

PROFILE OF CONTESTANTS

1. MR. AEZAZ HUSSAIN

Mr. Aezaz Hussain founded Systems Limited in 1977 as the first software house in Pakistan. His professional acumen provided the overall direction for turnkey computer projects involving systems design, hardware selection and installation, and the planning and management of large-scale industrial projects. Within the organization, he has been responsible for the internal restructuring needed to respond to periodic shifts in the company's strategy.

Mr. Hussain was the CEO of Visionet Systems, Inc. in New Jersey, USA till 2008 and he is currently the Chairman of Systems Limited. His main role is the development of enterprise strategy. He was a member of Pakistan's Information Technology Commission, which advised the President of Pakistan on IT-related matters and national policies. He has been a member of a number of committees and advisory bodies set up by the government on Information Technology strategies and on the development of public-sector information systems. He was a founding member and the founding President of Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA). He served as a member of the Economic Advisory Board, Government of Pakistan, the Information Technology Commission of Pakistan, and the Council of Computer Society of Pakistan.

Lahore

Systems Campus
Software Technology Park
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(Ex-Air Avenue), Lahore Cantt, Pakistan.
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2. MR. ASIF PEER

Mr. Asif Peer has been serving as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD) of Systems Limited, the same company where he began his career as a software developer in 1996. He also served as a Member of the Board of Directors.

Having majored in Computer Sciences at the National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences (NUCES) in Karachi, Peer was able to position himself in the lead for a job at Systems Limited as soon as he graduated. He demonstrated sheer tenacity by also completing his MBA in Marketing and Finance from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) in Karachi only a year later.

He has also served as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Visionet Systems, Inc. from 2008 to 2012 in the US before returning to Pakistan and taking charge of Systems Limited as CEO.

Under his leadership, the company has won several accolades, including Microsoft Country Partner of the Year, Top IT exporter 2019 award by PSEB IT Export Awards, membership of Microsoft Dynamics President's Club in 2014 and 2015, and 14 P@SHA ICT Awards in 7 categories over the past 5 years. He is also serving as Information Technology Board Member for CPEC Business Council on the advice of the Advisor to Primer Minter for Commerce and Investments, the Chairman BOI. The company has also been awarded by the prestigious Forbes Asia's Best Under a Billion 2020.

Asif Peer is an active member of P@SHA, representing Systems on a national level. He has been elected as President Executive Committee 2020 for American Business Council, a non-profit dedicated to bridge investment and business opportunities between Pakistan and the United States of America. He is also serving as a co-chair at Parwaz ICT, a multifaceted platform serving as a national accelerator on closing the skills gap to ensure the work readiness of Pakistan's current and future workforce. He is also serving as Information Technology Board Member for CPEC Business Council on the advice of the Advisor to Primer Minter for Commerce and Investments, the Chairman BOI.

3. MR. ARSHAD MASOOD

Mr. Arshad Masood started his career with IBM Corporation in the US and held various professional and managerial positions, including Sales Manager. He was a consistent top performer and his primary objective was to enhance customer relationships, protect their revenue base, and identify new revenue opportunities. In 1994, Mr. Arshad Masood founded Visionet Systems, Inc., USA.

As founder, Mr. Arshad Masood envisioned and executed a strategy to create a general-purpose consulting and solutions company. He helped Visionet Systems build a strategy and value proposition for products and services in the mortgage industry. Mr. Arshad Masood holds a BSc (Engineering) degree from Engineering University, Lahore, an MSc degree from University of Guelph, Canada, and an MBA degree from Baruch College, New York.

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4. MS. MAHEEN RAHMAN

Ms. Maheen has over twenty years of experience in investment banking, research and asset management. Currently she serves as the Chief Executive Officer of InfraZamin Pakistan, a Private Infrastructure Development Group (UK) company, and has played a crucial part in setting up operations and developing a project pipeline. Under her stewardship InfraZamin is fast establishing itself as a key player in financial markets with a view to catalyse private sector investment into infrastructure projects. InfraZamin's credit guarantees assist in de-risking projects and transactions to enable access to finance to underserved sectors and companies.

In her previous appointment, Maheen Rahman served as the Chief Executive of Alfalah GHP Investment Management where, under her leadership, Alfalah Investments has grown to be one of the largest asset management companies in Pakistan. Prior to that, Ms Maheen was the Chief Executive of IGI Funds, Head of Research at BMA Capital Management, Corporate Finance Associate at ABN AMRO Bank and Investment Banking analyst at Merrill Lynch. She has the experience of working across multiple geographies during her career.

Ms. Maheen has been featured on Fortune's "40 Under 40's women to watch" list, in 2015. She is currently Independent Director at GlaxoSmithKlein Pakistan, Director for the British Overseas School, Director Nasra Public Schools, Advisor to KatalystLabs, Director at Khaadi and Director of Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan. She is also the former Director of Special Technology Zones Authority, Pakistan, former Chairperson and Director of the Mutual Funds Association of Pakistan, former Director Pakistan Institute of Corporate Governance and former Member of the Prime Minister's Task Force on Restructuring of Evacuee Property Trust Board.

