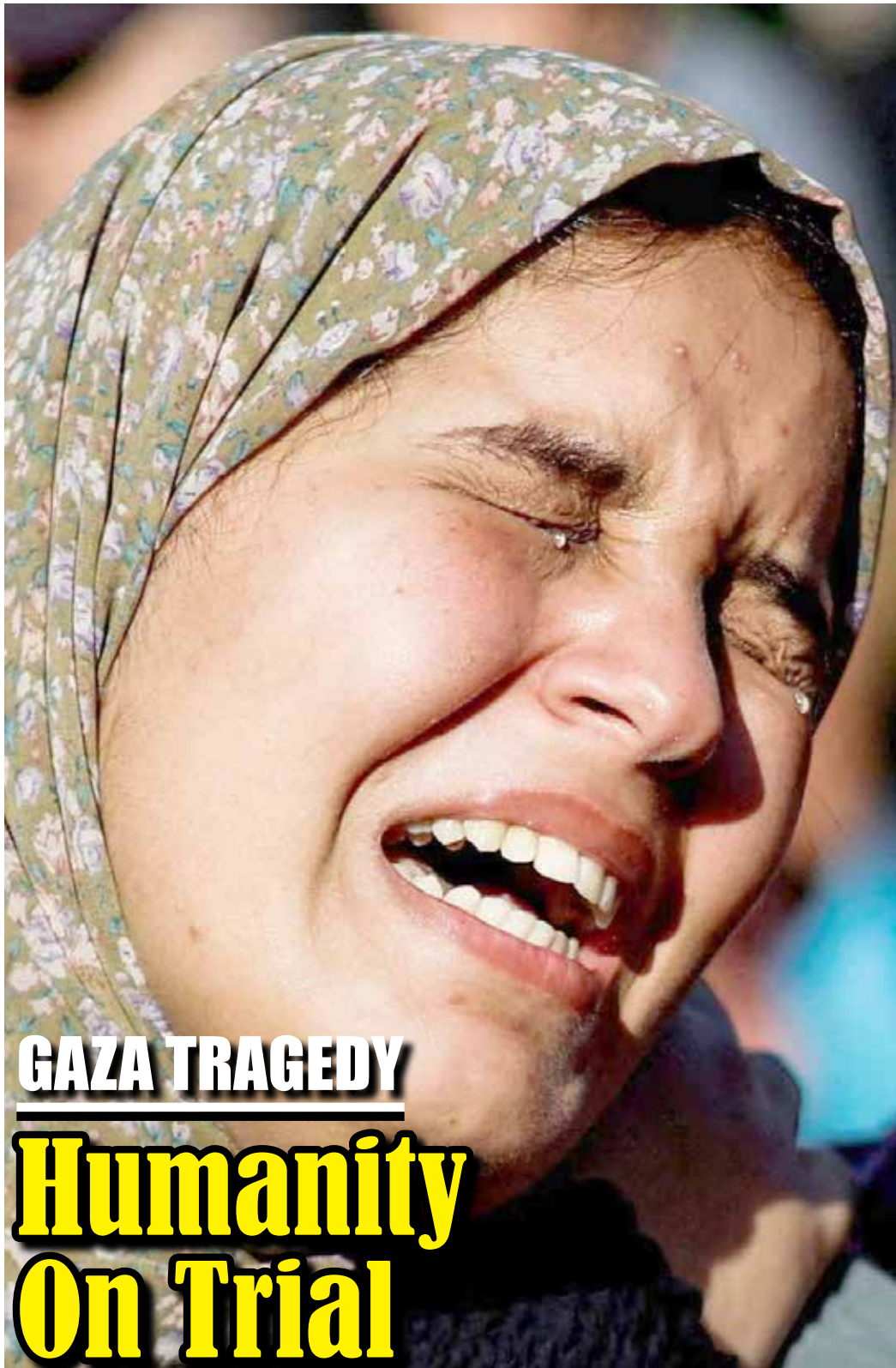


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GAZA TRAGEDY

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On Trial**



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Election are around the corner at last



Thanks to the Supreme Court of Pakistan that the general elections have finally been announced, which will take place on February 8, 2024. With this announcement all parties are likely to gear up their elections campaigns sans the PTI as most of its leadership is still behind the bars. The return of Nawaz Sharif, the PML-N's leader and former Prime Minister, after nearly four years of self-imposed exile has undoubtedly stirred a wave of poignant moments. As he graced the stage during the Minar-e-Pakistan gathering, with his presence, the audience witnessed heartfelt scenes, such as his warm embrace with his daughter, Maryam Nawaz, and his younger brother, Shehbaz Sharif. The sheer scale of the attendance at this homecoming event was undeniably massive, and this is hardly surprising, given the substantial support the

PML-N received from the state machinery. It evoked memories of PTI public gatherings, where the turnout was nothing short of phenomenal. However, it's worth noting that during that era, PTI held a special status with the Establishment, which contributed to the massive crowds they attracted. Nawaz Sharif's return marks a significant moment in Pakistan's political landscape, underscoring his enduring influence in the country's politics.

His return on one hand promises to breathe new life into the PML-N, which has faced significant challenges, particularly following the 16-month tenure in government after the PTI was voted out. Nawaz Sharif, during his speech, provided insights into his previous terms in office when, in his view, accessibility was widespread, even for those less fortunate. While avoiding specific reference to the PDM period, he attributed the entirety of the nation's troubles to the PTI government. Without explicitly mentioning Imran Khan, the former prime minister questioned the authenticity of his religious gestures. According to Sharif, the PTI chairman publicly counting beads attempted to project himself as a devout figure, which, in Sharif's opinion, did not align with his actions.

