh. A large number of women were already present. We began the medical camp immediately. We learned a few essential words of the Chitrali language to make patient care easier. Words like *Achha Mera* (pain), *Meh* (back), *Kopak* (cough), *Drakhsh* (itching), *Hayage* (come forward), and *Tamam* (fine) helped greatly. Still, hearing our accent amused the Chitrali women and girls, who smiled quietly among themselves.

Rubina and Asma began distributing beautiful shawls among the women and gifts to the children. The women and girls kept returning to them again and again. Zahra and Yumna also started examining patients. People continued to arrive until late afternoon.

After leaving Drosh, around the time of Maghrib prayer, we reached our mosque, Masjid Ansar, built in the Gahirait area

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along the roadside. A sister from Holland, Ms. Nilofar Majid, had generously donated for its construction. The local elders were present, welcome banners had been put up, and the imam of the mosque warmly received us. He thanked us for building the mosque and also presented a bundle of requests. We offered Maghrib prayer there and thanked Allah for granting us the honor of building His house in such a remote region. Zindagi had got constructed the mosque with great dedication and care.

Women from the surrounding areas descended from the mountains and gathered around Asma and the other companions. Asma and Rubina distributed shawls among them all. Late at night, we departed from Drosh and reached Chitral after a two-hour journey. We stayed at the Governor House rest house. By the time dinner and other arrangements were completed, it was midnight. After a full day of travel and setting up two or three camps, everyone was exhausted, and as soon as we lay down, we drifted into deep sleep.

Morning arrived again, gentle and serene. The cold was noticeable but pleasant. A cool breeze was blowing, and silence prevailed, broken only by the musical sound of the Bumburet River as its waters struck the stones. The sweet songs of birds could be heard as they began their day, each in its own language, praising Allah. The air was filled with the earthy fragrance of pomegranates, apricots, and flowers. In the valley of Bumburet, the call to prayer had just echoed. After the azan, Fajr prayer was offered under the leadership of Hafiz Huzafa.

In Kalash Valley, we are staying at the residence of our guide's uncle. Yesterday morning, after breakfast, we departed from the Governor House rest house. Passing through a mix of dirt and paved roads, we reached the beautiful, bowl-shaped Ayun Valley.

➤ Medical Care and Service in Beautiful Ayun Valley

Near Ayun Valley, we met Rehmat Ilahi at the office of a local organization. He briefed us about their ongoing projects in Kalash Valley. Inside Ayun Valley, Zindagi had arranged a medical camp in a large, spacious house where a considerable number of patients were already present. The house was surrounded by a rich variety of plants and trees. Gul Khan, a retired officer from the Forest Department, is deeply interested in plants and

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medicinal herbs. He has grown thousands of different plants and trees in his home.

As soon as we arrived, plates full of ripe, sweet, and juicy apricots were served. They were so delicious that they seemed to melt in the mouth. Soon after, the medical camp formally began. Abid had arrived early in the morning and set up his eye camp. Patient examinations started. Meanwhile, Yumna, Mahnoor, Asma, and others went out to explore the beauty of Ayun Valley.

Nestled between mountains, Ayun Valley is truly a masterpiece of nature. It feels like a beautiful bowl filled with crystal-clear water, delicately decorated all around with flowers and plants. Green and earthy-colored mountains encircle the valley. Fresh water springs flow at many places, providing clean, white, and healthy water that runs continuously. By noon, around 200 patients had been examined. Shawls were distributed among women, and gifts were given to children.

➤ Journey to Kalash Valley

After Zuhr prayers, we set off toward Kalash Valley. Zindagi is an exceptional person. He had already arranged for a young Kalash woman named Fatima to join us as a guide. Yumna, Zahra, Ayesha, and Mahnoor were delighted to meet her. Fatima was dressed in her traditional Kalash outfit and looked like a living portrait of Kalash culture. Traveling through rough and uneven mountain roads, we moved toward Bumburet Valley. Tall, dangerous mountains loomed above us, and driving on narrow, unpaved roads required real courage. Rafiq, Sadaqat, and Zahir Gul drove with great skill. A moment of carelessness could have meant falling hundreds of feet into a deep ravine. May Allah protect us. The women traveling with us kept reciting prayers quietly, clearly anxious. The younger boys and girls, however, were enjoying the journey.

