

Pakistan Link

The Largest Circulated Pakistani-American Newspaper in North America

VOL. 24/42 - 23 Dhul-Hijjah 1435 H

Friday, October 17, 2014

US & Canada \$1.00

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Swat Girls Foresee Change after Malala's Nobel Win



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Malala Wins Nobel Peace Prize



Oslo: Pakistani teenager Malala Yousafzai, who was shot in the head by the Taliban in 2012 for advocating girls' right to education, and Indian children's right activist Kailash Satyarthi won the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize on Friday.

Yousafzai, aged 17, becomes the youngest Nobel Prize winner by far.

Satyarthi, 60, and Yousafzai were picked for their struggle against the oppression of children and young people, and for the right of all children to education, the Norwegian Nobel Committee said.

The award was made at a MALALA, P29

PM's Disqualification: SC Asks for Text of Speech

Islamabad: The Supreme Court on Wednesday summoned the text of the prime minister's August 29 speech in Parliament, saying any words uttered in the House were public property and should be available to the people.

A three-judge bench of the apex court, headed by Justice Jawwad S. Khawaja, has been hearing identical petitions — filed by former MNA and Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) leader Ishaq Khan Khakwani, Pakistan Muslim League (PML-Q) President Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and Gohar Sindhu Advocate — calling for the disqualification of Nawaz Sharif from holding a seat in the National Assembly.

The petitioners have requested the court to disqualify Nawaz under Article 62 (f) of the Constitution, claiming he gave a false statement during a joint sitting of the Parliament over the role of the army in negotiations with PTI and Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT) to end SPEECH, P29

Pride at Stake in Multan By-poll



The government's worry is that the defeat of Mr Hashmi would give the impression that it is losing popular support in the country

Lahore: The Punjab (PML-N) government is considering the Multan by-election due on Thursday as the most important affair and has cancelled all other meetings to fully focus on it.

The fear is not the defeat of Javed

Hashmi, an independent candidate, who it is believed to be supporting. But the upper hand his defeat would give to the PTI is fearsome, according to official sources on Tuesday. Sources revealed all important meetings were being cancelled because the government was fo-

cusing on the bye-election.

The PML-N had not awarded a ticket to anyone but it wanted the victory of Javed Hashmi to embarrass the PTI which was supporting another independent candidate, Malik Amir PRIDE, P22

India Continues Ceasefire Violations at LoC

Rawalpindi: Indian armed forces violated ceasefire at the Line of Control (LoC) again on Wednesday morning as troops resorted to unprovoked firing in the Kailash sector near Bagh and in the Nezapir sector near Rawalakot, the army said.

"Pakistani troops are befittingly responding to Indian firing which started early morning today," said a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations. India's Border Security Force resorted to unprovoked firing on Nezapir sector in Rawalakot and Kailash sector in Bagh at 2am on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, four children were injured by Indian shelling in Nakial sector in district Kotli. The injured children were shifted to a military hospital. A day before the recent incident, military officials from Pakistan and India spoke over a hotline on the aggravating situation along the LoC and the working boundary as military observers from the United Nations visited affected areas inside Pakistan. VIOLATIONS, P29

Three Pakistani Doctors Die in Chicago Plane Crash



Palos Hills: Three top Pakistani-American physicians were killed when their private double engine Beech craft Baron crashed Monday night at 2240 hours in Palos Hills, a city in the state of Illinois.

The three were on board when the plane crashed in a Palos Hills neighborhood soon after it took off from Chicago's Midway International Airport.

"The three Pakistani-American physicians who died in the air crash were pulmonologist Dr. Ali Kanchwala, cardiologist Dr. Maria Javed, also wife of Dr. Ali Kanchwala and neurosurgeon Dr. Tauseef Rehman CRASH, P29

Dar Makes a Sincere Case for Pakistan in Washington



Finance Minister Dar's speech at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies on October 9 was well received by the audience

■ By C. Naseer Ahmad

Washington, DC: Pakistan's Finance Minister Ishaq Dar made a sincere case for Pakistan in Wash-

ington during a speech at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies on October 9, 2014. He spoke to South

Asian experts and students and was introduced with warm remarks by Dean Vali Nasr. Mr. Dar was accompanied by Paki-

stani Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani.

The finance minister discussed DAR, P29

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Misbah Must Say Goodbye to ODIs



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NED Alumni Convention 2014 in Silicon Valley



The Silicon Valley Convention featured keynote speeches by IBA director Dr Ishrat Husain and Silicon Valley entrepreneur and NED University alumnus Dr Naveed Sherwani



■ By Riaz Haq

Hundreds of my fellow alumni of Pakistan's NED University of Engineering and Technology (NEDUET) gathered in Silicon Valley for the Tenth Annual North America Convention for three days starting Friday, October 10 through Sunday, October 12, 2014. They traveled from dozens of US states and Canada. Many, including NED University's vice chancellor Dr Afzal Haq, came from as far as Pakistan.

