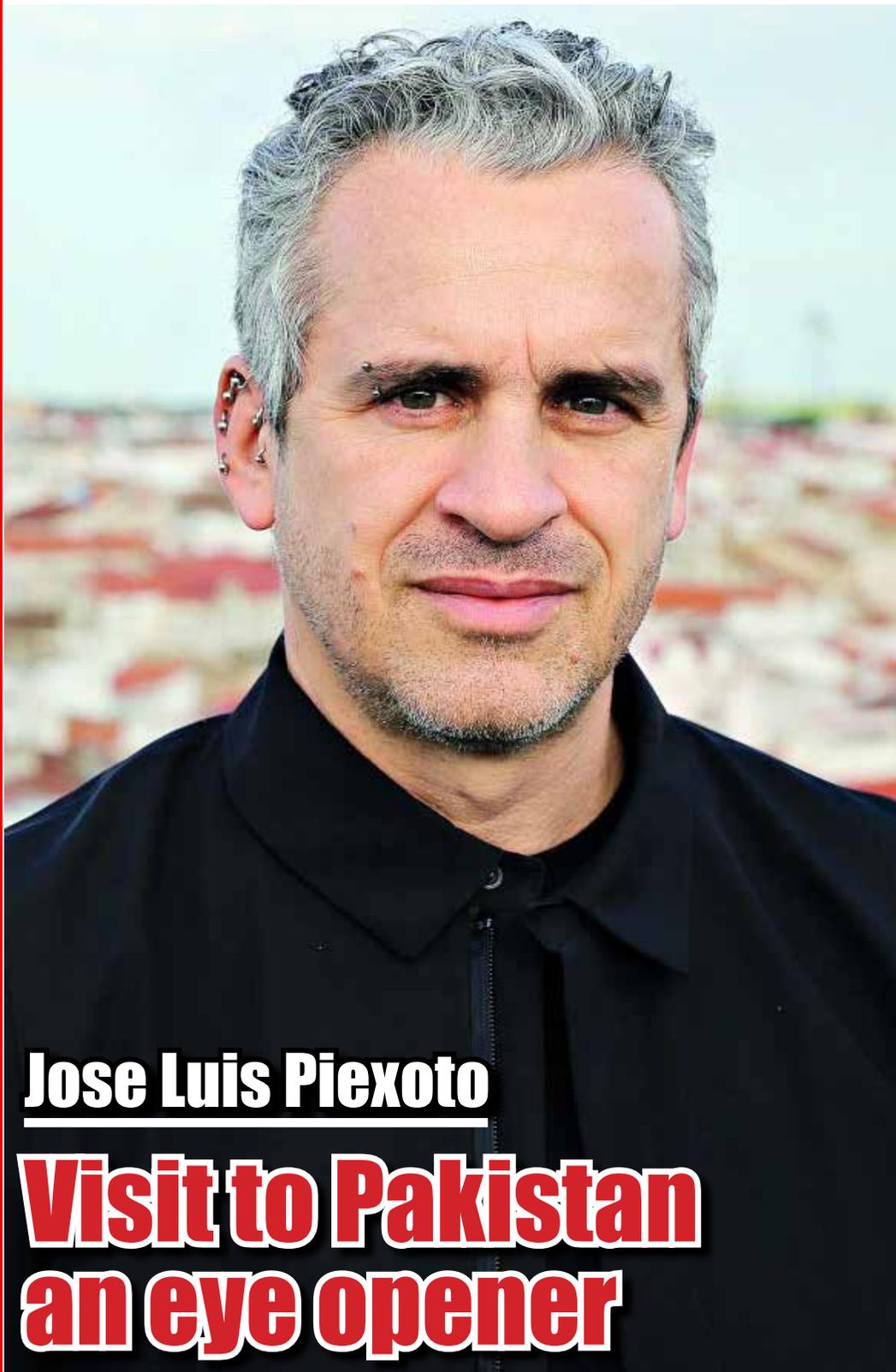


CENTRELINE

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Challenges ahead for Shehbaz Sharif govt



PRIME MINISTER Shehbaz Sharif is poised to embark upon a transformative journey, drawing inspiration from his previous leadership during the PDM government. As he resumes his responsibilities, he aims to build on the lessons learned and address the challenges that marred his previous 16-month tenure. Acknowledging the allegations of misgovernance and political victimization that clouded the past, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is committed to fostering a transparent and accountable administration. Learning from past experiences, his government would like to prioritize effective governance, ensuring that the needs and aspirations of the people take center stage. The challenges faced during the previous tenure

have provided valuable insights into areas that require improvement. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is determined to institute reforms that enhance governmental efficiency, curb corruption, and promote inclusivity. By fostering a climate of fair play and equal opportunities, his administration should seek to dispel any lingering doubts about political victimization. Recognizing the pivotal role of opposition parties in a thriving democracy, the new government under Shehbaz Sharif ought to aim to promote a culture of constructive dialogue. Embracing inclusiveness and open communication channels, the administration must seek to bridge the gap between different political entities, creating a more collaborative and cooperative political landscape.

While the PTI has emerged as a popular party, the Shehbaz Sharif-led government would like to present itself as a compelling alternative. By addressing the concerns that contributed to the rise of the PTI, such as governance lapses, the new administration aims to regain public trust and demonstrate a commitment to the welfare of the nation. Enhancing political stability should be the foremost priority for Prime Minister Shehbaz, recognizing that a stable political environment is crucial for the successful completion of his tenure. Notably, Pakistan has witnessed a historical trend where no prime minister has managed to serve a full term, even those with a two-thirds mandate faced premature exits. In this context, the Shehbaz government faces a particularly challenging scenario, with its sustainability heavily reliant on the support of allied parties. The pervasive issue of corruption poses the most formidable challenge for Shehbaz Sharif. Without effectively curbing corruption, the prospect of steering the country towards progress remains elusive. Unfortunately, both the PML-N manifesto and the Prime Minister's maiden address to the National Assembly fell short of addressing this pressing threat. It is noteworthy to acknowledge KPK Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur for his commendable initiative. He compelled all PTI lawmakers to take a solemn oath, pledging their commitment to abstain from corrupt practices and to prevent others from engaging in corruption.

While the effectiveness of this pledge in eradicating corruption in the province remains uncertain, the very act of making such a commitment underscores the high moral standards that the PTI aspires to establish in its governance. The pertinent question now arises: Do other provincial assemblies and the national assembly possess the moral courage to undertake similar vows? The future of our nation's progress hinges on our collective commitment to address and eliminate corruption at every level of governance. China has consistently demonstrated a proactive approach in extending warm greetings to Shehbaz Sharif upon his election as the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The immediacy of Chinese engagement can be attributed to the historical precedent of flourishing bilateral relations whenever the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) assumed power. Both Nawaz Sharif and Shehbaz Sharif successfully cultivated personal relationships with Chinese leadership, fostering mutual trust and cooperation. During PML-N tenures, China staunchly supported Pakistan, contributing to the elevation of bilateral ties to unprecedented levels. However, this close association also stirred feelings of envy and apprehension among other political parties, notably the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Consequently, the transition of power to PTI marked a notable downturn in China-Pakistan relations. The current scenario on the ground reveals a significant stagnation in all projects associated with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Remarkably, these projects have been at a standstill since the tenure of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government. With the recent formation of a government that maintains a positive relationship with China, there is a heightened anticipation that bilateral relations will undergo a complete restoration, paving the way for the revival of CPEC initiatives.