➤ Memories of Donkey Rides

The floods and earthquake of 2014 came back to mind, when we had visited this area for the first time. Roads were destroyed, routes were blocked, and medicines and supplies were transported on donkeys. After walking for two hours, exhaustion took over. On these very paths, we had ridden donkeys and later horses. Allah accepted this effort in such a way that for the past

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five years, service to the people of Bumburet has continued without interruption. Along the way, Fatima explained Kalash culture and traditions to Asma and Robina. After much effort, we finally entered the beautiful valleys of Bumburet. Zindagi had already arranged a meal at one place. After the long journey, everyone was extremely hungry, and as soon as the food arrived, every team member enjoyed the food. After eating our fill, we headed across the river with Ashfaq, Abid, Rehmat Ilahi, and other companions. Crossing the river required navigating uneven paths. Local elders were already gathered and warmly welcomed us.

➤ Medical Camp in Kalash Valley

As soon as we arrived, the medical camp was set up. Hot tea was served, which was especially welcome after the meal. At the same time, patients began arriving. Kalash women and girls, dressed in vibrant traditional clothes adorned with colorful bead necklaces, came forward for checkups. The camp quickly became lively. Children and elders alike came in large numbers. After many years, a medical camp of this kind had been held here.

For several days, the local people had been requesting the construction of a mosque. There are about 30 to 40 Muslim households in the area, along with nearly 30 Kalash families. The spiritual leader, Dr. Fida Sahib, had also recommended building a mosque here. Many times the plan was made and then delayed, but today Allah brought us here. The foundations of the mosque had already been dug. In the name of Allah, the construction of Allah's house was formally initiated. The first stone was placed in the foundation, followed by others from the team. We prayed that Allah make this mosque a center of guidance and righteousness, and that rays of guidance spread from here to the wider world. May Allah grant further opportunities to build His houses in more remote areas.

We felt deep happiness in initiating the construction of the mosque. Javed Munir from Lahore and his family had donated funds for it and gave us full freedom to build the mosque wherever needed. Gul Daraaz and Qurban had explored other locations as well, but fate chose this area. May Allah grant the ability to complete this mosque successfully.

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➤ The Beauty of Kalash Culture

A second group, consisting of Dr. Yumna, Nauman, Abu Bakr, Robina, Noveira, Asmai, Ayesha, Mahnoor, Aamna, Huzaifa, Dr. Zahra, the Kalash girl Fatima, and Zindagi, set out toward Kalash Valley. Along the way, Fatima introduced everyone to Kalash culture. She first took them to the museum, which offered a rich display of Kalash traditions, lifestyle, historical background, and beautifully crafted dresses from different periods. The exhibits explained the evolution of Kalash culture over time.

Fatima also took them into one or two Kalash homes, giving Yumna and others a closer look at everyday Kalash life. The Kalash people, living in this region of Pakistan, still hold their culture close to their hearts. Through their distinctive clothing and traditional festivals, they have kept their heritage alive. Every year, the Chilam Joshi festival is celebrated from May 14 to 16, the Uchal festival on August 22, and the Chomos or Chitrimas festival on December 15. From July 15 to August 21, Kalash girls dance and sing throughout the night. These festivals attract visitors from across Pakistan and from abroad.

At present, the Kalash population is around four thousand, with most living in Bumburet, Rumbur, and Birir valleys. Many Kalash families are economically poor. Girls like Fatima are educated, and along with her brother, several Kalash boys serve in the police, while some work as teachers. A few Kalash families have embraced Islam by choice, and we visited their homes to support them. Financial assistance was also provided to some poor Kalash families.

➤ Customs and Traditions of the Kalash People

Fatima explained that when someone dies in their community, ceremonies continue for three days. The deceased is bid farewell in a celebratory manner, and special arrangements are made for food. For this purpose, clarified butter is collected over several months. In the past, the Kalash used to leave their dead in open graves, placing the deceased's belongings alongside them. Over time, the flesh would decompose and be consumed by animals, leaving only the bones.

Fatima also guided everyone through the Kalash cemetery, where several such open coffins could still be seen. Huzaifa

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mentioned that in one or two coffins, bones such as the femur, tibia, and fibula were still visible. Fatima explained that now the Kalash bury their dead, but the wooden bed on which a person dies is placed on top of the grave. Traditionally, Kalash people welcome their guests with wine.