The Silicon Valley convention featured keynote speeches by IBA director Dr Ishrat Husain and Silicon Valley entrepreneur and NED University alumnus Dr Naveed Sherwani. In addition, there was an interesting monologue by NED alum Aftab Rizvi which offered a fictionalized account of an NEDian rise from a Karachi slum to a lucrative career. In this post, I will focus on the innovation panel which I found particularly interesting.

Innovation Panel

The topic for this panel was "How to promote innovation in Pakistan". Distinguished panelists included Dr Afzal Haque, Vice Chancellor of NED University; Dr Ishrat Hussain, Dean of Karachi's Institute of Business Administration; Dr Khurshid Qureshi, Chairman of DICE Initiative to promote innovation; Dr Abdul Ghafoor, Chairman of Manufacturing Engineering Department at National University of Science

and Technology (NUST); Dr Mumtaz Hussain, first Vice Chancellor of King Edwards Medical University; Tanveer Malik, NED Endowment - ALEF and Professor Ali Minai, Panel Moderator.

After listening to the panelists for almost an hour, it became very obvious to me that the panelists were talking about imitation rather than innovation in areas such as automotive engineering and personal computing. Dr Khurshid Qureshi and Dr Ghafoor talked about designing and building an automobile engine entirely in Pakistan by assigning major parts of the project to various engineering departments at universities working with the local auto industry. Then Dr Khurshid Qureshi brought up working with some Silicon Valley alums to design and build a laptop in its entirety in Pakistan.

It was a relief to finally hear Dr Ishrat Hussain clearly articulate the fact that the panelists were essentially talking about doing what others did decades ago. He said it's not really a bad thing to begin with and cited the example of the imitation and absorption of Green Revolution technologies in Pakistan.

He went on to explain that imitation, absorption and diffusion of existing technologies can greatly benefit Pakistan and set the stage for real innovation in the long term. Post-WW II success stories of the Japanese and the South Koreans and other Asian Tigers have shown how this process has helped them develop and prosper by industri-



alizing rapidly. Beyond imitation, real innovation requires a culture that promotes questioning of widely accepted conventional wisdom. Discouraging questions from children kills their natural curiosity and hurts innovation.

Moderator Ali Minai illustrated this important point with the following poetic lines:

yaqeen kee baat mayN kuchh bhee naheen thaa/ naye pehloo huay paidaa gumaaN say (by late Saleem Ahmad)

(Absolute faith offered little/doubts have helped open up new possibilities)

vo harf sach tha ke ahl-e yaqeen naheen samjhay/ dimaagh-e kufir se kyaa kyaa haqeeqatayN nikleeN (by late Aziz Hamid Madni)

(People of faith did not comprehend the truth/ Agnostics' mind revealed many truths)

Dr Mumtaz Hussain of King Edwards Medical University added that there is nothing in Islam that discourages questions and critical thinking. In fact, the Qur'an repeatedly exhorts

people to think, to ponder, and to go as far as necessary to seek knowledge. He particularly cited repeated Qur'anic exhortations like "Afala taqilun" (Why don't you reason?), "afala tatafakkarun" (Why don't you think?), "afala tubsirun" (Why don't you see?), "afala tadabbarun" (Why don't you find solutions?).

Here's a video clip of Dr Ishrat Hussain's presentation on innovation at the NED Alumni Convention 2014 in Silicon Valley:

http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x27up3a_innovation-panel-at-ned-alumni-convention-2014-in-silicon-valley-ca_news

http://youtu.be/-NTy66ey6vc?list=UUKrIDyFbC9N9evXYb9cA_gQ

Promoting Innovation

Dr Ishrat Hussain succinctly stated some of the key points which I had brought out in a blog post titled "Promoting Innovation Culture in Pakistan". It is reproduced below for those who didn't get a chance to read it:

Efforts to promote innovation in Pakistan are being spearheaded by sev-

eral different groups including DICE Foundation and Pakistan Innovation Foundation. Both DICE and PIF focus almost entirely on higher education institutions.

Before assessing the situation and making recommendations on promoting innovation in Pakistan, it's important to understand the history of innovation by studying the examples of major innovations since the industrial revolution.

James Watt

James Watt (1736-1819) is credited with the innovation of the steam engine which is believed to have enabled the Industrial Revolution in Scotland. Watt only had high school education. He never studied at a college or a university. His invention enabled a wide range of manufacturing machinery to be powered. His steam engines could be sited anywhere that water and coal or wood fuel could be obtained and provided up to 10,000 horsepower to run large factories. It could also be applied to NED, P20



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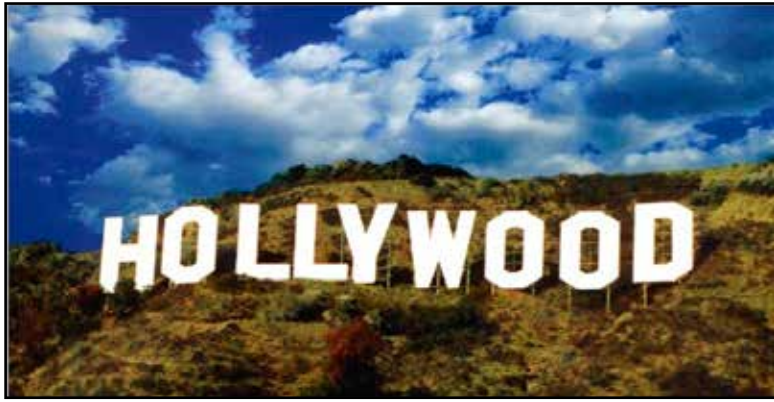