Nawaz Sharif exhibited a remarkable degree of discretion when discussing his removal from power. Though he refrained from directly naming the Establishment, his insinuations left little doubt about who he believed was responsible for his ouster. With a touch of literary finesse, he chose to invoke the words of Mirza Ghalib, hinting at the immense reservoir of untold secrets. In a poetic flourish, he implied that if he were to reveal the full extent of what transpired in the past, his tears alone could inundate the entire world. This combination of careful words and poetic allusions conveyed the depth of his experience while maintaining a sense of dignity and intrigue. However, the real question remains: can he maintain this level of self-control in the days ahead?

Nawaz Sharif has a long history of strained relations with the establishment in Pakistan. Each time he clashed with the powerful stakeholders in our political system, it ultimately led to his removal from office. In his three previous tenures as prime minister, he was unable to complete a full five-year term due to these confrontations. Considering his track record and his approach to dealing with establishment involvement in political matters, it's reasonable to predict that even if, by some stroke of luck, he manages to come into power for the fourth time, the outcome may not be different from what we've seen in the past. Winning back the trust of the Establishment may indeed pose a formidable challenge for him. His closest allies have repeatedly counseled him that unless he reconciles with the Establishment, his political prospects could remain in the shadows.

He presented a comprehensive 9-point agenda aimed at steering the country out of its current crises. However, it's worth noting that two vital aspects appear to be absent from this agenda. Firstly, there is a conspicuous absence of any clarification regarding the role of the Establishment in politics. Secondly, there is a noticeable lack of details about his vision for combating corruption in Pakistan. Corruption has been a persistent roadblock to Pakistan's progress, despite its abundance of resources. It is high time to address this issue head-on, as it is a major factor contributing to the country's ongoing struggles. Let us hope that all parties shall get a level playing field. Keeping the PTI out of electoral race won't serve anybody's purpose. Pakistan's challenges are of grave nature, which can only be matched through an all-inclusive political approach.

Ansar

Chief Editor's Profile: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti is a career journalist. He started off as District Correspondent of Daily The Muslim in 1988 from Gujrat. Later he moved to Islamabad and joined Pakistan Observer as Sub-Editor / Op-ed Writer, in 1993. In 1995 he again moved to The Muslim as Sub-Editor and he left The Muslim in 1997 to join THE Nation as City Editor and Diplomatic Correspondent, where he remained till 2002. His association with the The News spans over three years from 2002 to 2005 as columnist. In 2005 Mr. Bhatti switched over to Khabrain Group as Columnist / Special Correspondent. In 2010 he was made Resident Editor of The Post, a sister publication of daily Khabrain. In 2010, he launched his own publication Centreline. He has authored two books on European Union. He also served in Pakistan Telecommunication Company (PTCL) as Media Advisor/ Director Communication. He launched Diplomatic News Agency (DNA) in 2012. In May 2020 he launched Pakistan's First & only Diplomatic Newspaper Daily Islamabad POST.

Humanity On Trial

Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

WHILE the tragic accounts of large-scale violence against innocent Palestinians persist at the hands of Israeli forces, there is a noticeable disparity in the responses from the Muslim ummah and the global community at large. It is disheartening to observe that non-Muslim countries have reacted swiftly and resolutely to Israeli actions, while the Muslim states have, for the most part, remained passive and indecisive. Notably, some Latin American countries, such as Bolivia, have taken the bold step of severing ties with Israel, whereas the OIC and Arab League are still deliberating their course of action. Among the Arab states, Bahrain has sown some guts by expelling the Israeli ambassador. The situation in Gaza can be analyzed from multiple perspectives. Firstly, the conflict escalated when there were indications of Saudi Arabia deepening its relationship with Tel Aviv, potentially formalizing diplomatic ties with the intention of recognizing Israel in the future. As reports suggest, Saudi Arabia's plan was to extend recognition to Israel once Palestine achieved full independence and sovereignty, with Al-Quds as its capital. Nevertheless, after Gaza tragedy Saudis of course will have to put their plans on hold, albeit, for a while. The U.S. stance on the issue is perplexing, to say the

least. It's challenging to comprehend how a superpower could seemingly support an aggressor, especially when the tragic loss of innocent lives is so evident. Some observers speculate that President Joe Biden's unwavering support for Israel may be influenced by his desire to secure backing from the Jewish community for upcoming elections.

“They should also heed the voices of those who genuinely support their cause and seek an amicable resolution in accordance with their aspirations”

Questions have also been raised the way Hamas conducted its operations. Its critics believe if it did not have the Plan B and C then why it ventured on this mission due to which thousands of innocent people have lost their lives. It is also believed that Israel's prime objective is not to eliminate

Hamas rather to get the entire Gaza strip vacated from Palestinians. To eliminate Hamas may not be an issue for Israel as it knows it's all ins and outs given the fact that Hamas came into being with the very support and backing of Israel in order to contain Yasser Arafat's PLO at that time. It may be recalled that the bombing of the media tower in the Gaza Strip in May 2021 highlighted the unwavering resolve of Israel in its pursuit of eliminating not only the messengers but also the innocent Palestinian people who have endured decades of Israeli brutality. This tragic event had claimed the lives of over 180 Palestinians, including children, and left hundreds of thousands homeless.

Israel's relentless campaign of terror reached a horrifying climax when they targeted Palestinians gathered for prayers in the Al-Aqsa mosque on the night of the 27th of Ramadan. Even in the face of this brutality, the so-called Muslim Ummah responded with an outpouring of grandiose statements and promises to protect Al-Aqsa mosque and come to the aid of the innocent people. Regrettably, these vows remained unfulfilled, and their pledges never materialized into concrete actions.