Yumna, Zahra, and the other girls closely observed Kalash culture and blended easily with Kalash women. Mahnoor developed a close friendship with Fatima, as they are of the same age. Fatima has completed an LHV course and expressed her wish to have a dispensary built in her area. She was encouraged to proceed, and Allah willing, this will become our seventh dispensary, this time in Rumbur.

After completing the mosque inauguration, we set out with the Imam of Bumburet Mosque and Rehmat Ilahi toward our mosque in Bumburet. The route was long, so the Imam arranged a vehicle for the journey.

➤ **Prayer at Masjid Mus'ab bin Umair (RA)**

Seeing the beautiful stone-built Masjid Mus'ab bin Umair (RA), surrounded by mountains, filled the heart with joy. Gratitude was offered to Allah for granting the opportunity to build a mosque in such a remote area. Memories of the 2014 floods came back, when this place was devastated and destruction was everywhere. Homes and hotels had been washed away. It was at this very spot that the first brick of Allah's house was laid after a heartfelt prayer, asking Allah to make this mosque a center of guidance and righteousness.

All praise be to Allah. This mosque has truly become a center of guidance. Congregational prayers are offered regularly, children are learning the Qur'an, and Tabligghi Jamaats from across the country continue to visit and stayed in the mosque for 2-3 days. These days, a three-day group from Rumbur was staying at the mosque. Meeting them brought great happiness and satisfaction. Maghrib prayer was offered in the mosque, followed by two rakahs of prayer in gratitude.

➤ **Stay and Meals at Zindagi's Home**

The night was planned at Zindagi's place. He had arranged accommodation at his uncle's house, which is located at a

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considerable height. After a fair bit of climbing and catching our breath, we reached the house. Isha prayer was offered under the leadership of Hafiz Huzaifa. Zindagi hosted a generous feast: chicken pea rice, roasted desi chicken, saag, pumpkin curry, lentils, mutton, raita, and salad. Everything was excellent. The Kalash girl Fatima also joined us for dinner. Everyone ate to his fill and enjoyed the meal.

Zindagi is an exceptional person. He was first discovered by Aslam Marwat in 2014 and has been connected with us ever since. With just one call, he appears like a mirage, reaching from Bumburet to Chitral and sometimes even Dir. He had been with us continuously, barely sleeping for two days, constantly checking on every detail. At five in the morning, he arrived with hot tea and immediately said that the people of Bumburet wished to meet us.

The rich and delicious dinner ensured everyone slept well. Fajr prayer was offered early. Soon after the prayer, patients from nearby areas of Bumburet began arriving. Women, girls, and men came for check-ups. Wherever we go, people seem to know in advance. Zindagi's home has effectively become a center of activity. School-going girls, their mothers, and other locals kept arriving. Everyone was examined, medicines were given, and shawls were distributed among the women.

Around seven in the morning, Zindagi brought hot tea and parathas and asked everyone to get ready. We met his respected father and family, who shared that their family has lived in this area for the past 150 years.

➤ The 150-Year-Old Sheesham Tree

Pointing to a Sheesham tree in the old house, he latter explained that it is nearly 150 years old. Zindagi's father said they have been serving visitors to Kalash Valley for generations, and it was through this spirit of service that our connection was established. When he was told, after consultation with the team, that Zindagi would be sent for Umrah in recognition of his services, Zindagi and his family were overjoyed.

The people of Bumburet bid us farewell with great warmth. Enjoying the enchanting scenery of Kalash Valley, we began our return journey. Winding valleys, clouds overhead, light drizzle, the fragrance of apples, apricots, and flowers in the air, and the

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crystal-clear waters of the Chitral River crashing against the mountains. Scenes more beautiful than these are hard to find.

Leaving Bumburet, we soon reached the Dobaj check post, where one road leads to Rumbur and the other to Bumburet. Rafiq, Zahir Gul, and Sadaqat drove steadily ahead. These narrow roads, partly unpaved and hugging the mountains, demand constant care. Even a small mistake can be fatal.

Continuing on, we reached the beautiful Ayun Valley of Chitral. Chitral is a land of more than twenty-eight stunning valleys, each more beautiful than the last. The signs of Allah's creation and craftsmanship appear everywhere. After a journey of about one and a half hours, we reached Chitral. Compared to Bumburet, the weather here was less cold, though a gentle rain was still falling.

