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## Enlightening through the annals of Pak history

By Parvez Jami

At the launching of Ambassador Shahid Amin's book "A concise history of Pakistan" published by the Institute of Business Management, Syed Tariq Fatemi, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs and the Chief Guest, said that the youth home and abroad needs to be informed about Pakistan History, struggle and sacrifices made for Pakistan, we are on the right trajectory of growth and development understanding the genesis of Pakistan and that Ambassador Shahid Amin's book has been an instrumental contribution in this regard. Dr. Talat Wizarat, HoD, Policy Studies and International Relations, IoBM opined that this book is beyond the narration to interpretation and analysis of facts opening inspiring horizons in discussion and discourse. Dr. Huma Baqi complimented Shahid Amin's book as very objective, very passionate, very balanced for students of Pakistan History and for motivating concerned scholars in this connection. Mr. Shahid Amin expressed gratitude to IoBM for the publication of and support for this book which tantamount to labor of love, adding lasting value to Pakistan ideology, giving rationale to the genesis of Pakistan and attributing millions of sacrifices for the creation of Pakistan. Earlier Mr. Talib Karim, Rector IoBM welcomed the guests and revealed that as a diplomat, writer and commentator par excellence, it was an honor to have Ambassador Shahid Amin as a distinguished Visiting Faculty at IoBM for about a decade and a half being the favorite and hearthrob of hundreds of IoBM students of Pakistan Studies and International Relations for his congenial personality and ab-

sorbing teaching methodology.

Imagine noble and gentle kind of personal and professional background of an author writing "A Concise History of Pakistan" in letter and spirit. This is Mr. Shahid Amin with unparalleled flair for Pakistan Studies in personal capacity, with gracious reputation as a seasoned diplomat in Pakistan Foreign Service, acknowledged by men of letters and men at the helm of affairs alike, hearthrob of hundreds of students in Pakistan Studies and International Relations. Published by the Institute of Business Management where Mr. Shahid Amin is the Visiting Faculty for Pakistan Studies and International Relations, this book speaks volumes for its truthful, objective and fair account of history based on facts, free of bias and preconceived notions. The approach adopted is to include diverse views and analyses for completeness of the record. This book is useful for students of Pakistan Studies and Pakistan History, for general readers and those in pertinent research, journalism.

Born in Delhi on 8th February 1936, Mr. Shahid Amin secured MA degrees in English Literature from Punjab University and in International Relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Boston (USA). He stood first in Pakistan in the CSS batch of 1958. He was given the decoration of Tamgha-e-Quaid-e-Azam for his work in the Rann of Kutch case. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, Mr. Shahid Amin worked as lecturer in English in Gordon College, Rawalpindi (1956 to 1958). Since 1999, he has been Visiting Professor for International Relations and Pakistan Studies at College of Business Management, Korangi

Creek, Karachi. Since retirement from the Pakistan Foreign Service, Mr. Amin has written extensively for newspapers and seminars. He is also a well-known analyst on national television and radio on foreign policy and national affairs. He is the author of four books: (1) Pakistan's Foreign Policy: A Reappraisal (2000), which is being used as a text and reference book in colleges; (2) Realism in Politics (2005), which is a collection of his articles in newspapers; (3) Reminiscences of a Pakistan Diplomat, which covers the period from 1958 to 1988 in Pakistan's foreign policy, and Europe and the Muslim World: Coexistence or Conflict? Mr. Shahid M. Amin spent 39 years in the Pakistan Foreign Service from 1958 to 1997.

The highlight of the very introduction of the book suggests Pakistan's history cannot be separated from the history of Muslims of the rest of South Asia. For about a thousand years, Muslims help political power in much of India (or Hindustan, as it was called). The 1100-years long Islamic period has profoundly influenced the thinking and attitudes of the Pakistani people. Today's Pakistan is a continuation of that Muslim past, and its political landscape since independence has been heavily influenced by that legacy.

At the same time, an awareness of the region's pre-Islamic past -- Indus Valley civilization, Aryan, Hindu, Buddhist, Persian, Scythian and Greek -- is also relevant for understanding the historical and cultural heritage of Pakistani.

From the Pre-Islamic period in Pakistan's history to the Pakistan Movement, the first half of the book incisively and con-

cisely comprises such chapters as Muslim rule over India till the Mughals, Mughal dynasty (1526-1707) impact of Muslim rule over India, decline of the Mughal empire (1707-1857), rise of the British (1757-1857), 1857 mutiny, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, political developments in India (1885-1922) and the Hindu-Muslim divide (1922-1940). From the Independence and early days of Pakistan, the book moves on with Political and Constitutional developments (1947-1958), Field Marshal Ayub Khan, the first military takeover (1958-1969), including the 1965 India-Pakistan war, General Yahya Khan the second military takeover (1969-1971), including 1971 India-Pakistan war, the Bhutto years (1971-1977), General Zia-ul-Haq, the third military takeover (1977-1988), return of civilian rule (1988-1999), General Pervez Musharraf, the fourth military takeover (1999-2008), Pakistan since 2008 and Pakistan's foreign policy examined in all its different forms and manifestations. Summing up the book, Mr. Shahid Amin emphasizes Pakistan's importance in the International arena to be ensured by a number of such factors as "its key geo-strategic location, the sixth largest population in the world, the dynamism of its people, good resources, strong agriculture, the size of its armed forces and its nuclear and missile capability". He believes foreign policy successes will come if Pakistan has political stability at home, eradicates extremism and terrorism and has sound economic policies. India-Pakistan mutual resolve to address problems with mutual respect, fair-play and justice will greatly help both countries in promoting peace and security

and ensuring speedy economic progress. As the title of the book suggests "A concise history of Pakistan" is a step-by-step chronological development of Pakistan's history over the centuries. It is a tailored-to-perfection kind of research and reference material for students, faculty, researchers, historians and for media, government, politics and for those who have a flair for Pakistan history and Pakistan Studies. As Mr. Shahid Amin has himself been a distinguished faculty in Pakistan Studies and Pakistan History, a career diplomat, a seasoned writer and a print and electronic media analyst, it is believed that this book will go a long way pertaining to study, research and reference, beside others, for concerned students and teachers of these subjects at different Pakistani colleges and universities and for concerned departments and chairs at international universities.

"A concise history of Pakistan" by Shahid Amin provides ideal resource base on the subject at colleges and university libraries, specialized libraries of print and electronic media, libraries at foreign missions and international organizations, parliament and senate libraries and is heard echoing at the threshold of its launching from Liaquat Memorial Library and State Bank of Pakistan library, Karachi to Bagh-e-Jinnah and Punjab University Libraries, Lahore and beyond to Convention Centre Library, Islamabad and even at the Municipal library, The Mall, Murree to libraries at Peshawar University and Baluchistan University with far-reaching positive vibes through social, print and electronic media at the local, national and international levels.