The OIC foreign ministers' conference, held recently in Saudi Arabia, appeared to present an opportunity for addressing concerns related to Israel. However, it fell



disappointingly short of expectations as foreign ministers largely delivered routine speeches and failed to take substantial actions. There are three prominent international platforms that the Palestinian people and the broader Muslim community, often referred to as the Ummah, could look to for support: the United Nations, the Arab League, and the OIC.

Placing excessive hope in the United Nations may be unwise, as it often seems influenced by anti-Muslim sentiments and constrained by its relationships with certain powerful nations. Given that Israel has strong backing from the United States, the UN's criticism of Israeli actions may be limited. The Secretary General's earnest appeals for a ceasefire have unfortunately fallen on deaf ears. It appears that his pleas have not gained the traction they deserve. In light of this, it becomes imperative for the Secretary General to reflect on his relevance and the justification for his continued leadership at the United Nations.

The OIC, on the other hand, has unfortunately been criticized for its ineffectiveness and resource-draining tendencies since its establishment. This 57-member



organization has consistently fallen short of meeting expectations. Despite several challenges faced by the Muslim community, the OIC has not been successful in taking meaningful action. It has, at times, appeared as a platform for rhetorical condemnations, particularly in addressing issues like Islamophobia and blasphemous depictions.

The OIC was founded in response to the 1969 arson incidents at Al Aqsa mosque, yet it has been unable to prevent subsequent attacks on the mosque by Israel due to the lack of a substantial response from the Ummah and the OIC itself. In the recent episode, most of the OIC member countries believe, though they do not admit it openly, that Hamas acts do not represent the will of the entire Palestine state hence at times they are loathe to back Hamas actions wholeheartedly.



Arab League is yet another stakeholder that can play a role, if it wishes to. But keeping in view the past practices, nothing tangible is expected from the Arab League as the block appears to be divided into two distinct camps – one openly supporting the US and Israel and another desiring a solution as per the wishes of the people of Palestine. But now when a tragedy has taken place it time for everyone to shun differences and try to save innocent Palestine people from the Israeli barbarities.

Israel will never listen to anybody until and unless it is given a matching response. The Iranian foreign minister proposed to declare Israeli acts as war crimes and genocide of Palestine people. The Iranian spiritual leader Ali Khamenei has asked the Muslim ummah to boycott Israel but of no use only because of severe internal fissures among the Muslim countries. As long as they remain divided the innocent Muslims would continue to reel under tyranny and subjugation.

It's important to remember that complex geopolitical issues like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict require a multifaceted and long-term approach. While a matching response may seem tempting, dialogue, diplomacy, and international cooperation are more likely to lead to lasting solutions and a more stable and secure future for the region. Whether it's Hamas or other Palestinian factions, it's important for them to recognize the significance of unity within their ranks and resist succumbing to external provocations. They should also heed the voices of those who genuinely support their cause and seek an amicable resolution in accordance with their aspirations.

GAZA TRAGEDY

Hamas-Israel Conflict, 360 view



Qamar Bashir

HAMAS'S unprecedented and lethal surprise attacks deep inside Israel, was surprising to everyone, given the potential for a strong response from Israel, backed by the USA and the West. It was the concern that I highlighted in my article titled "How Hamas Stunned Israel." I've been seeking an answer to this question since, and that answer came from none other than United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) Antonio Guterres. His insights shed light on the intricate dynamics of this conflict, emphasizing the need for continued understanding and efforts to promote a peaceful resolution. UNSG, appalled by the killing of innocent Palestinian women elderly and children by the Israeli war machine sans mercy with heartless cruelty and brutality, said, "Hamas attacks did not take place in vacuum but they were the result of subjecting the Palestinian people to

56 years of suffocating occupation". He added, "They have seen their land steadily devoured by settlements and plagued by violence; their economy stifled; their people displaced and their homes demolished. Their hopes for a political solution to their plight have been vanishing." The answer, while welcomed by many, simultaneously stirred deep unease within the entire Western community, most notably in the USA and Israel. The UNSG's just and apt stance on this contentious and potentially explosive issue should have been received with openness and positivity. However, Israeli officials reacted with anger, vehemently rejecting this wise statement and labeling it as a justification for terrorism. In retaliation, Israel canceled the scheduled meeting of Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen with Guterres while Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust memorial, said the U.N. chief



“failed the test.” The Israeli Foreign minister said “I will not meet with the UNSG as after the October 7 massacre, there is no place for a balanced approach. Hamas must be erased off the face of the planet!” Israel went to the extent of refusing issuance of visa to the UNSG and its representative to Israel. Israel, true to its statement, has publicly conveyed its intentions to annihilate Hamas, destroy its war machine and reduce its capacity of launching any attack on Israel in future and to rescue over 200 Israeli hostages. The official statement added that Hamas only knows one language, the language of military might therefore it said that coupled with diplomatic pressure, all out air, land and naval attacks have been ongoing on the Gaza strip, whereas, joint US-Israeli military rescue mission by using sophisticated and state of the art technology has been conceived and will be

launched very soon. The principle stand taken by the UNSG, in the meantime, has started reverberating in many societies around the world. These societies unfettered by their governments’ reactions are reacting and protesting angrily in large numbers to the brutality and barbarism of Israel’s retaliation which as if today have killed around 9000 civilians and 3800 children and fatally injured over 21,000 civilians. Israel war machines have reduced the Palestinian Urban centers in rubbles and underneath these rubbles humanity is crushed, dead and is rotting while the attacks continue unabated without any end in sight. While responding to the question of Israel’s brutal attacks on hospitals in Gaza Strip, Israel Spokesperson said that Hamas is maintaining its command and control center under the hospitals and other such civilian facilities therefore, all such facilities will be destroyed and raised to the ground.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Palestine Ahmed Rabei speaking on the occasion of all parties conference. – DNA

They once again warned and gave an ultimatum to the Hospitals and the patients, some of them on life support systems, many babies in incubators and many more crippled due to constant and uninterrupted Israel bombardments to evacuate immediately to the South of Gaza and while those who had the strength and means to evacuate, their caravans were attacked Israel fighter jets without any mercy.

