

## Pakistani Community Bids Farewell to Bangladeshi Envoy in Doha



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The outgoing Ambassador of Bangladesh, H.E. Nazrul Islam, acknowledged that farewells remain emotionally difficult even after 31 years of diplomatic service. Speaking candidly at a farewell breakfast reception in Doha, he shared the strong personal bonds he formed in Qatar, describing the warmth of the country and the camaraderie of the South Asian diaspora as reasons he felt at home despite living apart from his family. His spouse currently serves as Bangladesh's

Ambassador to Canada, while their children live overseas, allowing him to dedicate himself wholeheartedly to his diplomatic responsibilities in Qatar.

The farewell event was hosted by the Pakistani community under its Culinary Diplomacy Forum Series at Sarhad Premium Restaurant. Coordinated by veteran journalist Ashraf Siddiqui, the gathering brought together diplomats, dignitaries, and community leaders from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and other nationalities.

Distinguished diplomatic guests included H.E. Suhail Shaheen, Ambassador of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan; H.E. Mohamed Bahrin Abu Bakar, Dean of ASEAN Envoys and Ambassador of Brunei Darussalam; H.E. Dr. Ali Salehabadi, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran; H.E. Rizwan Hassan, Ambassador of Indonesia; H.E. Ambassador Mardomel Celo D Melicor of the Republic of the Philippines; H.E. Ghulam Hoosein Asmal, Ambassador of South Africa; H.E. Nguyen Huy Hiep, Ambassador of Viet Nam; and H.E. Salah Khaled, Regional Director of UNESCO. Mr. Mustafa Rabbani, Counsellor at the Embassy of Pakistan, also attended.

From the non-diplomatic side, attendees included Al Sayed Farhan; Prof. Azad bin Ashraf, President of the Bangladesh Business Forum; Anwar Hossain Akon, President of the Bangladesh Community in Qatar; Iftikhar Ahmad, senior Bangladeshi professional; and prominent members of the Pakistani community, including Waqas Malik, Osama bin Javaid, Col. Mahboob Khaled,

Israr Khan Malazai, Riyaz Ahmad Bakali, Nisar Rana, Rauf Shahzad, Khurram Iqbal, Dr. Akmal Rana, Usman Ghazali, Usman Arshad, Dr. Khurram Iqbal, Haroon Rashid Qureshi, and Babar Khalil, Owner and Partner of Sarhad Premium Restaurant.

Ambassador Islam expressed his gratitude to Siddiqui and the organizing team, describing such events as vital in nurturing goodwill, trust, and inter-community cooperation. He reflected on long workdays filled with official meetings, community engagements, and cultural programs, often stretching late into the night. “It is not the titles or official documents that stay with you,” he said, “but the faces, conversations, and friendships that truly matter.” He emphasized that while “Ambassador Nazrul Islam” may leave Qatar, “the person Nazrul Islam” will remain a lifelong friend of its people.

Earlier, Siddiqui welcomed the guests and expressed appreciation to all ambassadors, dignitaries, and business and community leaders for joining the reception. He especially recognized the support of Usman Arshad, CEO of Darb AlShemal; Dr. Khurram Iqbal; and Babar Khalil for making the event possible. As a symbolic token of brotherhood and appreciation, guests were presented with boxes of Pakistani mangoes.

Speaking separately to Rahbar Kisan International, Ambassador Islam expressed pride in the strong and evolving bilateral relations between Bangladesh and Qatar. He highlighted the critical

role of over 430,000 Bangladeshi workers contributing to Qatar's infrastructure and development. "Though Qatar is small in geography, its influence and generosity make it one of the most diplomatically active states in the region," he noted.

He emphasized the importance of expanding the Bangladesh-Qatar relationship beyond traditional labor exports, pointing to initiatives in cultural diplomacy such as art exhibitions, musical performances, and food festivals, which introduced Qatari audiences to the richness of Bangladeshi heritage. A landmark moment of his tenure was the state visit of the Amir of Qatar to Bangladesh, resulting in 11 memoranda of understanding that significantly broadened cooperation in areas including energy, education, healthcare, and investments.

Ambassador Islam expressed hope that his successor would continue building on this momentum, particularly by establishing a high-level joint committee focused on investment, manpower planning, and trade facilitation. He emphasized the importance of diplomatic agility and personal connection in modern statecraft, especially in an evolving geopolitical landscape.

Looking ahead to his upcoming assignment in Russia, Ambassador Islam described the country as a traditional global superpower and a long-standing partner of Bangladesh. He highlighted the strategic significance of ongoing cooperation, including the construction of Bangladesh's first nuclear power plant with Russian support. He acknowledged the complexities of geopolitics but

remained optimistic about potential collaboration in energy, skilled manpower exchange, and trade in garments, pharmaceuticals, and IT services.

The event also featured remarks by Osama bin Javaid, a senior journalist at Al Jazeera with extensive experience reporting from conflict zones. He spoke about the resilience of communities affected by war and displacement, underlining the power of events like the Culinary Diplomacy Forum in fostering mutual understanding. He urged community and business leaders to engage in climate resilience efforts, calling climate change “a challenge greater than any conflict we have seen.”

The gathering ended on a warm note, with guests expressing their good wishes to Ambassador Nazrul Islam for a successful tenure in Russia and continued contributions to diplomacy and regional cooperation.