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.

JOSE LUIS PEIXOTO

Visit to Pakistan an eye opener

AB Khan/Centreline team

INTRODUCTION

JOSÉ Luís Peixoto is one of Portugal's most acclaimed contemporary writers. His vast work in fiction, non-fiction, poetry and children's literature has received several Portuguese and international awards, such as the José Saramago Literary Award, Libro d' Europa and Oceanos Literature Award, and was shortlisted for the IMPAC Dublin Literary Award and the Femina Prize. He was born in 1974, in a small village from the south interior of Portugal, in the Portuguese region of Alentejo. He finished a degree on Modern Languages and Literature in the Universidade Nova de Lisboa. Was a teacher for some years in Portugal and in Cabo Verde before becoming a professional writer in 2001. Peixoto's works often explore the complexities of human relationships, the rural landscape and the impact of societal changes on traditional ways of life. He is known for his evocative prose and deep insights into the human condition. "He's a man who knows how to write and who is the successor to the great writers." José Saramago Peixoto's books are currently translated into 34 languages. Here are some of the publishing houses where Peixoto's books are available: Bloomsbury (UK), Doubleday, Random House (US), Grasset (France), Seuil (France), Literatura Random House (spanish-speaking countries), Companhia das Letras (Brazil), Einaudi (Italy), Kedros (Greece), Meulenhoff (Netherlands), Atlas Contact (Netherlands), Kineret (Israel), Wsoy (Finland), Polirom (Romania), Bozicevic (Croatia), Bakur Sulakauri (Georgia), among many others



ISLAMABAD: Salt and Pepper hairdo, pierced ears and eyebrows, leaned body and honey dew tone and tenor may confuse oneself for a heavy rock band star ready to hit the notes. However, the gentleman sitting comfortably on a sofa is in fact, Jose Luis Peixoto, the Portuguese most acclaimed and bestselling novelist, a literature Wizkid when introduced. His resume is more than impressive. The list of his accomplishments in fiction, non-fiction, poetry and children's literature far surpasses many of his peers and even contemporaries. Recipient of Jose Saramago Literary award, Libro d Europa and Oceanos prize, his journey in the world of literature started at a very young age. "I was in my teens when I started writing poetry and that was my very first experience. However, as a teenager one goes through a lot of changes and a lot of discoveries and so it helped me organize myself in certain way because poetry is such a condensed form of literature which helps you to reach new horizons" explains the literati.

His first book, *Morreste-me* (You Died on Me) was published when he was 25 years old. The book is a very detailed account of relationship between the writer and his father. As one flips through the pages of this short story, one finds itself present at the scene along with the author himself. The description of the hospital room, the bedroom of the house, the fireplace, narration of the buildings in the neighborhood is so intricately sketched that one can see visuals while going through the texts. Although the book is not an exciting read as it narrates the harsh reality of a dying father and the helplessness of a son whose deep love for his father comes to light in every sentence.

Jose's second publication was a novel titled *Nenhum Olhar* (Blank Gaze) which won him the prestigious Jose Saramago award named after the Portuguese noble laureate at the age of 27. *Blank Gaze* which has been translated in more than 20 languages is all fictional. The character in the story, the Devil, Siamese twins, the giant and the shepherd are all are all connected with one common threat, the fate. Your travelogues like *Inside the secret*, *Book and The Imperfect*

Awards

Galveias - The Best Translation Award Japan 2019 (Best foreign novel translated into Japanese in 2019)

Galveias - Prémio Oceanos 2016 (Best novel published in all Portuguese-speaking countries in 2015)

Livro - Prémio Libro d'Europa 2013 (Best novel published in Europe in 2012)

A Criança em Ruínas- Prémio da Sociedade Portuguesa de Autores 2013 (Best poetry book published in Portugal on the previous year)

Gaveta de Papéis - Prémio de Poesia Daniel

Faria 2008 (Best poetry book published in Portugal by a poet under 35 years old)

Cemitério de Pianos - Prémio Cálamo 2007 (Best foreign novel published in Spain in 2007)

Nenhum Olhar - Prémio Literário José Saramago 2001 (Best novel published in all Portuguese speaking countries on the two previous years)

Morreste-me (Prose, 2000)

Nenhum Olhar (Novel, 2000)

A Criança em Ruínas (Poetry, 2001) Uma Casa na Escuridão (Novel, 2002) A Casa, a Escuridão (Poetry, 2002)

B Antídoto (Prose, 2003)

I Cemitério de Pianos (Novel, 2006)

B Cal (Prose and Theater, 2007) L Gaveta de Papéis (Poetry, 2008) I Livro (Novel, 2010)

O Abraço (Prose, 2011)

G A Mãe que Chovia (Children's, 2012)

R Dentro do Segredo (Travel, 2012)

A Galveias (Novel, 2014)

P Em Teu Ventre (Novella, 2015)

H Todos os Escritores do Mundo Têm a Cabeça Cheia de

Y Piolhos (Children's, 2016) Estrangeiras (Theater, 2016)

O Caminho Imperfeito (Travel, 2017) Autobiografia (Novel, 2019) Regresso a Casa (Poetry, 2020) Almoço de Domingo (Novel, 2021) Onde (Narrative, 2022)

RECEPTION

'Peixoto has an extraordinary way of perceiving, conveyed in his original choices of language and imagery'

Times Literary Supplement

"Splendidly demanding.... The images Peixoto evokes in helping his characters communicate without words are singular and unforgettable.... Nature appears to prevail as the governing force, and Peixoto's brilliance and power as an artist are precisely in his desire to mimic nature's ability to create and destroy simultaneously."

San Francisco Chronicle

"Peixoto offers an appealing addition to the genre of rural magical realism.... [A] poignant debut."

Kirkus Reviews

"You read and breathe as if you were downing a bottle of life in one gulp."

Le Figaro (about Blank Gaze)

'Peixoto has an acute ear for cadence, a sharp eye for the luminous image and a good nose for the pungent'

Independent

'Peixoto's evocation of pathos is tempered by a keen sense of the absurd' Financial Times



Path do not excite readers to visit these countries as a tourist whereas Travelodge's meant to do the very same. Your comment?

“To answer your question, out of the three, Livro (Book) is not a Travelodge. It's a novel and it describes experience that I did not live myself. Having said that, it was lived by hundreds and thousands of Portuguese in 60's and 70's and among them my parents included. They were immigrants also, who migrated to the suburbs of Paris, France and that was the exodus of Portuguese people. One and a half million Portuguese went to France in that period and the journey was painful. There was censorship, dictatorship, war and poverty. It was a very difficult period in Portuguese history.

Now on the other two books, Inside the secret on North Korea and The Imperfect Path on Thailand, I have not tried to impose my opinion on the places, but tried to describe my experience as a Portuguese tourist. I feel that sometimes the touristic narrative, gives a portrait of a country that is very shallow and superficial. So, I made an effort to dig deeper and write on the uncharted territories of these two countries.