The statement of the UNSG was deeply rooted in the history of the Israel-Palestine conflict, a protracted and multifaceted dispute having historical, political, and territorial factors. It originated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when Jewish immigration to Palestine, then part of the Ottoman Empire, increased, leading to tensions with the Arab population. The conflict was further fueled by the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which expressed British support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine.

After World War II and the Holocaust, led to international support for the creation of a Jewish state and led to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. This event triggered a series of Arab-Israeli wars and further territorial disputes, particularly in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and gave birth to two organizations Hamas and Hezbollah deeply supporting and promoting Palestinian cause.

The recent escalation of conflict between Hamas and Israel can be attributed to several factors. Hamas launched its attack in response to a culmination of long-standing grievances, including Israeli policies, violence at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, treatment of Palestinians, and the expansion of Israeli settlements. While Hamas justifies its actions as a response to these issues, Israel and the U.S. have rejected any moral equivalence between Hamas attacks on Israeli civilians and Israel's efforts to defend itself. Hamas anticipated that its actions would

draw Israel into a protracted conflict, potentially undermining the diplomatic normalization efforts and generating international sympathy for the Palestinian cause. The timing of the attack took advantage of domestic distractions in the Israeli government, allowing Hamas to act while Israel was internally preoccupied. Hamas, or the Islamic Resistance Movement, was founded in 1987 during the First Intifada (Palestinian uprising) against Israeli occupation. Hamas's core objectives include the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, resistance against Israeli occupation, and the assertion of its Islamist ideology.

Hezbollah, on the other hand, is a Shiite militant and political organization based in Lebanon. It was formed in the early 1980s with the backing of Iran as a response to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Hezbollah is considered more powerful than the Lebanese army, and has engaged in conflicts with Israel, notably the 2006 Lebanon War.

While the USA, UK and rest of the western governments are standing astutely and resolutely with Israel, Russia stands with Hamas. This prompted the West to draw comparisons between Hamas's onslaught and Russia's war against Ukraine arguing that one was "a terrorist organization that attacked Israel" and the other "a terrorist state that attacked Ukraine." The United States has historically been a strong ally of Israel and has often supported Israel in the Israel-Palestine conflict. This support includes financial aid, military assistance, and diplomatic backing.

But on the other hand, Russia has long maintained close relations with Hamas and has never declared either wing of Hamas to be a terrorist group. Rather, eager to carve out a niche in the Middle East peace process, Russian diplomats have tried to unify different Palestinian factions, including Hamas, into a single po-

litical force in order to restart the peace process and promote a two-state solution. Unlike the west, USA and Russia, China has towed a neutral line since the war began and continues to call for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. In an official statement issued on October 8, the day after Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel, China's foreign ministry called for a de-escalation in hostilities and for "relevant parties to remain calm, exercise restraint and immediately end the hostilities to protect civilians and avoid further deterioration of the situation".

Iran plays a crucial role in supporting Hamas financially and politically, although Iran has denied any direct involvement in the recent attack. However, Iran in an intimidating strong statement warned Israel of dire consequence if the war expand to other parts of Middle East especially Lebanon. Western states, such as Australia and New Zealand, have only declared the military wing of Hamas—the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades—to be a terrorist organization. Others, such as the United States, have not made this distinction. The support of Iran, Russia, and Turkey for Palestine, contrasting with the backing of Israel by the USA and Western nations, has indeed starkly divided the world into clear-cut positions, painting many shades of gray within the conflict. This division intensifies the complexities of the situation.

The deployment of two U.S. aircraft carriers in Middle Eastern waters sends a clear message, serving as a warning against any misadventures. This stern posture raises the stakes, particularly with Iran and other Middle Eastern countries, creating an environment of heightened tension. Yet, amidst these developments, Russia and Iran remain resolute and undeterred by such deployments. This scenario underscores the intricate global dynamics at play and the fragility of peace in the region.

Certainly, conflicts, especially those involving powerful nations, can be brutal, causing immense suffering. The world often witnesses self-proclaimed champions of human rights backing their interests. In this ongoing conflict, some powerful nations support Israel while others stand by Palestinian civilians. Yet, history shows that even the bloodiest wars ultimately find resolution at the negotiating table. It's in the interest of all parties involved to put aside entrenched positions, attribute blame to the culprits, ensure justice for victims, and, most crucially, address the root causes, as underscored by the United Nations Secretary-General. Failure to do so could escalate this weeping conflict into a global conflagration, reminding us that the path to peace is always more desirable than the ravages of war.

