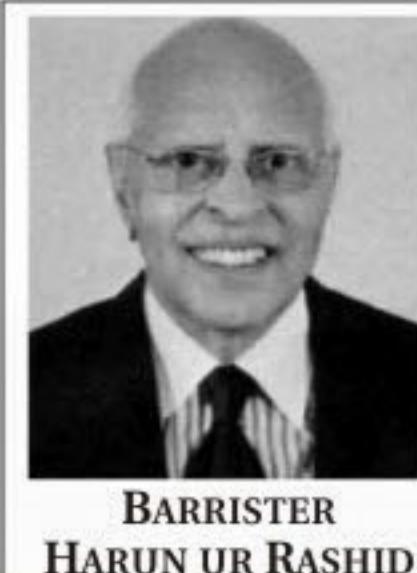


BOTTOM LINE

# Cricket diplomacy in South Asia



BARRISTER  
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**D**URING the tense cold war era between the United States and the People's Republic of China, no one would have guessed that the break in hostility would begin over a game of table tennis, known as Ping Pong.

After more than two decades, "Ping Pong diplomacy" in 1971 led to the restoration of Sino-U.S. relations, which had been cut for more than two decades. Blending statecraft and sport, table tennis matches between American and Chinese athletes set the stage for Nixon's breakthrough with the People's Republic of China.