In addition to her extensive work experience and professional achievements, Ms. Maheen holds a Bachelor of Science (Hons) degree in Economics from the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) and a Master of Science in Finance and Economics from Warwick Business School in the UK. She also has several capital markets certifications including Series 7 from the New York Stock Exchange and is a certified independent director from the Pakistan Institute of Corporate Governance.

5. MR. OMAR SAEED

Mr. Omar Saeed graduated with high honors from Brown University and did his Master's in Business Administration from Harvard Business School.

Omar has recently been appointed Chief Executive Officer of Service Long March Tyres (Private) Limited, a Joint Venture between Service Industries Limited and Chaoyang Long March Tyre Co., Ltd. Additionally, Omar serves as the Chief Executive Officer of Servis Foundation.

Omar has served as the Chief Executive Officer of Service Industries Limited (SIL) from 2011 to 2018. Under his stewardship, SIL won the highly prestigious Pakistan Stock Exchange Top 25 Companies Award for the years 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2015. Prior to that, Omar was responsible for building Servis into Pakistan's largest footwear retailer, with 500 stores and more than PKR 12 Billion in annual revenues. He founded Ovex Technologies (Private) Limited in 2004, which went on to become one of Pakistan's leading call center companies before the business was sold in 2011.

He has served on the Boards of various private and public companies in the past. Omar has also been an adjunct faculty member of LUMS where he taught entrepreneurship.

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6. MR. ZUBYR SOOMRO

Mr. Zubyr Soomro has been a career international banker with 33 years at Citibank in senior assignments in the Middle East, Turkey, UK and Pakistan. In 1997, he was asked by the Government of Pakistan to return to Pakistan to run United Bank Ltd as its President and Chairman and restructure it for privatization. For his work at UBL, he was awarded the Quaid-e-Azam Centenary Gold Medal by the State Bank of Pakistan in 2004. This was also in recognition of his leading role in banking reforms as Chairman of the Pakistan Banks' Association. Thereafter, he was invited by the World Bank in Washington D.C., the IMF in Egypt and the IFC in Bangladesh to speak on the restructuring of public sector banks. In early 2019, he was asked by the government to take on the Chairmanship of NBP and support and oversee a much-needed restructuring of this institution which position he held till the end of his tenure in April 2022. During this period, he was also appointed Chairman of NBP's UK joint venture bank called United National Bank and held this position until October 2022.

Over the last 20 years, Mr. Soomro, has also been actively involved in financial inclusion and poverty alleviation and was the Chairman of Pakistan Microfinance Investment Company, the apex entity for the sector, majority owned by UK and German Government related entities. He has served on the boards of the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, the Lahore University of Management Sciences, the National Education Management Foundation, the Layton Rahmatullah Benevolent Trust, Aitchison College, and the US based Grameen Foundation. From 2011 to 2015 he was faculty for a New York boutique firm, SGA Interactive, focused on coaching senior IBM executives on dealing with boards. In October 2023 he was given a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Pakistan Microfinance Network for his contribution to the sector.

He has twice served on the Government's Economic Advisory Council (1997 to 1999 and 2013 to 2018), been a member of the board of the State Bank of Pakistan, on the policy board of the Securities & Exchange Commission of Pakistan, the board of the National Investment Trust, Chairman of the Board of the Karachi Stock Exchange, President of the Overseas Chamber of Commerce & Industry, President of the American Business Council and from 2017 to 2023 was a member of the board of EFG Hermes, Cairo, a leading international financial services group involved in commercial and investment banking, brokerage, asset management, consumer banking, and microfinance.

Mr. Zubyr Soomro has a BSc Hons from the London School of Economics (LSE) and a Masters from the School of Oriental and African Studies (London University). He has also attended executive programs at the Harvard Business School and the Harvard Kennedy School in 2015, 2017 and 2020.

He is currently Chairman of the Board of the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, and on the board of Acumen Pakistan, a subsidiary of a US impact investment entity, as well as

on the boards of LRBT and Shaukat Khanum Memorial Trust. In addition, he looks after the family agriculture in Jacobabad where they grow rice and wheat.

7. MS. ROMANA ABDULLAH

Mrs. Romana Abdullah is CEO of Highpoint Ventures (Pvt) Ltd and leads Hopscotch, a kidswear brand she co-founded in 2014. Prior to becoming an entrepreneur, Romana led the strategic planning and transformation functions at MCB Bank and SoneriBank. Earlier, Romana spent significant time at The Boston Consulting Group (Management Consulting) and Merrill Lynch (Investment Banking) in New York, where she focused on strategic, financial, and operational assignments for Fortune 500 financial services and consumer clients.

Romana also serves on the boards of Nestle Pakistan, Interloop and Karandaaz. She has a BSc in Financial Engineering from Princeton University and an MBA from the Harvard Business School.



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