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We're Bringing Hollywood to You



■ By Suhad Obeidi
MPAC

Last year, Hollywood announced numerous projects that depicted Islam and Muslims. MPAC's Hollywood Bureau (HB) has ensured that American Muslims are involved in the process and engaging with Hollywood writers and directors on projects that explore our community. In fact, this Friday, an MPAC consulting project, "Camp X-Ray," will be released in theaters. The film starring "Twilight" actress Kristen Stewart displays the inhumane conditions at Guantanamo Bay.

In light of the current global political climate, we anticipate that there will only be more stories written about Muslims. This year, we will bring this important conversation to our annual convention, titled "America Deserves Better," which will be held at the Long Beach Convention Center on Saturday, December 13. We will be hosting a not to be missed session titled: Collaboration or Cancellation: Shaping the Image of Islam & Muslims in Hollywood.

The session will feature:

- Writer and Director, Peter

Sattler, ('Camp X-Ray')

- Television Screenwriter, Sameer Gardezi ('Modern Family', 'Aliens in America')
- Manager, Producer & Chairman of MPAC's HB, Ahmos Hassan ('Life with Louie')
- Executive Director of CAIR-SFBA, Zahra Billoo

We invited a diverse range of panelist who will bring a broad range of experience and different perspectives about the perceptions of Muslims in Hollywood. We will also discuss the opportunities and challenges that Muslims face on-screen in Hollywood, how we can capitalize on these opportunities and the best approach to tackling these challenges.

The daytime program will additionally include the following sessions:

1. Let's Be Honest: Tackling Taboos in the American Muslim Community
2. ISIS: Result of Failed Policies or Perverted Ideologies?

Now is the time to participate in these important conversations that will impact our community and country!

We hope to see you there.

Irvine Politics: Final Two Weeks Countdown

■ By Farrah N. Khan
Irvine, CA

As we're gearing for the final week of the election countdown, some drastic steps have been taken by several Irvine leaders to reach out to their communities in hope of providing pertinent information about the upcoming election. Muslim community leaders have written a letter urging all Muslim voters to vote current Mayor Steven Choi and Councilman Jeff Lalloway out of office. In addition, a complaint to the Anti-Defamation League resulted in their response to Mayor Choi demanding that he respect the community he serves.

Excerpt from the Letter to Muslims in Irvine:

Today, we are writing to inform and encourage you to support and vote for Mary Ann Gaido for Mayor, Larry Agran and Melissa Fox for City Council in the upcoming November 4th City election. These three candidates are not only in support of restoring good planning in Irvine but also restoring respect in City Hall for the Muslim community.

Our preferred team is Gaido-Agran-Fox. Our community is very familiar with Councilman Larry Agran who has attended many events at the mosque and is a strong supporter of our community. He is the one who initiated the Friendship Cities program in hopes of building stronger ties with the international community.

Mary Ann Gaido is a former City Councilwoman and a long-time Irvine Planning Commissioner who, when elected Mayor, is willing to place a moratorium on all new development until Irvine's Master Plan is reviewed and current growth is evaluated. Melissa Fox is a Community Services Commissioner and works hard to plan and maintain Irvine's award-winning parks and recreational programs.

Earlier this year, Melissa helped facilitate a workshop for Muslim women in Orange County to coach them on how to seek leadership positions through civic engagement and grassroots organizing. Both women are in the forefront of establishing stronger relations with the Muslim community.

The Gaido-Agran-Fox Team is challenging the team led by Mayor Steven Choi, Councilman Jeff Lalloway and Planning Commissioner Lynn Schott. Choi and Lalloway have disrespected the planning process, recently approving 10,000 homes and apartments at the Great Park, and causing traffic and school overcrowding throughout Irvine. Plus, Steven Choi and Jeff Lalloway have also disrespected the Irvine Muslim community in several ways:

- Mayor Choi and Councilman Lalloway have opposed establishing Friendship City ties to Pakistan. In recent City Council meetings, Choi and Lalloway stated they didn't want to have relations with "terrorists".

Mayor Choi and Councilman Lalloway were recently approached by a Muslim Montessori school who were being forced out of rented space at the El Camino School by the Irvine Unified School District. They did nothing to help the school and dismissed any request for intervention.

- When Choi was City Councilman, he smeared Todd Gallinger's campaign by airing television ads in which he warned voters not to vote for Todd because he had ties to "terrorists".

We believe Irvine must be a leading "international crossroads city" in the 21st Century, just as Councilman Larry Agran described it years ago. We believe that we once again need leaders who have a multi-cultural vision for Irvine – and who respect all cultures and all people. We also believe we once again need leaders who remain faithful to Irvine's Master Plan and who have the courage to control growth and development.