Jose Luis's novel Galveias is named after his birth place, Galveias, a small village in the Portuguese region of Alentejo. “Yes, I have deliberately named the novel Galveias to give my village a tribute. However, your take

“ The two children book A Mae que Chovia (The Mother who Rain) published in 2012 and Todos os Escritores do Mundo Tem a Cabeça Chela de Piolhos (All the writers of the World have their heads full of Lice) in 2016 were written after birth of his own children. “The idea to write children’s book grew after I had my children. I had to tell them stories to make them sleep”, informs the father of two boys. He accepts that children literature is very specific. It has different layers and different tones, and sometimes as grownups we forgot to see the world from their perspective which is sad, he adds ”

on the novel reading from far away will be very different from a reader who is an inhabitant of Galveias and knows the streets, café, schools and the roads that I had mention in the novel” answer the writer.

The two children book A Mae que Chovia (The Mother who Rain) published in 2012 and Todos os Escritores do Mundo Tem a Cabeça Chela de Piolhos (All the writers of the World have their heads full of Lice) in 2016 were written after birth of his own children. “The idea to write children’s book grew after I had my children. I had to tell them stories to make them sleep”, informs the father of two boys. He accepts that children literature is very specific. It has different layers and different tones, and sometimes as grownups we forgot to see the world from their perspective which is sad, he adds.

q-Was the success of your first book at the age of 25 the reason for your inspiration to write more and more an expand your horizons trying your luck in other mediums?

a-After my teenage years, I had always been dreaming of writing books. I used to look up to writers and poets at that time and it was my wildest dream to become one of them. It was the Jose Saramago award which encouraged me to write professionally as it brought me to limelight. Secondly when I was a teacher as well, I had always



though to continue writing books while teaching. Professional writing also provides livelihood and I was always very open to ideas not confining to one medium only”, he informs. Although the writer confessed that he never tried his vocals for singing or held a paint brush in his hand, but his pursuit for working with musicians, with visual artists, painters kept pulling him towards the performing art and that it provided a great impetus in his writing. Jose Luis Piexoto termed his visit to Pakistan as an eye opener. He attend-

ed the Literature Festival in Lahore and spent two days in Islamabad. “My perception of this country was totally opposite before coming here. It is very unfortunate that the west has portrayed Pakistan with a lot of fallacies, misleading narratives. I started to get an insight about Pakistan when I planned to visit Lahore to attend the Literature festival and it started to change right then. The literati promises to write a Travelodge on Pakistan someday but looks forward for a lot of input from his Pakistani fraternity.

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Serena Hotels Celebrates International Women's Day with a Focus on Inspiring Inclusion

Mahnour Ansar

ISLAMABAD: Serena Hotels proudly hosted a vibrant celebration in honor of International Women's Day, underscoring the theme of "Inspire Inclusion." The event, held at Islamabad Serena Hotel, featured a dynamic panel discussion on "Breaking Barriers: Inspiring Inclusion and Diversity in Leadership." Moderated by renowned broadcast journalist Sidra Iqbal, the panel included esteemed personalities such as Dr. Sania Nishtar, a leading public health and development expert; Azima Dhanjee, a disability rights activist; Dr. Noor Khan, a distinguished career diplomat; and Mr. Lansana Wonneh, Acting Representative of UN Women Pakistan. Distinguished guests from the diplomatic community, international agencies, corporate sector, representatives from the Pakistan Foreign Office Women Association and Islamabad Foreign Women Association and Serena associates participated to honor and appreciate women who have shattered stereotypes and achieved success

across various spheres of life. Foreign Secretary Mr. Syrus Qazi and many Ambassadors and their spouses also joined in the celebration. Reflecting on the significance of the occasion, CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani stated, "Today, we celebrate the resilience, strength, and achievements of women who have paved the way for generations to come. Our event aims to recognize their contributions and amplify the voices of those advocating for gender equality and inclusion." The Chief Guest for the occasion, Begum Samina Alvi, First Lady of Pakistan, graced the event alongside accomplished women from diverse backgrounds, symbolizing unity and collective empowerment. She also said 'we need to focus on girls' education to make our women strong enough to face the challenges of life with the strength of their minds. We also need to make continuous efforts to equip our women with vocational skills to utilize their potential and also to save them from economic exploitation'. As Serena Hotels continues to champion gender equality and diversity, events like these serve as catalysts for meaningful dialogue and action towards a more inclusive society.





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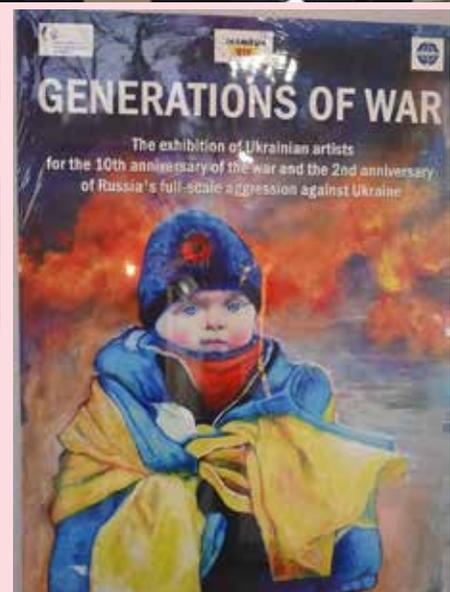
Weimar Triangle expresses solidarity with Ukraine

Ambassador Pisarski says Ukraine cannot be forgotten, nor can the significance of the war be overlooked

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Embassies of countries comprising the Weimar Triangle (Poland, France, Germany) and Ukraine joined hands in organizing a commemorative event dedicated to the Solidarity with the Ukrainian people. The gathering marked the second anniversary of an unprovoked Russian full-scale invasion against Ukraine. The documentary "Culture vs. War" and exhibition "Generations of War," featuring works created by Ukrainian artists, were shown during the event which took place at the Poland's Embassy grounds. Ambassadors: of Poland - Maciej Pisarski, Ukraine - Markiian Chuchuk, France - Nicolas Galey, Germany - Alfred Grannas addressed the participants. The ambassadors highlighted the bravery of resistance shown by the Ukrainian people against the Russian invaders throughout the course of the two-year conflict. They also underlined the sacrifices made by Ukraine's Armed Forces in repelling Russian assault. The speakers also mentioned the devastation of homes, schools, hospitals, and other infrastructure, as well as the suffering of Ukrainians, including children. Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine is an attack against the rules-based international order and its core elements, such as sovereignty and territorial integrity. It constitutes a dangerous precedent that cannot be left unanswered, as Ambassador Grannas stated. Therefore, the world community of responsible and peace-loving nations must vehemently oppose and confront any infringement of international law.