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Pakistan should focus on Africa for business promotion: Nigerian Envoy

Ambassador Karmoune said that the outgoing high commissioner played key role in promoting relations between Nigeria and Pakistan



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) hosted a farewell reception in honor of H.E Muhammad Bello Abioye High Commissioner of Nigeria to Pakistan at his home. Ambassador of Morocco H.E. Mohamed Karmoune, Ambassador of Ethiopia H.E. Jemal Beker Abdula, Ambassador of Algeria H.E. Brahim Romani, Ambassador of Somalia Mrs. Khadija Mohamed Almakhzoumi, Ambassador of Mauritius H.E. Rashidally Soobadar, Director General Foreign Affairs Shahid Ali Bhutto, Asif Luqman Qazi of Jamaat-e-Islami, Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader ICCI and many other dignitaries and notables of the city. Speaking on the occasion, H.E Muhammad Bello Abioye High Commissioner of Nigeria said that Africa is being termed as the Continent of future by the trade experts and Pakistan should focus on it to promote its trade by developing close cooperation with Nigeria. He said that direct flights between Nigeria and Pakistan have the potential to make significant increases in bilateral trade. He said that Nigeria and Pakistan can cooperate in many sectors including transportation, tourism, trade & commerce,

industry. He said that during his tenure in Pakistan, he had taken several steps to facilitate the exchange of information, foster business-to-business meetings, and implement a simplified visa policy to support the entrepreneurs. Visa applications have been processed within 48 hours over the past two years, streamlining the process for business-related travel. He thanked Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari President ICCI and Zafar Bakhtawari Secretary General UBG Pakistan for hosting a farewell reception in his honor and said that he has spent a very good time in Pakistan and would act as an Ambassador of Pakistan in future.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) said that Pakistan-Nigeria bilateral trade is just around US\$ 114 million, which is quite low as compared to the actual potential of both countries. He stressed that Pakistan and Nigeria should accelerate efforts to increase bilateral trade at least up to US\$ 3 billion in the next few years to achieve mutually beneficial results. He said that Pakistan can export many products to Nigeria and other African countries including textiles, rice, pharmaceuticals, surgical instruments, electrical appliances, processed food, cosmetic & beauty products, leather

goods, IT products, financial services. He paid tribute to the services of H.E Muhammad Bello Abioye High Commissioner of Nigeria and hoped that he would play a role to promote business interests of Pakistan wherever he goes for his next assignment.

Dean of the African Group Ambassador of Morocco Mohammad Karmoune in his address lauded the services of the outgoing colleague and wished his best of luck. Ambassador Karmoune said that the outgoing high commissioner played key role in promoting relations between Nigeria and Pakistan. Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader ICCI said that Pakistan and Nigeria are a combined market of about half a billion people and they can achieve much better results by developing close cooperation. He stressed for regular exchange of business delegations to explore all untapped areas of mutual cooperation between the two countries. Zafar Bakhtawari, former President ICCI and Secretary General UBG Pakistan lauded the services of H.E Muhammad Bello Abioye High Commissioner of Nigeria who remained as an active Ambassador in Pakistan. He said that the direct flights between Pakistan and Nigeria can boost bilateral trade and urged that both countries should make all possible efforts to achieve this goal.

National Foundation Day of Korea celebrated in Islamabad

**DOAM, Korean
embassy
commemorate 40
years of diplomatic
ties with photographic
exhibition**

— DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Islamabad has celebrated the National Foundation Day and the Armed Forces Day of Korea as well as the 40th Anniversary of diplomatic relations between Korea and Pakistan. The National Foundation Day ceremony was held at the residence of the Ambassador of the Republic of Korea and attended by the Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Muhammad Sami Saeed, as the Chief Guest while Murtaza Solangi, the Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting, and Kamran Tessori, the Governor of Sindh. Addressing the audience, the ambassador of the Republic of Korea said that Pakistan is channeling all its vigor towards national progress. Korea, with its wealth of experience and technological advancement, stands ready to support and partake in Pakistan's endeavors. He mentioned that Korea is committed to fostering a partnership that reaps mutual benefits, ensuring our combined strengths produce greater results. The Korean embassy, too, is dedicated to this shared vision.

He mentioned that he seeks continued support and goodwill as they embark on this new 40-year chapter of collaboration between Korea and Pakistan. The Envoy

further stated that since 1983, the bond between both countries has deepened and diversified, spanning areas from politics and economy to culture and collaborative development. He said "As we reflect upon our shared journey, it is essential to not only value our past accomplishments but also to set our sights on a future filled with bright new promises. Our aspiration should not be limited to the current status of 'friendship and cooperation', but should aim to elevate it further, creating a bond that stands strong through time and challenges".

Meanwhile, An exhibition showcasing '40 Years of Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of Korea and Pakistan' was organized on Friday by the Department of Archeology and Museum (DOAM) in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Korea. In the opening session, notable speakers were Park Kijun, the Korean Ambassador, a representative from the National Heritage and Culture Division in Islamabad, the Executive Director of the Korea Cultural Heritage Foundation (KCHF), and Dr. Abdul Azeem, the Director General of DOAM.

The exhibition's purpose was to commemorate the 40-year diplomatic relationship between Pakistan and the Republic of Korea. During his address, the Joint Secretary of

the National Heritage and Culture Division emphasized that the longstanding friendship and cooperation between Pakistan and South Korea, developed over four decades, had resulted in substantial advancements in their bilateral relations. He highlighted that Pakistan and Korea both had a shared interest in ensuring a peaceful and prosperous South Asia and had worked together in various multilateral forums.

He stressed the broad spectrum of cooperation between Pakistan and Korea, encompassing areas such as cultural heritage.

