

# The Political Mix: Fashion and Pak-Parliament!

An article by Stuti Kamboj, NIFT (September 26, 2011)

“Fashion is what you adopt when you don’t know who you are”; this very famous line by Quentin Crisp brings in the concept of style and its importance. Very few people believe in making their own style statement and fashion identity. Dressing is a very important aspect of one’s personality. It is said, “What is in your mind, is on your body”. In current scenario of professionalism, people look for perfection in terms of knowledge, skill, speech, etiquettes and now even dressing. In today’s world garnishing a dish has become equally important to the taste of it, otherwise people underestimate you. Power dressing has become an important aspect of the political stage. Political leaders want to look presentable among the masses that look towards them as opinion leaders in all facets.

Fashion and politics is the strange combo when one talks about both in one frame. Though many political leaders have set their benchmarks in power dressing but bringing Pakistan and that too a woman into the storyboard of fashion and politics is something new that we are witnessing. Yes, I am talking about Ms Hina Rabbani Khar; the Pakistan Foreign Minister who is into news more because of her extraordinary style rather than political drama. The 34 year old Pakistani woman is the youngest and the first woman Foreign Minister for Pakistan. Hina, who has inherited politics from her family, is daughter of former Pak foreign minister Ghulam Noor Rabbani Khar and niece of Ghulam Mustafa Khar. It’s because of her political roots that she has often been referred as the next Benazir of the Pakistan. After Benazir Bhutto, Hina is the next female face of Pakistan known worldwide. Hina also holds a Masters degree from the University of Massachusetts, USA. She has all that it takes to be a leader. In 2008; she was named to the World Economic Forum’s list of young global leaders.

The lady made a visit to India in order to meet the nation’s External Affairs minister Mr. S.M. Krishna to have a dialogue over Indo-Pak relations. She landed India at the Delhi airport in a monotone outfit of blue which is the colour of the season and since then was under the coverage of shutterbugs throughout her visit in India. It was interesting to witness the formal meeting between two people of generation gap and completely different cultural backgrounds and style statements; where Mr. Krishna has a taste for tailored suits and known among masses for his work and not style statement.

Being a scorpion by sun sign, she has a signature style which is in harmony with what astrology has to say about scorpions on the style and dressing front. Scorpions are extremely fashionable, dynamic and social. They love to wear blacks and dark coloured clothes and tend to like simple clothes more than very detailed and flashy ones. Conforming to the astro-science Hina has the same tastes stated above. Her belief in elegant and graceful dressing makes her a Pakistani Fashionista. Being very tasteful for accessories, the lady flaunts her understated South Sea pearl necklace, Roberto Cavalli shades and Birkin bag, which almost cost 17 lakhs giving her a luxury end in terms of fashion. Her bag gave her the formal and crisp flavour whereas her oversized glasses gave a touch up to her glamorous look. However, being from a Muslim state, she dresses conservatively and her brief to the designers is not to make body hugging dresses. A polo enthusiast, she has a stable of horses. She also owns a restaurant named Polo Lounge. She has more than 20 facebook fan clubs. Not just restricted to fashion and politics, the lady portrays her versatile personality with her interest in adventure sports as well. She is a trekking enthusiast and has been to K2 and Nanga Parbat. Being a mother of two, and yet looks young

like a college chic, I guess all the secrets reside in her healthy lifestyle, where she eats healthy and prefers green tea over the other beverages. The Khar family are the typical 'haves' of Pakistan and own fisheries, mango orchards, sugarcane fields. Ironic to her conservative dressing on formal front, Hina wears trendy jeans in private gatherings as well. According to Ciro Paone; quality is simplicity, understatement and clear lines" and so is followed by Ms Khar, giving a completely new perspective to Pakistan politics and fashion. She has given a new meaning to politics in Pakistan by clubbing it with power dressing.

## Hina Rabbani Khar: A weapon of mass Distraction

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Imagine!! Mahatma Gandhi walking towards the stage in order to talk about poverty in Giorgio Armani corporate suiting, Rolex watches and Gucci leather shoes. Tough one to digest? Well fashion and politics in one frame is still a sore subject for many. The two should never mix. They say, politics and fashion have nothing to do with each other. So my question is, 'Is Ms Hina Rabbani Khari (Pakistan foreign minister); authentic on flaunting her super expensive apparel in a country where people die of hunger?

The 34 year old Pakistani woman is the youngest and the first woman foreign minister for Pakistan. Hina Rabbani Khar, who has inherited politics from her family, is a daughter of former Pak foreign minister Ghulam Noor Rabbani Khar and niece of Ghulam Mustafa Khar. It's because of her political roots that she has often been referred as the next Benazir of the Pakistan. After Benazir Bhutto, Hina is the next female face of Pakistan known worldwide. Hina also holds a Masters degree from the University of Massachusetts, USA- she has all that it takes to be a leader. In 2008, she was named to the World Economic Forum's list of young global leaders. The Khar family are the typical 'haves' of Pakistan and own fisheries, mango orchards, sugarcane fields. Having such a feudal background, gives her blue blooded privilege to go for such a fashion statement.

Politics is changing but the core motive is still the same, and that is, a political leader should keep in mind the sentiments of the masses he or she is representing. You can blame it on our superficial culture but our shallow roots run deep. Hina Rabbani Khar's take on the amalgam of fashion and politics has created a buzz among many. Her oversized Roberto Cavalli shades, south sea pearl necklace, Berkin bag; which almost cost 17 lacs may be hurting the sentiments of her people and giving them a second thought that can a lady wearing high end designer apparel feel the pain of people who don't even have cloth to cover their loins. Ms Khar made a visit to India this July in order to have a political dialogue with our External Affairs minister Mr. S.M. Krishna. But the media too got distracted by her looks and fashion statement. Nobody was curious about the word going on between the representatives of the two nations. Everybody including shutterbugs was keen to notice that Ms Khar wore a monotone blue suit which was the colour of the season. This creates a big question mark; can a glamorous woman ever be taken seriously on work front? Though she is very much tuned to power dressing and is competent to the First Ladies of USA but her flock of hair that repeatedly coming into her eyes maybe a source of bad impression for some. Being from a Muslim State, she makes it a point to have conserved dressing and plays with her style within that much spectrum only; but I think her half head uncovered at times must be objectionable to a sect where women cover themselves head to toe in front of outsiders. It's not a gender biased statement to point out a Pakistani woman, but a social issue; a political leader should step into common man's shoe because represent those. Big brands may make you a fashion freak but poor masses may stop relating to you costing you on your vote banks.