As Ambassador Pisarski underlined, Ukraine cannot be forgotten, nor can the significance of the war be overlooked. Russia's strategy is to wear the defenders and those who help them down, to make them tired and to make the world forget so they can achieve their nefarious goals. Therefore, it is imperative to sustain backing for Ukraine's endeavor to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity to determine its own course in the future. One of the priorities priority of the Weimar Triangle is to help Ukraine facing the Russian aggression as long as necessary. Supporting Ukraine is an investment in ensuring the security of Ukraine, Europe, and the world. It is a shared responsibility of the entire global



community to aid Ukraine in resisting the illegal Russian invasion. There is no "Ukraine fatigue". There are no divisions among all those who, since the beginning of the aggression, have been on Ukraine's side. We remain fully united and committed, and we will remain so - Ambassador Nicolas Galey pointed out. The Ambassador Chuchuk, also referred to the attitude of his compatriots, stressing that despite being vastly outmatched by a nuclear-armed power with significantly larger economic and military resources, Ukraine has held its ground. Furthermore, he also highlighted President Zelenskyy's Ten-point Peace Formula, a comprehensive plan to

end the war including cessation of hostilities, food security, nuclear safety, energy security, justice, human rights, and respect for the UN Charter, which Ambassador Chuchuk emphasized as the sole viable peace offer.

Euro Village festivities: much ado about nothing

Although it was supposed be an entry with family only, stags in large numbers easily got through the scanner gate installed and managed jointly by the EU and private security personnel; many had to return simply because there were not enough parking facilities

AB Khan

THE tin walls erected around the grounds of the Convention Center Islamabad depicted a sight of a citadel. Islooties and Pindi boys thronged the venue in large numbers to see what was all the hype of “Euro Village 2024” was about. Although it was supposed to be an entry with family only, stags in large numbers easily got through the scanner gate installed and managed jointly by the EU and private security personnel. Stall bearing European Union signs were right at the entrance of the ground where 10 to 15 stalls from different EU member countries in the likes of Austria, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Hungary, Greece, Germany, Finland, Romania, Poland could be spotted with a naked eye. To being with, most of the stalls were empty and free giveaways like T-shirts, shopping bags, Mugs etc were all gone within first two hours according to the Spanish councilor who was giving explanations to the visitors that we were not expecting

so many people so early. Moreover, many visitors had to return because there were not enough parking facilities available. The scarcity of parking spaces led to significant traffic congestion on the main roads connecting Rawalpindi and Murree, creating challenges for individuals unrelated to the Euro Village festivities. This issue not only inconvenienced residents and commuters but also impacted the overall flow of traffic, exacerbating the already bustling nature of these key thoroughfares. Although the Dutch stall was busy putting mixed flour to make truffles in the electric oven, the other Dutch delicacies were long gone. As the EU member State pegged their stalls in a “L” shape formation, local stalls of food vendors were seen selling in the other corner . Cakes, Waffles, Channa chat, fries and other munches were being sold like hot cakes as vendors looked quite busy doing good business. The highlight of the evening was the live performance by Qurat ul Aain Baluch also known as QB of drama Humsafar theme song. The idea to hold EU Village event

started off a few years ago with great fanfare bringing together EU member states to showcase their food, artefacts and local traditional culture with foreign musical bands mesmerizing the audience , magician performing to give a share of laughter to children and fusion of Pakistani and European music with families enjoying a sunny day out . This year the event looked more of a local mela rather than an EU presentation of their culture and traditions. It would be nice to see, stalls with traditional food to taste, ceramics and artefacts to buy and hosts in their traditional attires to fascinate the Pakistani visitors with their fashion haute couture. Interestingly, the diplomatic corps excluding the European missions expressed mixed reaction over Euro Village festivities. A majority of such diplomats, especially the ambassadors, wanted to be part of the event however they could not do so simply because they were not invited. Most of them even did not know about the event at all. The best thing about this event was that EU Village was visa free!





Dutch OHC Bully Hockey Club wins 3-match series

Beat HEC team on penalty shoot-out

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Dutch hockey club OHC Bully won hockey series by defeating HEC team on penalty shoot-outs. The two matches players earlier in Lahore ended in a draw. The hockey series was facilitated by the Khawaja Junaid academy, run by Olympian

Khawaja Junaid. High Commissioners of Australia Neil Hawkins, Ambassadors of Brunei, Romania, Kyrgyzstan and Morocco also witnessed the final match apart from a large number of spectators. International Umpir Sohail Janjua of the Rising Stars Hockey

club supervised the final match along with the Dutch. President of Rising Stars Hockey Club Mehmood Ahmed along with team members and officials of the Rising Stars Hockey Club presented a souvenir to the Dutch hockey team.





Japan, Pakistan have many cultural similarities: envoy

Exhibition “Yakishime: Earth Metamorphosis” held at PNCA

Mahnoor Ansar

ISLAMABAD: 15th February 2024: To showcase the depth of traditional Japanese cultural heritage from its earliest origins to contemporary works, a Japan Foundation’s travelling pottery exhibition “Yakishime: Earth Metamorphosis”, one of the most basic or primitive means of producing ceramics, opened up at the National Art Gallery of the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) for visitors to get familiar with this unique and centuries old cultural facet of Japan. The exhibition, which runs until February 29, is jointly organized by the Japan Foundation and the Embassy of Japan in Islamabad in collaboration with the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA). Jamal Shah, the Caretaker Federal Minister for National Heritage & Culture, and H.E. Mr. WADA Mitsuhiro, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, together with the other distinguished guests inaugurated the exhibition on Thursday February 15 at the National Art Gallery to provide an opportunity to the visitors to witness the evolution of yakishime from its ancient roots to contemporary expressions.

This captivating showcase focuses on a traditional Japanese ceramics technique yakishime (firing unglazed wares at extremely high temperatures) and introduces its history and evolution that has developed in distinctive directions in Japan from 4th and 5th centuries through present day. It features over 80 exquisite pieces from the earliest examples to the present through yakishime wares, tea vessels, food vessels, jars, containers and more that have become an essential part of everyday life in Japan. It also presents a wide range of non-utilitarian objects created by the contemporary ceramic artists working in yakishime styles aiming to provide an opportunity to communicate this distinctively Japanese sensibility and aesthetic to the people abroad. Ambassador WADA, while speaking at the inaugural ceremony, expressed his deep admiration for this time-honored traditional Japanese art of producing ceramic art and crafts, and said that “one of the unique characteristics of Japanese culture is the fusion and coexistence of tradition and innovation. We are good at adding new interpretation to tradition, while respecting old methods and tastes.” Ambassador WADA mentioned that Pakistan is also known as a production center of traditional potteries with Blue Pottery from Multan which has common attractions with Yakishime. “I feel a sense of warmth and simplicity from both of them”, he further added.



'Touch of Love' art exhibition

Amb. Maen Khreasat heralds new era of Pak-Jordan cultural exchange



Mahnoor Ansar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan National Council of the Arts, National Heritage and Culture Division, and The Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan inaugurated the exhibition of Suzan Alsaid's latest collection titled "Touch of Love" The exhibition was inaugurated by the Ambassador of Jordan Dr. Maen Khreasat, The Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts, National Art Gallery, Gallery # 6 in Islamabad, Pakistan on 26th February, 2024.

Dr. Maen Khreasat, Ambassador of Jordan, hailed the historic moment as he addressed attendees at the unveiling of a painting exhibition featuring the remarkable works of Jordanian artist Mrs. Suzan Alsaid Alosaily in Pakistan. Expressing gratitude to the Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) for their invaluable support, Dr. Khreasat emphasized the significance of such collaborations in strengthening the bond between nations. He highlighted the exhibition as a testament to the enduring cultural ties between Jordan and Pakistan, transcending mere diplomatic relations.