He mentioned that Buddhism, with its diverse tapestry of traditions and life teachings, was introduced to the ancient Baekje Kingdom, originating from present-day Pakistan, by Monk Maranatha nearly 1,500 years ago. He said that for 40 years Pakistan and Korea developed deep cultural connections. Buddhism was routed to Korea in the 5th, and 6th centuries from Gandhara. So both countries have long term and deep relations since centuries, he added. Ambassador Park Kijun, in his speech, highlighted the vast potential for mutually beneficial collaboration in diverse fields.

He said that this special exhibition promises, to bring the cultural heritage of Pakistan and Korea together.







ISLAMABAD: The National President of the Pakistan Floral Art Society Ms. Farida Kaleem, Mrs. Viqar Boolani and others attended the Monthly Meeting titled 'Magic With Wire' held at Islamabad Serena Hotel. – **DNA**



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Italian Embassy's digital art exhibition draws huge interest

DNA

ISLAMABAD, The Italian well-known artist Stefano Fake has brought to Pakistan the famous digital art zone. The Italian Embassy in Pakistan, in order to make his work known to Pakistanis, organized an immersive digital art exhibition, bringing an innovative art form to the Pakistani audience. Speaking on the occasion, Italian Ambassador Andreas Ferrarese expressed his pride in presenting the unique showcase of digital art to the public, highlighting its versatility and wide range of possibilities.

The ambassador acknowledged the artwork of Stefano Fake, one of Italy's celebrated digital artists. He praised Italy's capacity to blend historical heritage with new and creative arts, dispelling the notion that the country was solely associated with its past.

Stefano Fake, in his address, delved into the journey of digital art, which he began nearly 30 years ago. He described his transition from traditional art to digital tools in 1997, culminating in the establishment of his studio in 2001, dedicated to creating immersive art experiences. Fake underlined that every era had its unique artistic tools, and digital art represented the current period's creative expression.

He said, "The purpose of art is, after all, to create original and imaginative forms of aesthetic expression shared with a community through experiences and events." Stefano Fake's early work in this field was initially met with skepticism, often being associated with music or youth-centric events. However, over time, digital art gained recognition and acceptance. His exhibitions now span the globe, from Germa-

ny to Colombia, and even recent showcases in Berlin and Shanghai. This transformation reflects the growing appreciation for new media art worldwide.

One of Fake's groundbreaking approaches was to immerse audiences in a digital environment, using video projection to transform spaces and even people. He dispelled early concerns about safety and emphasized the combination of physical reality with digital art, creating immersive experiences that evolve and transcend traditional static forms of art. The term "immersive art experiences" emerged, capturing the essence of their work, as it blends physical spaces, bodies, and digital artworks, making it a unique and ephemeral experience. These art experiences offer a fresh perspective, bridging the gap between contemporary culture and art.





Romania, Pakistan cooperation in defence field exemplary, says envoy

Ambassador Preda acknowledges the exceptional professionalism of the Pakistani Army, the deep patriotism of its men and women in uniform, sacrifices they made in fighting terrorism

Abid Raza

ISLAMABAD: Acting Ambassador of Romania Eduard Preda has said celebration of the Romanian Army Day has a special meaning, focused on the idea of respect for fallen heroes. Historically, the decision to celebrate the Romanian Army Day on October 25th was a long process that reflects the various stages of the Romanian Army development in the second half of the XX century as well as its contributions on various fronts of the First and Second World Wars. Therefore, the 25 of October is symbolizing the day in which the entire Romanian territory was liberated by the Romanian Army during the Second World War, on 25 October 1944. He expressed these views while speaking on the occasion of the Armed Forces Day of Romania. Air Marshal Irfan Ahmed of Pakistan Air Force was the chief guest.

Ambassador Preda further said, Army Day crowns through its symbolism a whole series of anniversary moments, attended not only by those dressed in military uniform, but by all segments of our society. It became a date with special significance in the calendar of celebration days in Romania. 'Today, Romanian Armed Forces, completely reformed and modernized up to the NATO and European Union standards, are assigned to foreign missions, contributing alongside with the allied and partner countries to the common effort of keeping peace and stability worldwide. In compliance with

the commitments deriving from the international treaties, agreements and memoranda whose signing party is, Romania had contingents of different sizes from all services – Army, Air and Naval Forces – available to multinational coalitions authorized to carry on peace support operations, humanitarian assistance, within the framework of UN, NATO, OSCE and EU-led Observing, Monitoring, Liaison and Training missions'.

He said for the Romanian Armed Forces, these years of contribution to foreign missions meant the maintenance, almost continuously, of a military force of variable size, integrated into UN, NATO and EU missions carried out in Africa and Asia, in the theatres of operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and Western Balkans. Almost 40,000 Romanian troops took part in different operations and missions out of national borders, gathering a valuable professional experience extremely useful in the transformation and the cooperation enhancement process of the Romanian Armed Forces with their NATO and EU counterparts. The contribution of the Romanian troops to the collective defence, peace keeping and restoration missions to enforce the UN Security Council Resolutions, of the international legislation and law reveals that the Romanian state complies consequently and in full faith with the commitments agreed with the allies and partners, according to the international legislation and treaties whose signing party Romania is, he added.

He said, 'Today, unfortunately, we are living in a very complicated security environment. The challenges we have to deal with every day, along with the war going on at NATO, EU and Romanian borders, all these prove that we need to be ready to defend our common values and freedoms and grant security and stability'.