➤ Ceremony at the Chitral Chamber of Commerce

The office bearers of the Chitral Chamber of Commerce and Industry had arranged a ceremony in our honor today. While searching for the Chamber's office, we learned that the event was actually being held at a hotel. The ceremony was attended by Chamber officials and traders, and women business owners were also present. After the welcome address, speeches were delivered.

The people of Chitral have a long-standing demand that the region be fully brought into the national mainstream. From Chitral, Arandu connects to Afghanistan, and from Garam Chashma, Shah Salim lies across the border. Wakhan has been a trade corridor for centuries. Chitral is rich in natural resources, including minerals and gemstones, and their trade could generate millions of dollars. There used to be a customs station in Arandu, which was closed in 2017. The Chamber representatives demanded that this customs station be reopened. They were assured that, Allah willing, a reference would be sent to the FBR regarding this matter.

➤ Visit to the Golen Gol Hydropower Project

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the Chamber officials presented us with traditional Chitrali caps. Afterward, we headed toward the Golen Gol Hydropower Project, traveling along uneven and challenging roads. Golen Gol is also a recreational spot,

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known for its large natural springs. The electricity generated here supplies the entire Chitral region. A small tourist point has been developed at the site, along with several trout farms. Visitors enjoy fishing with nets and traps.

Zindagi is like a walking encyclopedia of Chitral. Wherever he goes, he finds familiar faces. Here too, people who knew him immediately brought trays of mulberries and cherries. The mulberries were so sweet they melted in the mouth like syrup, and everyone ate his fill. Trays of fresh, juicy, sweet-and-sour cherries followed. The mulberries were sweeter than honey, and it was hard to stop eating them.

Then salted lassi was served subsequently. Although everyone had already eaten plenty of mulberries, the lassi somehow sparked hunger again. Zindagi explained that this is the effect of lassi. Fresh trout were caught and fried, and homemade bread was served alongside. Enjoying the beautiful scenery of Golen Gol, everyone ate the hot, freshly prepared fish.

Along the way, we offered the Zuhr prayer. The children enjoyed not only the food but also exploring the tourist spot. The spring water was so icy cold that placing one's feet in it for even two minutes felt as if they would freeze.

We also visited a madrasa for girls in Golen Gol and met the lovely young students. Zindagi frequently visits this area. Whatever items arrive from Lahore, he distributes them across different regions, which is why people know and appreciate him.

At the Chamber, we also met people from Upper Chitral. They expressed disappointment that we had not visited their area and requested support for a mosque. Allah willing, we will visit their area next time. We presented chadors for women as a gesture of service.

➤ The Return Journey from Chitral

Bidding farewell to the beautiful valleys of Chitral, we began our journey back. Along the way, we encountered strong winds and a storm. We stopped at the Shaheedan-e-Kargil check post to offer the Asr prayer. Throughout the journey, we faced intermittent rain, sometimes light and at other times heavy.

Around the time for Maghrib, we passed through the

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magnificent and masterfully built Lowari Tunnel. The moment one enters the tunnel, a sharp sense of cold sets in. Rafiq, Zahir Gul, and Sadaqat skillfully drove the vehicles through both the smaller and larger tunnels. As the time for Maghrib prayer was slipping away, we stopped by the roadside and offered the prayer there, with Huzaifa leading it.

We reached Dir around 9 p.m. and once again stayed at Green Hills. We thanked Allah for enabling us to complete all stages of the journey safely. After dinner, everyone rested comfortably. We departed late the next morning, around 9 a.m., passing through various areas of Upper Dir before reaching Lower Dir. From there, at the Chakdara Motorway toll plaza, we dropped off Suhail Khan, the dispenser. Suhail Khan, Allah willing, has been with us since 2009. He is a tireless worker who remains absorbed in his duties from morning until late at night without complaint.

The Swat Motorway has been completed over the past few years, though work is still ongoing in some sections. Proper roads are being built, and travel to Swat has become much easier. What once took four hours now takes only about two. From Swabi, we headed toward Islamabad. Upon reaching Islamabad, Ashfaq and Abid were dropped at Faizabad to continue their journey by bus.

We then reached the home of Shahid and Nasira, who live near Khanna Pul in the PAF Colony, Islamabad. Nasira had arranged a generous meal. No matter how expensive food outside may be, nothing compares to a home-cooked meal. Everyone ate with great enjoyment. Meeting Nasira's children, Rameesha, Hadi, and Arham, brought happiness to all of us. We spent the night at their home. Early the next morning, we set off for Lahore, and thus this beautiful journey came to a close.