The ambassador conveyed optimism for future collaborations, envisioning the ex-

hibition as a precursor to deeper cultural exchanges between the two countries. He encouraged attendees to immerse themselves in the vibrant display, finding inspiration and fostering a sense of unity through art. With the inauguration marking a pivotal moment in cultural diplomacy, Dr. Khreasat expressed eagerness for further initiatives that would continue to bridge the gap between Jordan and Pakistan, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation. Suzan, a prolific visual artist from Jordan, is set to captivate audiences with her diverse collection of paintings at the PNCA, Art Gallery. The exhibition, titled "Touch of Love" will be a celebration of Suzan's lifelong dedication to art and her unique ability to fuse abstract drawing, portraits, and Islamic patterns into a harmonious expression of creativity.

Suzan's artistic journey began in childhood, where she was drawn to the transformative power of art. Over the years, she has experimented with a wide range of colors and techniques, continuously pushing the boundaries of her creativity. Her work is a testament to her deep appreciation for art's ability to convey emotions and ideas that words often fail to express.

"I believe in the power of art to inspire,

provoke thought, and bring people together," says Suzan. "Through my work, I strive to make a positive contribution to society." Suzan's commitment to using art as a tool for social good is evident in her volunteer work with children and adults. She has dedicated herself to sharing her knowledge and passion for visual arts, conducting workshops and training sessions to encourage others to explore their creative potential. Her solo exhibition in at National Art Gallery is a culmination of years of dedication and hard work. The 33 paintings on display showcase different art forms, each telling a unique story and inviting viewers to embark on a journey of self-discovery and reflection. "We are thrilled to host Suzan's exhibition at the National Art Gallery, Islamabad," says Mariam Ahmed, Director Visual Arts Division, PNCA. "Her art is a testament to the power of creativity and the universal language of emotions." Suzan's "Touch of Love" exhibition will run from 26th February at the PNCA, National Art Gallery, Islamabad. The gallery is closed on Saturday. Open daily from 10 am till 4 pm, and the public are invited to experience the beauty and creativity of Suzan's work.







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Ambassador invites businessmen to visit Nepal

A renowned businessman and Chairman Ashraf Group of Companies Ijaz Khokhar hosted the ambassador at his residence. Ijaz briefed the ambassador about the Sialkot potential in various fields

DNA

DNASIALKOT: Ambassador of Nepal Tapas Adhikari visited Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry and had an interaction with Mr. Abdul Gafoor Malik, President of the Chamber, and other executive members. A renowned businessman and Chairman Ashraf Group of Companies Ijaz Khokhar hosted the ambassador at his residence. Ijaz briefed the ambassador about the Sialkot potential in various fields. During the interaction, the ambassador appreciated the contribution of Sialkot entrepreneurs making Sialkot as a hub of sports goods, surgical items, and kitchen cutlery products in Pakistan. He shared the intention to learn business from Sialkot and invited the business community to visit Nepal to participate in the forthcoming Nepal Chamber Expo-2024 in March and in the Investment Summit in April 2024. The participation of Sialkot entrepreneurs would open a new avenue of bilateral business promotion, investment, and technology transfer that the Government of Nepal is ready to extend all kinds of support to foreign direct investment. He further said that Sialkot could be a role model for Nepal people that it has emerged from a small town to a global business hub because of the hard work, innovation, and entrepreneurship of its people. The ambassador opined that Nepal and Pakistan need more economic engagements and as Ambassador of Nepal, I want to tap the business opportunity in Pakistan that could be beneficial to both countries. He also shared that recently Nepal has been able to export 6-container of Nepali tea to the Pakistani market after decades. I further said that the meeting would be very beneficial for the business communities of both countries and would open a new avenue of cooperation. The ambassador said that Nepal is a tourist hub of South Asia and invited them to visit Nepal for business purposes as well as family and friends for holiday since Nepal is close, hospitable and has an easy visa regime for Pakistani nationals. Moreover, I shared that Nepali Sherpas are sharing their skills and expertise with Pakistani mountaineers and every year they bring a large number of foreign mountaineers in Pakistan which is becoming beneficial for Pakistani people. Abdul Ghafoor Malik, President SCCI while welcoming me said that Nepal and Pakistan share cordial relations and this year would mark 64 years of strong bilateral relations, based on mutual respect, deep understanding, and a shared vision for peace and socio-economic progress of both



countries. President SCCI said that both the countries need to focus on further enhancing our economic ties, and there was an ample scope of opportunities waiting to be explored. The ambassador also visited FIFA World cup football manufacturer 'Forward', surgical equipment manufacturer 'Elmed' and sports garment manufacturer 'Rajco' production units. Sialkot, a city of 7-lakh population, is an industrial hub of Pakistan which exports 2.5 billion US dollars, in particular sports goods, surgical items, and kitchen cutlery. Sialkot exports ten percent of Pakistani export. Sialkot is labeled as the football manufacturing capital of the world supplying 70 percent of global demand. It produces the sports goods of Adidas, Nike, Reebok, Puma, and other various brands. Small manufacturing



units contribute a large share of exports and provide one third of employment to the residents of the city. Sialkot has its own private sector invested in public airports, dry ports, and airlines to promote business.

Embassy of Nepal in Islamabad organized a programme 'Vipassana: Stress Management and Inner Peace for Better World'

DNA

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of the 114 International Women's Day, the Embassy of Nepal in Islamabad organized a programme 'Vipassana: Stress Management and Inner Peace for Better World' highlighting the inner peace to manage stress through Vipassana. During the programme, I shared the imprint of Vipassana in Taxila and Takht-I Bahi and other places in Pakistan that have

full evidences of meditation. As an oldest country, Nepal has preserved and practised the oldest traditions, which could be beneficial to all of us. A large number of foreigners are visiting Nepal each year to learn, practice, and develop their skills in Yoga and Meditation. The yoga and meditation are non-religious and nonpolitical and beneficial for the well-being of humankind. Some of

the centers in Nepal offer courses without any charge. In the programme, Vipassana teacher Mr. Khageshwar Aryal shared the importance of Vipassana for the well-being of people and taught some breathing exercises and meditation. In the programme, Government officials, corporate chiefs, Human Resource Managers, Yoga teachers and practitioners were also present.





Nepali Army Day Celebrated

ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest Lt. General Inam Haider Chairman National Disaster Management Authority attended the Nepali Army Day hosted by Ambassador of Nepal Tapas Adhikari, Defence Attache Col Bhes Bahadur.