He said, Ukraine's security means European and Euro-Atlantic security. In line with the NATO and European Union's policy, Romania stands in full solidarity with the people and government of Ukraine in the heroic defence of their country, helping Ukraine to uphold its fundamental right to self-defence with unprecedented levels of support as a response to the Russian Federation's full-scale, unprovoked and unlawful invasion of Ukraine. He said he was pleased to underline the excellent cooperation existing between Romanian and Pakistani Armed Forces which have developed over the years into a true and mutually partnership. Since there is not enough time to elaborate on the multifaceted and complex character of the cooperation, I will only mention that the Pakistani Navy will soon receive their third patrol vessel built at Damen Shipyard Galati, Romania. These vessels will provide the Pakistani Navy with highly effective search and rescue capabilities that will allow it to play an important role in safeguarding international trade routes from piracy and other threats like drugs and human trafficking or terrorism.







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Newly-appointed envoys present credentials to President Arif Alvi

President denounces use of brutal force against innocent Palestinians



ISLAMABAD: Envoys of Jordan, Holy See, Czech Republic, Brunei and Qatar presenting credentials to the President of Pakistan Dr. Arif Alvi. – DNA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has denounced the use of brutal force against innocent Palestinians, and called for the lifting of the siege and opening of a humanitarian corridor for Palestinians. He said that Pakistan was seriously concerned at the incessant Israeli aggression against civilians, which had killed thousands of people including women, children, and elderly. He stressed that the international community should condemn the continued Israeli aggression in Gaza. He stated that Pakistan stood for a total withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, as well as the establishment of an independent homeland for Palestinians with Al-Quds Sharif as its capital.

The President gave these remarks during a presentation of diplomatic credentials ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr, today. The Ambassador-designate of Jordan, Dr Maen A.M. Khreasat, Ambassador-designate of Holy See, Archbishop Germano Penemote Apostolic Nuncio, Ambassador-designate of Czech Republic, Mr Ladislav Steinhübel, the High Commissioner-designate of Brunei Darussalam, Colonel (r) Pengiran Haji Kamal Bashah bin Pengiran Haji Ahmad, and the Ambassador-designate of Qatar to Pakistan, Ali Mubarak A.E. Al-Khater, presented their diplomatic credentials to President Dr Arif Alvi and later separately called on him. Talking to the envoys, the President said that Pakistan was closely monitoring the situation in Palestine and wanted the restoration of the inalienable rights of the people of Palestine. He highlighted that Pakistan had consistently supported

the Palestine cause, and wanted a comprehensive resolution of all outstanding Arab-Israeli disputes to ensure lasting peace in the region. Speaking to the envoys, the President said that Pakistan wanted to further intensify political, economic and cultural links with all friendly countries, besides increasing bilateral trade and investment relations. He highlighted that Pakistan had established a Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), which provided a one window facility for investment in IT, Corporate

Farming, Minerals and Energy sectors of Pakistan. He said that foreign investors should benefit of the investment friendly policies of Pakistan and invest in these sectors. The President also highlighted the gross human rights violations being committed by India in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The President congratulated the envoys on their new assignments and expressed the confidence that they would further strengthen bilateral relations of their respective countries with Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Editor Daily Islamabad POST Ansar M Bhatti, Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov and Acting Ambassador of Romania Eduard Preda joined Nistar Hockey Club for practice session, at the NaseerBundha Hockey Stadium. – DNA

Serena Hotels host grand Mehfil-e-Mushaira at ISH

Renowned poets of Pakistan spell-bound audiences with their poetry; CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani assures to continue this practice and expand its ambit to other cities as well



Mahnoor Ansar

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels recently orchestrated a grand Mushaira entitled Mehfil e Sukhan, a distinguished poetic gathering that showcased the brilliance of some of the most esteemed poets of our era. The evening, characterized by enchanting verses, featured the literary prowess of renowned poets including Anwar Masood, Iftikhar Arif, Kishwar Naheed, Anwar Shaoor, Dr. Pirzada Qasim, Asghar Na-deem Syed, Dr. Fatima Hassan, Akhtar Usman, Ajmal Siraj, Nasira Zuberi, Ashfaq Nasir, Umair Najmi, Rubab Tabassum, and Farjaad Me-hdi. The event was graced by the esteemed Nazamat of Shakeel Jazib, a distinguished personality celebrated for his profound understanding of poetic traditions and significant contributions to the literary realm. This poetic extravaganza promised an evening replete with soul-stir-

ring verses, eloquence, and profound thoughts, thereby creating an atmosphere that deeply resonated with poetry enthusiasts and literary aficionados alike. The primary objective of the event was to celebrate the rich heritage of Urdu poetry, providing an esteemed platform for poets to share their thoughts, emotions, and perspectives with a captivated audience. The Mushaira Mehfil e Sukhan stands as a testament to Serena Hotels' unwavering commitment to the promotion of cultural and artistic expressions. By fostering an environment where creativity flourishes, the event underscored Serena Hotels' dedication to connecting people through the universal language of poetry. CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani assures to continue this practice and expand its ambit to other cities as well. He said the Serena Hotels took this initiative last year and after its resounding success it decided to not only continue this practice to expand its ambit to other cities as well.