This letter was signed by Todd Gallinger (CAIR-CA-PAC and Former Irvine City Council Candidate), Iyad Afalqa (Vice Chair of the Arab American Democrats of California), MohyEldeen F. Abdelgany (Community Leader, VP Engineering, Wireless Solutions and resident of Irvine), Sabry A. Aziz (Community Leader, Businessman and Resident of Irvine) and myself, Farrah N. Khan (CS Commissioner, City of Irvine, Businesswoman and Resident of Irvine).

For more information on State and Federal elections and propositions, please download your free 2014 CA Voter's Guide at <https://ca.cair.com/los-angeles/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/voter-guide-online.pdf>.

Pakistani American Running for Eastvale

City Council

Eastvale, CA:

Anwer A. Khan, a Pakistani-American, is running for City Council in the City of Eastvale in Riverside County, California, says a message. It adds:



His candidacy presents an opportunity to have a Pakistani in public office but he needs your support. Please visit his website at EasvaleUnited.com to see his background, vision for the city, and to donate to his campaign.

Anwer requests anyone willing to volunteer, or living in the City of Eastvale, to contact him. His contact information is available on his website. He also seeks your vote on November 4, 2014. For anyone not registered to vote, Anwer's website provides links to register online. The online registration deadline is October 20, 2014. Please do vote.

NED FROM P19

vehicles such as traction engines and the railway locomotives. The stationary steam engine was a key component of the Industrial Revolution, allowing factories to locate where water power was unavailable.

Thomas Edison

Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931), the man who invented the light bulb, was probably the most prolific inventor since the Industrial Revolution. He had no formal education. He was a tinkerer who worked with his hands to come up with many devices and was awarded over 1000 patents by the US Patent Office. His innovations were transformational in their impact: electric light and power utilities, sound recording, and motion pictures, all established major new industries world-wide. Edison's inventions contributed to mass communication and, in particular, telecommunications. These included a stock ticker, a mechanical vote recorder, a battery for an electric car, electrical power, recorded music and motion pictures.

Steve Jobs

Steve Jobs (1955-2011) invented Apple personal computer. Jobs revolutionized several industries from computing and personal electronics to publishing and entertainment. Jobs, a highly prolific innovator, attended college briefly but did not complete college education. Jobs, too, was a tinkerer who worked with his hands to create things.

These examples clearly establish that some of the most prolific innovators have been people who had little or no

college education. It is therefore not wise to limit promotion of innovation to just the college level.

In fact, it is much more important to start promoting innovation during early years in primary and secondary schools. It can be done through inquiry-based learning and provision of tools and training at the K-12 school level. Some examples are as follows:

Inquiry-based Learning

Inquiry-based learning is a method developed during the discovery learning movement of the 1960s. It came in response to a perceived failure of more traditional rote learning. Inquiry-based learning is a form of active learning, where progress is assessed by how well students develop experimental, analytical and critical thinking skills rather than how many facts they have memorized. Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) and The Citizens Foundation (TCF) are beginning to promote inquiry-based methods to encourage more active learning and critical thinking at an early age in Pakistan. These skills are essential to prepare Pakistani youngsters to be capable of facing the challenges of living in a highly competitive world in which the wealth of nations is defined in terms of human capital and innovation.

Maker Movement

The Maker Movement is a technological and creative learning revolution underway around the globe. It has exciting and vast implications for the world of education. New tools and technology, such as 3D printing, robotics, microprocessors, wearable computing, e-textiles,

"smart" materials, and programming languages are being invented at an unprecedented pace. The Maker Movement creates affordable or even free versions of these inventions, while sharing tools and ideas online to create a vibrant, collaborative community of global problem-solvers.

Maker movement is helping spawn facilities in many different cities around the world. These places have a wide range of both hardware and software tools and classes available to help people to create and "make" things with their own hands.

The only possible example of "makerspace" that comes close in Pakistan is Robotics Lab that was launched in 2011 in Karachi. It was founded by two friends, Afaq Ahmed and Yasin Altaf, who had previously worked in Silicon Valley. They bought a 3D printer for the lab as a tool to help children learn science. The founding duo is now looking for ways to expand its audience. "Our goal is to push this science lab to TCF schools, a nationwide school network covering about 150,000 underprivileged students," says Ahmed. The project, however, is currently pending because of funding constraints. "We have asked them to find some big donor for this purpose. Currently, we train these children only through field trips to our labs."

Out-of-the-Box Thinking

The key to innovation is not necessarily advanced education and training in a certain field. It is out-of-the-box thinking. Major innovations have often come from people working in unrelated fields. Recent examples of such innovations

from people of South Asian origin include Zia Chisti's Invisalign and Salman Khan's Khan Academy. Both Zia and Salman came from investment banking background before they revolutionized the fields of orthodontics and education.

Summary

Encouragement of the culture of innovation should begin during children's formative years in primary and secondary schools. Innovation requires free out-of-the-box thinking. History tells us that some of the biggest innovators were tinkerers with little or no formal education in the fields of their biggest and most transformative innovations. Groups and foundations promoting innovation in Pakistan need to increase their outreach to the school kids. As a start, they can expand inquiry-based learning and build more makerspaces like Karachi's Robotics Lab in partnership with private industries and foundations in major cities.