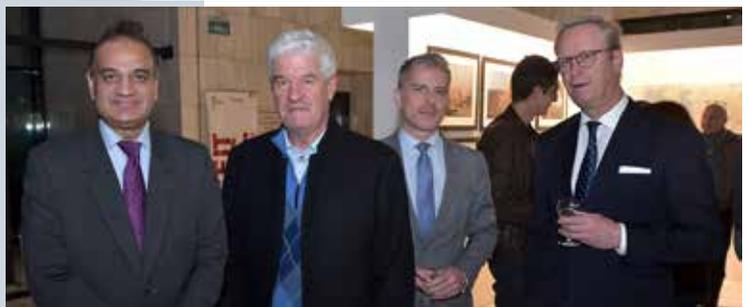
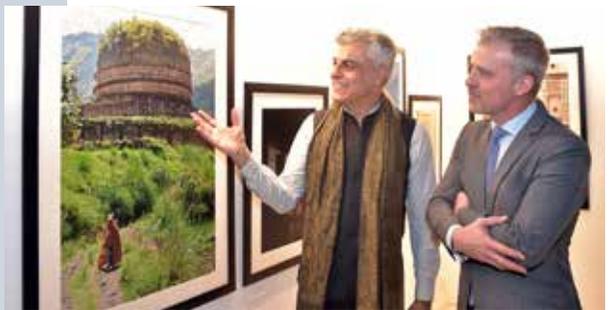


A photo exhibition by Ferrante Ferranti 'From Troy to Lahore'

The exhibition provided a window into Ferranti's extensive global travels, drawing inspiration from the epic tales of The Odyssey and The Iliad as well as the works of Swiss writer and poet Nikola Bouvier

ISLAMABAD: A photo exhibition by Ferrante Ferranti 'From Troy to Lahore' In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great and Nicolas Bouvier and curated by Shah Zaman Baloch was held at the premises of the French embassy. Deputy Head of Mission of the French Embassy Guillaume DABOUTS spoke on the occasion and introduced the artist to the audience. French Photographer Ferrante Ferranti presented his 40-year photographic exploration of civilizations "From Troy to Lahore" at French embassy in Islamabad. The exhibition provided a window into Ferranti's extensive global travels, drawing inspiration from the epic tales of The Odyssey and The Iliad as well as the works of Swiss writer and poet Nikola Bouvier. Ferranti's images have appeared in more than 60 books and been exhibited in a number of international cultural organizations, such as the Maison Open de la Photographie in Paris. The current exhibition at the French embassy in Islamabad offered a short sample of Ferranti's extensive portfolio, highlighting his recent exploration of Pakistan. Last year, Ferranti participated in the Lahore Literary Festival and returned to Pakistan in July to further explore beauty of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit Baltistan. Ferranti emphasized the significance of his visit to Pakistan, citing the country's rich history and cultural heritage as a source of inspiration for his work. On the occasion, Ferrante Ferranti expressed gratitude to the embassy and the cultural section for

their collaboration. He reflected on his journey, drawing parallels to the travels of historical figures like Alexander the Great and Nicola Bouvier. The artists said in 1980, at the age of twenty, he set off on an initiatory trip to Greece, and the legend of Alexander the Great In the footsteps of mythological heroes Ulysses and Aeneas. Rather than awaiting Apollo's prophecies at Delphi, the navel of the Greek world, they instead consulted the oracles in the East at Didymus, in Minor Asia, on the West at Cumae. Not far from Vesuvius and in the south in the oasis of Siwa. There Alexander the Great, young emperor of Macedonia, consulted the oracle of Amen and received the prophecy that he would conquer Asia and set out for the East. 'Later, I went in search of the traces of this thousand-year-old palimpsest. In Anatolia and on the banks of the Euphrates, I took measure of the spiritual riches of these Territories at the crossroads between West and East. At Mount Nemrut, Greek Inscriptions told me the story of a king born of Alexander's conquests. He added, Armenia, where he stepped off at ruined caravanserais, and to Georgia, where he visited churches overreaching the plains of Azerbaijan he had to wait until 1997 for a new guide to take him further East. 'Nicolas Bouvier burst into my life, and his book The Way of the World became the breviary of my travels. I followed in his feat steps in Iran, from Table to Persepolis, discovering Sufism', he added.





Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad commemorates 128th Adwa Victory Day



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on Tuesday celebrated the 128th Adwa victory day in Islamabad in the presence of a large number of government officials from different Ministries and Armed Forces, Members of Parliament, diplomatic corps, business community, civil society, media, and above all Ethiopian Diaspora in Pakistan. Celebrated with a national zeal and fervor, the commemoration day featured multiple events including documentaries on history of the Adwa victory of Ethiopia against the then colonizers, Ethiopia's role in laying the foundation of Pan-Africanism and its consistent diplomacy for promoting the regional integration. Senior Parliamentarian and Member of the National Assembly Khawaja Asif graced the celebration ceremony of the Adwa victory Day as the chief guest. Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori was the guest of honour at the ceremony. Speaking on the occasion, H.E. Jemal Beker Abdula, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the FDRE to Pakistan, extended his felicitations to the whole Africa especially the people of Ethiopia on the occasion of 128th Adwa Victory Day commemorated under the theme of "Adwa Black People's Victory". He expressed gratitude to the people of Pakistan for gracing the 128th anniversary of the Black People's Victory in such a large number. H.E. Ambassador Jemal Beker briefed the honorable participants in Islamabad on historical role played by the Adwa battle in igniting movements for freedom, equality and liberty in the whole Africa and in other continents against the colonization. On March 2, 1896, a united Ethiopia achieved the biggest victory in battle field against the in-

vading forces which, indeed, changed the course of history, humanity, political and social narration at the global level, the ambassador noted. Adwa's victory is an inspiration and spirit of Pan-Africanism that ignited anti-colonial movements all across the world, the ambassador remarked. The Adwa victory symbolized Ethiopian unity and pan-Africanism, he said while highlighting the major initiatives of the reformist Government of Ethiopia that further fostering regional integration in the region. He said Ethiopia had built Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam which would further promote regional integration through energy export. Ethiopia was already sharing its resources with the people of neighboring countries and would continue to do so. The ambassador said Green Legacy Initiative of H.E. Dr. Abi Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, was also another major initiative of the government to boost collaboration with regional countries in mitigating global issues like climate change and food insecurity. 32.5 billion seedlings of different fruits, plants, trees and animal feed were planted during the last four years under the Green Legacy campaign, he added. The ambassador also expressed resolve to further strengthen the bilateral ties between the two countries through economic diplomacy. He announced Hijra Trip II, another business delegation of Pakistani business community to Ethiopia in this year, for boosting the trade between the two countries. Last year, the Embassy of Ethiopia mobilized a historic delegation of 75 business persons to Ethiopia, the ambassador added. Chief Guest Khawaja Muhammad Asif also congratulated the people of Ethiopia and Africa on the Adwa victory day. He also stressed the need for the Pakistani business community to explore African markets especially through Ethiopia which was a gateway to the African continent.



Bosnia, Pakistan ties from cordial to excellent, says Ambassador

Film “Qou vadis, Aida?”, on the occasion the 32nd anniversary of Independence Day of Bosnia and Herzegovina

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Emin Cohodarevic Ambassador Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina has said he was pleased to present the film “Qou vadis, Aida?”, on the occasion the 32nd anniversary of Independence Day of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The film is not only a cinematic masterpiece, but a painful reminder of the Srebrenica genocide, the worst atrocity on European soil since World War II. A large number of guests hailing from various walks of life attended the reception. The ambassador said, it was an undeniable reality that the relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Islamic Republic of Pakistan are special: alongside the enduring link of the permanent support that Pakistan give to Bosnia and Herzegovina on its path to preserve freedom and democracy. “Our relations have an out of ordinary dynamic, they permanently develop and diversify. There no single field, either political, defense, economical, cultural or social one, where we not able to give positive examples and good practices’.

He said he was confident that the friendship between the people of the two countries and bilateral relations between two governments will continue to flourish and achieve new heights.