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Introduction

How great must a person be whose every moment is devoted to serving humanity and whose days and nights are spent in the

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remembrance of Allah. For over a quarter of a century, I have been in search of such individuals, and occasionally, amidst the crowds, I encounter one. In the society we inhabit, true humanity is rare. I always prefer brevity over lengthy explanations, yet before me lie the pages of a healer's poignant story, each word soaked in the intensity of pain and compassion, tearing at the heart.

The words *accident*, *healer*, and *life* may seem simple, but each carries the weight of an entire universe. In a single drop, one can behold the Tigris; in a drop, the vast ocean can be seen. This is the story of a healer whose life inspires the desire to dedicate countless lives without hesitation. It is not merely a tale of life and death, but a struggle in which life ultimately prevailed. Yet death was not defeated; it merely granted a reprieve, in accordance with Allah's will. The world still needed saviors like Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah, and Allah amplified the honor of those yearning for His creation by affirming the integrity of our mentor and benefactor.

Every word of this book overflows with the pathos of sacrifice. Its painful narrative culminates in relief and ease, for before the bloom comes the thorn. This book is a chronicle of the selfless service and dedication of Pakistani doctors, whose efforts have been blessed by Allah, turning prayers into healing. From home to the Thar desert, the prayers of the people became a movement, a wave of energy, and all voices rose in unison:

"I have asked for everything from Allah, having asked for you,

My hands rise no more after this prayer."

The return journey from the divine realm was perilous. The healer witnessed, with his own eyes, the chaotic and faltering pulses of life settling into rhythm, and felt the struggle. Death, embodied by Azrael, insisted on taking lives, yet the healer remained steadfast, devoted in humility and prayer.

In such a state, I ask you: show me one individual who, even in the midst of life's gravest trials, still yearns to serve humanity, whose every moment, every word, glorifies Allah. This book is the living, enduring testament of a devout Muslim healer. May Allah continue to bless Dr. Asif with His protection over the Ummah (Ameen).

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This book will gain recognition across the world because no prior work has captured the author's brush with the struggle between life and death while enabling his pen to record such a journey. Allah has bestowed this honor upon Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah. I offer prayers and congratulations to his wife, daughters, and son Huzaifa for his achievements. I present heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Asif on the publication of *Accident, Healer, and Life*.

"Elevate yourself so high that before every destiny,

Allah Himself will ask you, 'What is your will?'"

Finally, my prayer is: may Allah strengthen the power of the pen even more.

Mansha Qazi

Writer, Orator, Columnist

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Congratulations on the New Life of Humanity's Benefactor, Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah

After the late Abdul Sattar Edhi, the personality who has selflessly served humanity—from Thar to Khyber—risking his own life to save lives and improve health, and continues to do so, is Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah. Recently, during travel between Islamabad and Lahore, he suffered a severe accident. Survival seemed unlikely, yet perhaps Allah intended that he continue his service to humanity, granting him a new life. We must value such benefactors, as they are becoming increasingly rare. Previously, the government honored him with the Hilal-i-Imtiaz.

Our country has no shortage of great individuals; when appreciated, their work shines publicly. Otherwise, as Alexander Pope lamented, “how many precious skulls have we buried in the dust through neglect?” Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah, Chief Collector Customs, a healer practicing Ayurvedic and Allopathic methods free of charge, is foremost a caretaker of Thar’s needy population. His services in the path of Allah are manifold. The government’s decision to award him the highest civil honor, the Hilal-i-Imtiaz, on the blessed occasion of 14th August, benefits the marginalized segments long neglected by society.

I often refer to Dr. Jah as the “Second Abdul Sattar Edhi.” Continued recognition at national and governmental levels will only strengthen his spirit of service. He is both noble and humble; meeting him brings not only physical healing but also solace to the heart and soul. The fortunate are those who support his mission financially, fulfilling a duty that benefits countless lives.

We congratulate Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah on receiving the prestigious Hilal-i-Imtiaz, praying that his spirit of service continues to grow. The Mayo Hospital team deserves recognition for their precise and effective treatment, as Dr. Jah’s condition had become critical with severe internal bleeding. Thanks are also due to Professor Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, Vice-Chancellor of

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King Edward Medical University, for assembling the medical team that ensured his recovery.