Here's a video of my friend Ali H. Cimentaur's visit to Karachi Robotics Lab:

<http://vimeo.com/58856985>

PS: Since I first published this blog, Dr Khurshid Qureshi, Chairman of DICE, has communicated the following to me:

While I was reading the article, I wondered that may be I failed to fully explain what DICE is all about. My apologies.

I would like to mention few point to clarify our mission.

1. As I mentioned earlier we have been arranging mega events for last 7 years and that is to bring all innovative

ideas from all domains disciplines to one platform in an effort to bring Innovation culture in Pakistan. We have seen innovations from increasing iron content of Basmati rice 10 times, fertilizer which works on saline land, design of low cost sugarcane planter to pain measurement device (if we are successful in creating such a device - that one innovation can have a potential to take Pakistan out of misery. At DICE we have been bringing 100 hundreds of such innovations on surface for the last several years.

2. When we talked about automotive and laptop, idea was not to say that we should not work on item 1 above; it is just that there are certain strategic areas where we have to fix the baseline first (we are far behind), before we can reasonably come up with something really innovative. And from my perspective even Pakistan having its own low cost car (indigenous design) with our own engine is highly innovative.

3. I always cite example of Shan Masala (one of the greatest innovations), and also ultimately having an Innovation market place such as Jumma Bazar of Innovations where people can market their innovative ideas and projects (does have to come from colleges univ).

So as I mentioned earlier, I am fully aligned with what you are saying that Innovation can come from anywhere - doesn't require degrees.

I thought I should try to clarify our position at DICE - we are not there just to imitate (which btw is also an innovation), we are truly after changing the culture of our nation.

Mayor Joe Petty Celebrates Eid-ul-Adha with Muslims of Worcester



The Mayor remained on his feet out of respect as the Muslims completed the prayer. He was visibly impressed by the presence of thousands of Muslim families in their traditional dresses, all gathered in one place for one purpose only



■ By Tahir Ali

Worcester: Close to an estimated 5000+ Muslims from the Greater Worcester area flocked to the Islamic center in Worcester (WIC) located on East Mountain Street to observe prayers and to celebrate Eid-ul-Adha, the major festival of Islam that marks the end of the pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca.

This year, the Worcester Mayor Joe Petty and his Chief of Staff Daniel Racicot were also celebrating with the Muslims. Yasser Najjar, President of WIC introduced the Mayor to the Muslim Community. The Mayor opened his remarks with 'Eid Mubarak' and thanked the Muslim Community for inviting him to be part of the celebration.

The Mayor remained on his feet out of respect as the Muslims completed the prayer. He was evidently very much in awe and visibly impressed by the presence of thousands of Muslim families in their

traditional dresses, all gathered in one place for one purpose only. The sermon delivered by the Imam resonated well in the wake of atrocities carried out in the name of Islam: "Do not let the evil of a few put doubt in your heart. They do not speak for us." He cited examples of Prophet Mohammad(saw): "The Prophet made more peace than war. He made many peace treaties. He did not seek revenge, rather he decided to forgive. He was a peace monger." The Imam offered good advice: "Do not lose heart or self-esteem in your faith. We do not follow ISIS – they do not follow Islam."

The Mayor and his Chief of Staff spent three hours with the Muslim Community. They enjoyed meeting with people of various cultures, enjoyed the traditional cuisine and were apparently delighted to see so many cultures in their traditional garbs. He offered to fill an open 'Heath Director' position from the Muslim Community.



Khalid Sadozai, President of ISGW on Laurel Street, told the Mayor, "When we were building this center, we were wondering why we need such a big place. The overflow of today's event observe the holiday at the other original Islamic center."

Muslims from all over the World go to Mecca (Saudi Arabia) to fulfill the fifth pillar of Islam: To Perform Hajj. The Hajj commemorates the tradition of Hazrat Ibrahim (Abraham) and his son Ishmael who build the Ka'aba - the House of Allah in Mecca. Since then millions

of Muslims go around (tawaf) the Ka'aba 7 times as part of the rituals of Hajj. An animal is sacrificed in the name of Allah as part of the rituals.

The meat is distributed among the poor and needy families in Mecca. However, at the same time Muslims worldwide perform similar sacrifices and distribute 1/3rd of the meat to the poor and needy.

Allah says (of the sacrifice) in the Qur'an: "It is neither their flesh nor their blood that reaches Allah; it is your piety that reaches Him." (Qur'an 22:37)

CAIR-CA Publishes 2014 Voter Guide

The four offices of the California chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-CA) have published the 2014 California Voter Guide. The voter guide is a compilation of resources to help community members vote in the 2014 mid-term elections on November 4.

The booklet consists of three main resources:

- Congressional scorecard
- California State Legislative scorecard (state scorecard)
- Statewide proposition guide

The scorecards reflect the voting performance of California representatives from Congress, and the California State Legislature. The votes of each legislator have been rated positive or negative depending on how closely their votes on relevant legislation corresponded with civil rights and social justice priorities identified by CAIR-CA.