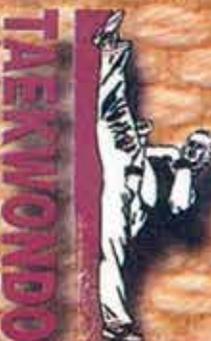
While giving a highlight of the film, the ambassador said, it was not coincidence that we chose this moment to screen “Quo vadis, Aida?”, as we mark our 32nd year of independence, recognizing all of the stories, tragic and heroic, personal and collective, well-known and yet-to-be-told, that are part of my country’s history already. ‘Aida’s drama and her emotions are the heart of the story. I would like you to take away the feelings and questions the film raises. How many things would have been different if we had more empathy and solidarity? Did this tragedy have to have such a terrible outcome? He said, he would like to express his gratitude to the Pakistan National Council of the Art for hosting us this evening, as well as Mr. Danish Iqbal, Honorary Consul of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Lahore, Mr. Asad Saleem, Honorary Consul of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Peshawar and Mr. Khawaja Abdul Ghani Majid, Honorary Consul of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Karachi who so generously contributed to the success of tonight’s event.



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Read Pakistan successfully concludes the National Reader's Conference

The National Reader's Conference, hosted by Read Pakistan, is a flagship occasion in the organization's annual calendar. Every year, it brings together luminaries and intellectuals from diverse fields to celebrate the importance of reading and its profound impact on society. This year's conference featured distinguished speakers who had made substantial contributions to their respective fields.



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Read Pakistan, a distinguished organisation committed to promoting literacy and fostering a passion for reading nationwide, held the National Reader's Conference on the 16th of February at Kehkashan Hall, Serena. Read Pakistan has been at the forefront of initiating numerous campaigns and projects over a decade. The organization's largest campaign for school libraries in the country has already established 54 libraries. The National Reader's Conference, hosted by Read Pakistan, is a flagship occasion in the organization's annual calendar. Every year, it brings together luminaries and intellectuals from diverse fields to celebrate the importance of reading and its profound impact on society. This year's conference featured distinguished speakers who had made substantial contributions to their respective fields. Among the honoured

speakers were Miss Nigar Nazar, a renowned artist and female cartoonist, and Mr Rashidally Soobadar from the Mauritius High Commission in the most memorable way highlighted the importance of reading. Mr Zia Ur Rehman, a notable author who has received a Lifetime Achievement Award and served in civil services for 36 years, spoke passionately about the importance of inculcating reading habits among the youth. Senator Fauwzia Arshad appreciated the cause of Read Pakistan in a very modest way. In addition to the esteemed speakers, the conference hosted a compelling panel discussion with prominent participants, including Muhammad Rafique Tahir, Former Joint Educational Advisor, Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training, Dr. Waqar Azeem, a multi-talented individual with expertise in playwriting, directing, and acting, discussed "The Joy of Reading Plays", Sumbhal Naveed, Founder and CEO of the In-

stitute of Learning for a Better Tomorrow (ILFABET), delved into the "Pedagogy of Reading Habit in Pakistan", Munir Ahmed explored the theme of "Storytelling to Inculcate Reading Interest," while published author Madiha Arsalan discussed the "Role of Language in Literature SDGs 2030." Miss Sadaf Raza who is a poet, mystic, and healer and has authored three collections of poems, moderated the whole panel discussion. The event was concluded by CEO Read Pakistan, Miss Syeda Fatima Hasan Gilani a passionate philanthropist who has dedicated herself to promoting reading and love for books in Pakistan has authored more than ten children books. In a grand culmination, the Winners of the 50 Bay Competition were awarded. Yasir Nawab and Wafa Batool from Wah University were awarded the prestigious Read Pakistan 50 Books A Year Award, while almost 30 other winners from more than 15 partner universities received appreciation certificates.



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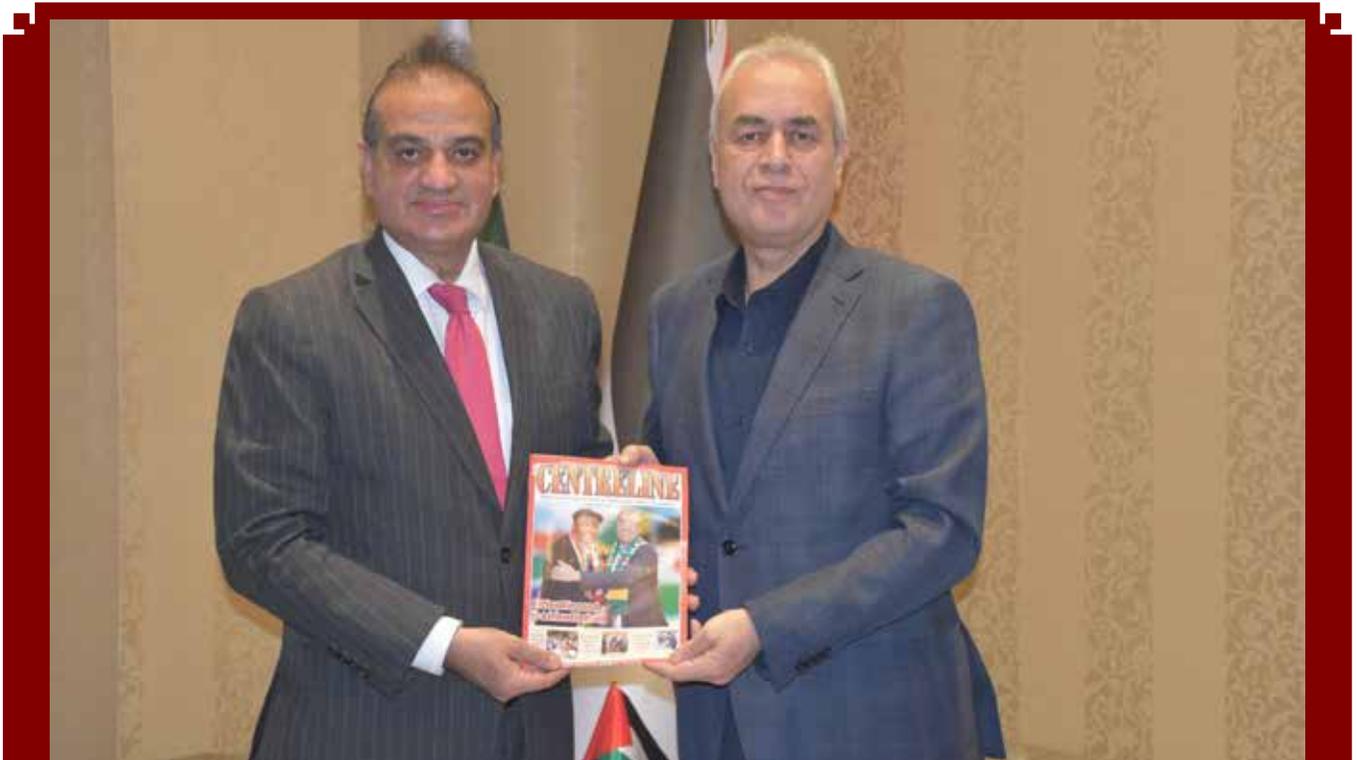
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Islamabad Marriott Hotel launches 'Kiku': A gateway to authentic Japanese cuisine