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Pakistan keen to further develop ties with Hungary

Hungary is grateful to the Pakistani diplomacy for supporting the cause of the Hungarian revolution in the United Nations: Ambassador Fazekas

Abid Raza

ISLAMABAD: Jawad Sohrab Malik, Prime Minister Special Assistant on Overseas Pakistanis has said Pakistan and Hungary enjoy excellent relations adding these relations are poised to grow further even in the days to come. Malik expressed these views while speaking as chief guest on the occasion of the National Day of Hungary. A large number of guests hailing from various walks of life attended the reception. The chief guest further said that Hungary had supported Pakistan on all occasions especially on the issue of GSP Plus status. He hoped trade and economic relations would also be strengthened. Ambassador of Hungary Bela Fazekas in his speech said, on the 23 October 1956 a student protest in Budapest turned into a national uprising against Communist dictatorship. The joy of freedom lasted only two weeks when the Soviet military aggression crushed the heroic struggle of the freedom fighters. He added, it was only 33 years later Hungary regained its independence. After defeating the revolution of 1956 the so called "Hungarian question" was still on the agenda of UN General Assembly for many years. 'Hungary is grateful to the Pakistani diplomacy for supporting the cause of the Hungarian revolution in the United Nations. In 1962 Sir Muhammad Za-

frulla Khan the President of the General Assembly played an important role in forcing the Hungarian authorities to release hundreds of Hungarian freedom fighters from the prisons', he added. Ladies and gentlemen, although diplomatic relations between our two countries are only 58 years old, the people-to-people relations between Hungary and this part of the subcontinent have started much earlier. The cultural and intellectual life of the 19th and early 20th century Lahore would not have been so rich and vibrant without the Hungarian artists, professors, doctors, orientalist who lived and worked there. A few years back our Embassy has started a project to make the Pakistani public realize the extent of the intellectual footprint of this humble Hungarian presence.

Ambassador Fazekas said, Hungary is not a big power. Neither politically, nor economically. But there is something, which gives us a soft power status, something we Hungarians are very proud of. Just three weeks ago two Nobel Prizes, one for Medicine and one for Physics were awarded to Hungarian Scientists. The first one was the recognition of the mRNA molecule discoveries by a Hungarian lady professor that paved the way for COVID-19 vaccines saving the life of millions of people all around the world during the COVID pandemic. Since

the introduction of the Nobel Prize, this prestigious prize was awarded to 19 Hungarian scientists. This is quite remarkable for a country with a population of 10 million people. It is also the recognition of the high quality of the Hungarian higher education. Hungary is ready to offer this rich educational, academic and scientific background for everyone including young Pakistanis. Every year the Hungarian government provides 400 state sponsored scholarships to Pakistani students. Investing into knowledge and skills pays the best interest. You never know if there is a future Pakistani Nobel Prize winner among those currently studying with scholarships in Hungarian universities.

He said, the frequent political contacts, regular visits and meetings between our two countries provide a solid political basis for enhancement of our multilevel cooperation. In February 2023 we had the first ever visit of a Pakistani Foreign minister to Hungary. The minister was offered a podium to deliver his message in front of 130 Hungarian Ambassadors from all around the world. The visit created a new momentum for every aspect of our cooperation. Our trade has doubled in the last four years. There are more and more Pakistani-Hungarian joint ventures in the field of water management and agriculture.





100th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Republic of Türkiye

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Türkiye Mehmet Pacaci has said we are proud to have reached 100th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Republic of Türkiye. 'I commemorate Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of our Republic, and express our gratitude our holy martyrs and our veterans who fought for the same blessed cause and entrusted our beautiful homeland to us at the cost of their lives'. The Ambassador expressed these views while speaking on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Republic. Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti was the chief guest while Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori also attended the event. The Türkiye ambassador further said, The Republic of Türkiye signifies the reborn of a noble nation from its ashes that prefer to die instead of making compromises from its liberty, independence and honor. We are proud of being a member of such a heroic nation who has the "character of independence". He said Turkish War of Independence was not only the success of the Turkish nation but also well documented part of our shared history with Pakistan. The sacrifices and selfless support by the South Asian Muslims during the Khilafat Movement, and their political and financial contributions to the Turkish sacred cause have and will never be forgotten, he added.

Turkish Independence War has also become a profound inspiration for sub-continent Muslims in their struggle for freedom. Founding father of Pakistan, Quaid-e Azam Muhammad Ali Cinnah expressed his appreciation for the Turkish struggle and its exceptional leader, Atatürk, as builder of Modern Türkiye and an example to the rest of the world, especially to the Muslim states in the Far East. a video message by Turkish President H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, on our National Day and Centenary of the Republic was also screened on the occasion.





France in favor of abolishment of death penalty: envoy

Ambassador Nicolas Galey says proud to support JPP in its initiatives

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of France to Pakistan Nicolas Galey has said France, like its European partners and dozens of countries around the world, many of which represented here firmly opposed to the death penalty in all places and all circumstances. He expressed these views during a function organized at the French residence. He said this on the occasion of the 21st World Day against the Death Penalty. He thanked the JPP people for their presence and screening of a documentary.

Ambassador Galey said, his country supported unequivocally the dynamics of the movement in favor of the universal abolition of the death penalty. In 2002 four new States joined this movement (Kazakhstan, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone and Central African Republic). The adoption in December 2022 by a historic number of 125 States, of the United Nations General Assembly resolution calling for a universal moratorium on the death penalty is a real progress. 'Despite this progress, executions continue. In 2022 the number of executions reached highest in five years 883 persons, in 20 countries, were executed that is plus 53% compared to the previous year.

France deplores this trend and calls on these countries to observe moratorium like Pakistan since 2019 - with a view to definitely abolishing the death penalty. In this regard, we call on all states to ratify the second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. As we will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights signed in Paris on 10 December, 1948, France is more than ever committed against the death penalty.

The ambassador said the Capital punishment is a cruel and unjust punishment. In 1948 exactly one century before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, Victor Hugo, then a member of the French National Assembly tried to pass a law abolishing the death penalty and uttered these words; "The death penalty is the special and eternal sign of barbarism. The right of life and death belongs only to God".



Independence Day of Indonesia celebrated



Kazakhstan Embassy hosts Fashion Show on the occasion of the Independence Day







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