The guide also includes CAIR-CA's recommendations on statewide ballot propositions. As a non-profit and non-partisan organization, CAIR-CA cannot advocate for specific candidates for office, but is able to endorse ballot propositions.

The voter guide is part of CAIR-CA's voter empowerment and mobilization efforts made this year. In addition to the distribution of the voter guide, CAIR-CA's efforts include organizing voter registration drives at local mosques and online through CAIR-CA's website and creating Muslims United for Solidarity and Action (Project MUSA) with the Muslim Student Associations across the West Coast (MSA West) to educate and mobilize voters in support of Proposition 47.

"Our goal with this guide and other election related projects is to empower California Muslims to not only participate in civic life, but also to make informed choices as they participate in the 2014 mid-term elections," said Haroon Manjilai, CAIR-LA's Public Affairs Coordinator. "Throughout America's history, many groups have struggled to achieve their right to vote and for some communities that struggle continues until today. We hope our voter engagement and education work will lead to greater participation from the Muslim community in the November elections."

Gala Celebration Marks OBAT's Tenth Anniversary

■ By Saima Hassan

On September 27th 2014, US based OBAT Helpers celebrated ten years of empowerment. OBAT Helpers is a 501 ©(3) Indianapolis based non-profit that aims to empower displaced communities through education, health and micro-finance programs. Its immediate focus is to work for the empowerment of a destitute community known as Urdu-speaking or stranded Pakistanis who reside in makeshift camps in Bangladesh in truly despicable conditions.

In the past ten years, OBAT has made tremendous progress in empowering the camp residents. Its academic programs collectively educate nearly 4,500 students. Twenty-one thousand people enjoy clean drinking water from the tube-wells established by OBAT. The two sewing centers of OBAT teach about 150 women a year to sew clothing and earn a living by selling the clothes they stitch. The successful micro-finance program has enabled 9,000 people to earn an income from businesses initiated through loans received from the program. OBAT also has two health clinics that treat almost 10,000 camp residents every year. Hundreds of people around



Many OBAT founders, board directors and advisors were recognized, including Dr Shahid Athar, and presented with plaques

the world assist the camp dwellers through their zakat, sadka and qurbani contributions and have made these strides possible.

The organization hence had many milestones to celebrate at its ten year anniversary celebration. The event took place at the Athenaeum Theater in downtown Indianapolis and, among other things, consisted of paying tributes to donors, volunteers, partners and a musical program. The initial part of the event comprised of a silent auction gallery, signing a canvas with messages for the school children, viewing large scale photos from the camps while also enjoying food and music by DJ, Kyle Long. During the event, the attendees were entertained to musi-

cal performances by Irfan Alvi and Ranjani Datar. A birthday cake was cut on the stage. OBAT was fortunate to have guests from Texas, Seattle, Illinois and Canada attending this event.

Many OBAT founders, board directors and advisors were recognized, including Dr Shahid Athar, and presented with plaques. Mr M.M Alam and Mohammad Inamul Haque Siddiqui from Bangladesh and Ehtesham Arshad Nezami, director, Friends of Humanity from Chicago along with over 200 friends were present on the occasion. In his brief remarks, Dr Shahid Athar observed: "All praise belongs to God who inspired Mr Anwar Khan and family 10 years ago to start this proj-



ect of helping the stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh who are stateless. My congratulations to him and the board of directors as well as workers of OBAT in BD refugee camps for all their work and support. My prayers are with you. God Bless You. To the 'forgotten people' I say that world may have forgotten you but Allah has not, nor we have. You live not in refugee camps but in our hearts. You should continue to empower yourselves with education, micro financing, and your hard work. I was with you from the inception of OBAT and will continue to be with you till my last day on earth."

Many people from around the world and the US have been a part OBAT, P22

Celebrating Malala: What Pakistani-Americans Have to Say

■ By Anwar Iqbal

Malala is a Nobel Laureate at 17, the youngest ever.

The Pakistani nation has two options:

- Celebrate her success and use it to promote education, particularly for girls

Or

- Reject it as yet another Western conspiracy against Muslims.

We put these two options before a group of Pakistani-Americans in Washington and the overwhelming majority endorsed the first option.

More than 160 people, including those using the virtual space, watched this debate while 29 spoke.

The moderator opened the discussion, showing a web picture of Pakistan Army doctors treating Malala soon after the Oct. 9, 2012 assassination attempt. The fact that these doctors were members of the Pakistan Army, and not CIA operatives, should be sufficient to silence the conspiracy theorists, he argued.

He also produced the print of a tweet by the ISPR chief Major General Asim Bajwa, saying that on Friday Malala became the second Pakistani to win the prestigious award, after Dr Abdus Salam. "Except for terrorists, all Pakistanis want their children in school," Mr Bajwa wrote.

Pointing to two laptops with web cameras, the moderator said that people in other cities were also participating in this debate.

Muhammad Atif Rajput, a Washington, DC resident, underlined a sad similarity between the first Pakistani Nobel Laureate, Dr. Abdus Salaam, and Malala.

"Dr Salam couldn't stay in Pakistan. Malala can't go back to Pakistan," he said.