DNA

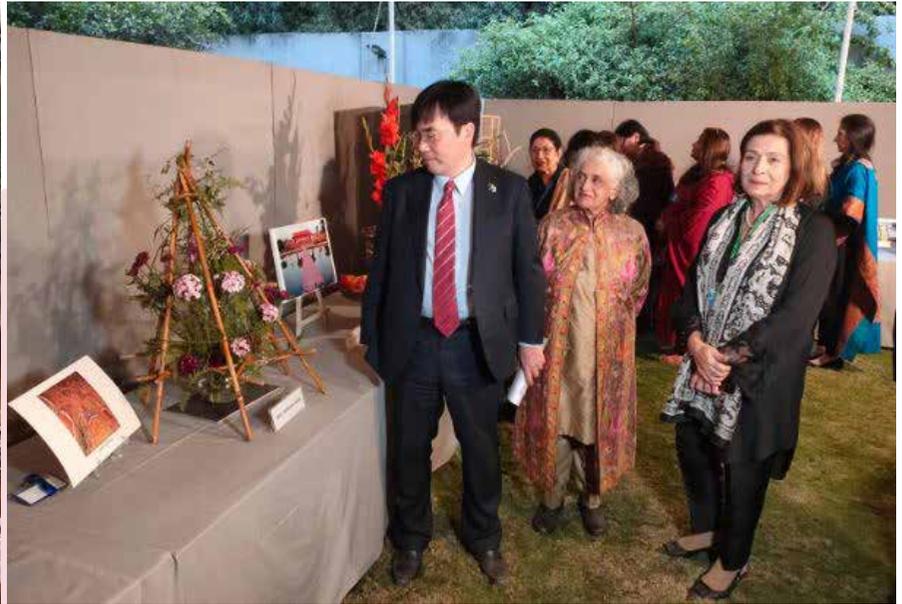


THE Islamabad Marriott Hotel has announced the grand opening of 'Kiku', an elegant new addition to Islamabad's culinary scene. The inauguration ceremony was attended by the Ambassador of Japan, H.E. Mr. WADA Mitsuhiro, who expressed his delight and endorsement of Kiku as "the only authentic Japanese restaurant in Islamabad." The restaurant's name, Kiku, translates to 'chrysanthemum' in Japanese, a symbol of rejuvenation and nobility, reflecting the restaurant's commitment to providing guests with an authentic and exquisite dining experience. The restaurant offers a meticulously curated menu of contemporary Japanese cuisine, prepared by highly skilled chefs who have mastered the art of Japanese culinary arts. There is also a live sushi bar, teppanyaki and Robatayaki stations complemented by vibrant music played by a DJ. Kiku's interior has been designed to transport diners to Japan, with a serene and elegant ambiance that combines traditional and modern design elements. The opening of Kiku marks a significant milestone in the city's dining landscape, promising an unforgettable journey into the heart of Japanese culture and cuisine. Mr. David Richard O'Hanlon, the General Manager of the Islamabad Marriott Hotel said: "Kiku is more than just a restaurant; it's an invitation to explore and appreciate the rich culinary traditions of Japan." The cultural bridge is being built through the culinary exchange, and Islamabad Marriott is proud to offer its guests an unparalleled authentic Japanese dining experience.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Editor Centreline/Daily Islamabad POST Ansar Mahmood Bhatti presenting a copy of Centreline magazine, which carries a special report on Gaza, to Ambassador of Palestine Ahmed Rabei. The Ambassador briefed the senior journalist about the latest Gaza situation. The Ambassador thanked the government and the people of Pakistan for extending whole-hearted support to Palestine at this particular juncture. – DNA

Japanese culture flourishes in Lahore with Wagashi and Ikebana exhibitions



DNA

LAHORE: To experience and learn about the rich cultural diversity and aesthetic beauty of Japan, the Embassy of Japan in Pakistan in collaboration with the Pakistan-Japan Cultural Association (PJCA) Lahore and Lahore Sogetsu Study Group showcased the exhibitions of Wagashi (traditional Japanese sweets) and ikebana flower arrangement, two of Japan's most cherished cultural traditions spanning over centuries of history. Wagashi exhibition titled "Wagashi- Art of the 5 Senses" presented the pleasantly colored dainty pieces of confectionery called the art of the five senses as they are works of art designed to appeal all the senses with their appearance, flavor, aroma, feel and the sounds of their names. While reflecting the various aspects of nature and the changing seasons, Wagashi sweets are exquisitely shaped and crafted earning them the name of edible art which are traditionally served as an accompaniment to the Japanese tea ceremony. Mr. ITO Takeshi, Charge d' Affaires of the Embassy of Japan in Pakistan, inaugurated the two exhibitions which represented the essence of Japanese traditions and culture. Mr. YAMAZAKI Tetsuya, the Chef of the Embassy of Japan, on the occasion skillfully demonstrated the art of pre-

paring a variety of beautiful and delicious wagashi sweets, using traditional ingredients and techniques. With his artistic skills and aesthetic sense, Mr. Yamazaki elaborately spoke about the cultural significance of Japanese confectionery that are not only used at different celebrations and rituals in Japan but also represent the changing seasons. His presentation won great applause from the attendees.

The ikebana exhibition by the students and teachers of Lahore Sogetsu Study Group, exhibited their spring arrangements titled "Mughal Architecture through the eyes of Sogetsu Ikebana". The floral designs by the teachers and students displayed have taken their inspiration from the numerous Floral Frescoes of the monuments of the Walled City, namely Lahore Fort, Sheesh Mahal, Badshahi Masjid, Wazir Khan Masjid, Shahi Hammam to name a few. Ms. Neveen Syed, Director Sogetsu Study Group, gave live ikebana demonstration on the occasion which was inspired through her inspirational tour of the various historical monuments in Lahore. Explaining to the viewers, Ms. Neveen said that this kind of an exhibition where history is linked with flowers, is the first of its kind in Lahore, where floral artists of Ikebana have expressed their feelings through the meditative art of Sogetsu Ike-

bana, spreading peace and harmony and friendship through flowers. Mr. Ito, while speaking on the occasion, deeply appreciated the aesthetically pleasing exhibitions of wagashi and ikebana arrangements, and hoped that through these exhibitions more and more Pakistani people can enjoy the Japanese culture which will lead to strengthen the bond of friendship between Japan and Pakistan. He said that It is always a pleasure to visit the beautiful city of Lahore that is culturally so rich and vibrant yet has an aura of historical significance for its people. He commended the hard work of Japanese Ambassador's Chef Mr. Yamazaki Tetsuya, who has especially come from Islamabad to present before Pakistani audience a rare glimpse into Wagashi, the art of 5 senses. Mr. Ito expressed his special appreciation for the Lahore Sogetsu Study Group who have dedicated and supported to organize these exhibitions successfully in Lahore and also for displaying beautiful ikebana floral arrangements during His Majesty the Emperor's birthday celebration in Islamabad last week. He also thanked Mr. Aamir Shirazi, Honorary Consul General of Japan at Lahore and Dr. Ghazal Irfan, President of PJCA Lahore, for their continued support and efforts for holding various cultural events in Lahore.



Government of Pakistan



Prime Minister's Office
National Disaster Management Authority

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