Dr. Jah has been the first drop of rain for the hungry and thirsty of Thar, earning the prayers and support of local Hindu and Muslim communities. Friends and well-wishers provided a rare supply of B-negative blood, and countless prayers poured in for his recovery. Alhamdulillah, following successful treatment at Mayo Hospital, Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah has returned home safely.

We also salute his daughter, Dr. Yumna, who tirelessly cared for her father through the nights for more than two weeks, and extend respect to all doctors, nurses, and medical staff across the country who continue to serve COVID-19 patients selflessly. As a nation, we must honor those who dedicate their lives to serving humanity, for they are truly our benefactors.

Professor Syed Israr Bukhari
Columnist, Daily Jang

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From Hut to Home

Allah Jawai's cries rang out. She stood with her six daughters in front of their new home. A few months earlier, their father had tragically died, buried alive during the digging of a well. His body had been recovered only with great difficulty, and the memory of those moments still haunted her. Today, however, she was moving from their hut into a proper house.

Maulvi Yaqub Naumani, the project director of the "From Hut to Home" initiative in Tharparkar, had constructed the new house for her. Allah Jawai, along with her daughters, entered the new house, beautifully decorated and fully furnished, thanks to financial assistance provided by the worthy donors. As she stepped inside, a mix of happiness and grief overwhelmed her. The children were delighted to be in a new home, but Allah Jawai could not forget her late husband, who had loved her and their daughters dearly. He had often said that as the girls grew, he would build them a new brick home, complete with windows and shelves for their utensils. Although she had never imagined a permanent house, hearing his words had always filled her with joy.

Today, entering the bricked walled home, Allah Jawai was ecstatic. The sparkling walls, shelves adorned with utensils, solar-powered lights, and fans exceeded her imagination. Overwhelmed, she closed her eyes and opened them again, soaking in every detail. Everyone watching was filled with joy seeing her and her daughters so happy.

The entire team of the Custom Health Care Society was present in the remote villages of Umerkot. Maulvi Muhammad Yaqub, in charge of construction, helped distribute happiness across the community. Perhaps it was the prayers of these very poor families that had granted Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah a new lease on life after his near-fatal accident on June 18, 2020, while traveling from Islamabad to Lahore. Despite a serious crash, an unseen power saved him, allowing him to continue serving the needy.

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Following the incident, the Custom Health Care Society expanded its social welfare work for the poor and destitute. For over ten years, it has been providing sweet water wells in Tharparkar—a vast desert covering 19,500 square kilometers where life is harsh and resources scarce. Women often had to walk 10 kilometers carrying heavy pots of water, suffering long-term injuries. Since 2012, over 2,500 wells have been dug, providing thousands of people and animals with water.

After the wells, the Green Thar campaign was launched to make the desert fertile. Previously barren land began producing crops within months, including wheat, vegetables, and fodder for livestock. In the last four years, 2,000 acres have been transformed into 200 green farms, supporting the nutritional needs of the poor.

Inspired by his accident, Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah initiated the “Hut to Home” project, building permanent homes for Thar residents. Floods in Dadu and fires in Thar had destroyed many huts, leaving families homeless. To date, 150 homes have been constructed and handed over to families, with more under construction. These homes are provided at minimal cost, enabling small contributions to secure a permanent house for families of 7–8 members.

The Custom Health Care Society also runs hospitals, dispensaries, schools, madrasas, community centers, and relief programs across Pakistan. Internationally, it has helped Rohingya Muslims in Bangladesh, Palestinians, Syrians, and recently Afghan refugees, sending 25 containers of aid, including Ramadan packages and clothing.

Donations can be made directly to the Custom Health Care Society, account number 4011311614, National Bank of Pakistan, Main Market, Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore. Contributions are tax-exempt under FBR certificate (Barcode 2(36)(c) dated 27 August 2019). For inquiries, contact Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah at 0333-4242691.

I have known Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah for ten years. He began this society while working as a customs officer and has done extraordinary work. Today, he continues both as a Federal Tax Ombudsman and as the driving force behind the society. I am

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confident that any donations made will be used efficiently for the needy, with every penny reaching those in need.

Javed Chaudhry

Anchorperson & Columnist, Express / Express News

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