Zahid Ali, a Virginia-based political activist, urged Pakistan, both the nation and the government, to

see Malala as "a goodwill ambassador for a state which mostly gets negative coverage in the international media."

Haseeb Ahmad, a physician based in the Middle East, urged the Pakistanis not to lose this opportunity. "I hope this strange nation will not treat Malala the way they treated Dr Salam," he said.

Ahmad argued that even if the conspiracy theorists were right and Malala indeed was a Western agent, "then we should thank the West for sending us an agent of change because we need her."

Khalid Walid noted that now Malala will have a lot of influence around the world "whether we like it or not."

"Now, either we can benefit from it or refuse to take advantage of what she can offer. If we go against her, we will only harm ourselves, not Malala," he argued.

Ahmar Mustikhan, another political activist based in Baltimore, Maryland, argued that "as long as we continue to preach hate against those who disagree with us, people like Malala cannot return to Pakistan."

Huma Kazmi, who used the Internet to participate in the debate, lamented that some Pakistanis were criticizing Malala "out of sheer jealousy and malice." Urging them to stop doing so, she said: "Malala is not an embarrassment. She is a source of pride and inspiration for Pakistan."

Mohsen Awan of Springfield, Virginia, said that this was indeed a proud moment for Pakistan. "But why is Abdul Sattar Edhi being ignored? Does he not deserve this prize?" he asked.

Humeraa Qamar, another Internet user, declared that she simply loved Malala.

Adil Bhatti, Glasgow, UK, agreed with the suggestion that Malala was a goodwill ambassador of



Pakistan.

Mahera Rahman of Detroit, Michigan, noted that Malala challenged a particular mindset and has had a global impact. "Edhi sahib has done what no one else could do in Pakistan but his impact was on Pakistan alone, not worldwide," she said. "About time for Pakistanis to be a wee bit grateful."

Ghulam Mustafa, another Washington DC, resident, said that people's love for Edhi sahib should not prevent them from celebrating Malala's success and from recognizing Dr. Salam.

Rashda Qadeer, also a DC resident, said that Edhi sahib could have had a greater impact if the West had recognized him too. She also urged Pakistanis not to ignore Mr Edhi's "great humanitarian efforts while cheering Malala."

Zahid Ali, a Kuwait resident, pointed out that no one in Pakistan ever ignored Edhi sahib. "I have seen him getting more respect than the prime minister," he said.

Another participant, Aadam Zaad, observed that "some people use Edhi sahib as an excuse to attack

Malala."

"Let's not make it an Edhi versus Malala dispute," said Khadim Alvi. "We must respect both."

Mohsen Awan agreed. "I'm not comparing one with the other. Both have great accomplishments."

Neelum Ahmad Basheer, a famous Urdu short story writer who was visiting Washington, said: "Malala is a winner while those who attacked her are losers. And they know it too."

Syed Muhammad Ali, another online participant, said Malala symbolized "the hope our nation has in its bright future and the great potential of our youth, which shows its great resilience against great odds and great ignorance."

Faqir Naqvi of Springfield, Virginia, said that the entire nation should be proud of Malala.

Azra Majeed of Toronto, Canada, said she was proud of Malala. "May God bless her and give Pakistan more Malalas and more Dr Salams."

"A global honor for Pakistan to have produced the world's youngest Nobel Peace Prize winner," said Per-

vaiz Lodhie, a California-based Pakistani businessman. "What a shame that millions of children in Pakistan never go to school and grow up in garbage dumps," he said. Mr Lodhie hoped that Malala will complete her studies, "come back to Pakistan as its Prime Minister and finally implements Article 25A of Pakistan's constitution: Education for All."

Farida Rokadia, Stamford, Connecticut, called Malala a perfect role model for Pakistani girls.

Zaheer Rana, Montreal, Quebec, said that "any innuendo or aspersions being cast by certain people is plain stupidity."

Rashid Masood Khan, Cincinnati, Ohio, asked: "How can anyone curse Malala?" It's the media that highlights such stupid statements by irresponsible and uneducated people. I have never seen any Pakistani who is not proud of her."

But another participant pointed out that "unfortunately, there are many who do criticize Malala because they were afraid of her views."

"Let us celebrate Malala's success with all praise to God for showering His Blessings on the Pakistani girl," said G. H. Qamar Baloch of Ashburn, Virginia.

"Malala, my beautiful daughter. You have so many uncles and aunts to love you. Love is being loved today," said Haider Rizvi from New York.

"And how and why should anyone compare Malala with Mr Edhi, he is another Pakistani asset. I am sure Mr Edhi and his family are celebrating this great achievement with equal fervor," said Rashid Masood Khan, a physician.

"We should all be proud of her," said Iftikhar Ifti of Portland, Oregon.

"While we celebrate this recognition, my mind keeps going back to why the incident happened in the first place? What are we doing about that?" asked Attiya Mahmood. - Courtesy Dawn

Pakistani Artist Wins Prestigious ArtPrize Award

■ By Ismail Sheikh

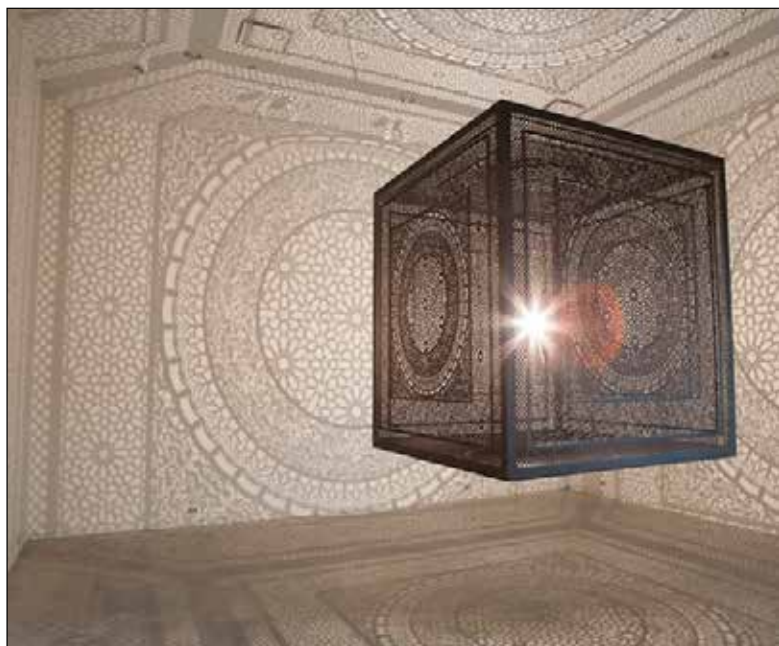
Pakistani artist Anila Quayyum Agha's 'Intersections' has won the prestigious ArtPrize award along with a whopping \$300,000 in prize money.

Agha's three-dimensional creation 'Intersections' is a laser-cut 6.5 feet cuboid made of wood in which the geometrical patterning along the lines of Islamic architecture, associated with certitude, is explored in a way that reveals its fluidity.

According to the artist, her project takes the seminal experience of exclusion as a woman from a space of community and creativity such as a Mosque and translates the complex expressions of both wonder and exclusion that have been her experience while growing up in Pakistan.

"The wooden frieze emulates a pattern from the Alhambra, which was poised at the intersection of history, culture and art and was a place where Islamic and Western discourses met and co-existed in harmony, and served as a testament to the symbiosis of difference," said Agha.

Her creation was not only awarded the Public Vote Grand Prize worth \$200,000, but was also jointly awarded the Juried Grand Prize along with Sonya Clark for her creation



'The Haircraft Project'. Clark and Agha will each be entitled to half of the \$200,000 prize money.

Commenting on Agha's creation, ArtPrize Executive Director Christian Gaines noted, "The push and pull between the popular and expert approaches to assessing art is what makes the parallel award structure so intriguing. Over the last couple of weeks we've seen this conver-

sation grow and change, showing us that it is possible to find a consensus, to find that sweet spot where popular and expert opinions coincide."

Agha was born and raised in Lahore, where she completed her BFA in Textile Arts in 1991. Currently she is working as the Associate Professor of Drawing at Herron School of Art and Design.

Aafia Siddiqui Allowed to End US Appeal



New York: A US court on Thursday allowed Dr Aafia Siddiqui to withdraw what could be the last appeal of her conviction on charges of attempted murder.

US District Judge Richard Berman in Manhattan said that Siddiqui, who is serving an 86-year sentence in a prison medical center in Texas, had 'clearly and unequivocally' stated her intent to end the appeal.

The judge ordered the case closed and said that even if the appeal had continued, he likely would have ruled against her. Siddiqui was represented at trial by an able team of five lawyers, Berman wrote. He declined to hold a hearing to question her further. In May, a new lawyer filed the appeal on Siddiqui's behalf, but in July Siddiqui wrote a letter to Berman saying she had no faith in the US legal system and refused to participate in it.

A jury convicted Siddiqui in 2010 of attempting to shoot and kill a group of FBI agents, US soldiers and interpreters who were about to interrogate her in Ghazni, Afghanistan, for alleged links to al Qaeda.

PRIDE FROM P1

Dogar. The victory of PPP candidate Dr Javed Siddiqui would also be an embarrassment, sources said.

The government was not afraid of the loss of a seat in the National Assembly. The actual worry was that the defeat of Mr Hashmi would give the impression that it was losing popular support.

"The government wanted to delay the election under the pretext of law and order situation in Multan. But as a related request has been rejected by the Punjab Election Commission, it is fully focusing on how to handle the situation," a source said.

Polling for NA-149 constituency of Multan will be held on Thursday. Independent candidates Javed Hashmi, Aamir Dogar and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) candidate Dr Javed Siddiqui are among the strongest contenders for the NA-149 seat. To ensure law and order, Rangers have been deployed at 106 sensitive polling stations.

OBAT FROM P21

of this ten-year journey of OBAT and have played a major role in reaching this milestone. OBAT hopes that with the help of more friends, it will be able to brighten the future of many more camp residents in the years to come. It invites you to join the cause and spread the word about the plight of the camp residents. More information about OBAT can be found at www.obathelpers.org.