



December, 2025

Price: US\$ 4, per copy

Annual Subscription: US \$ 48

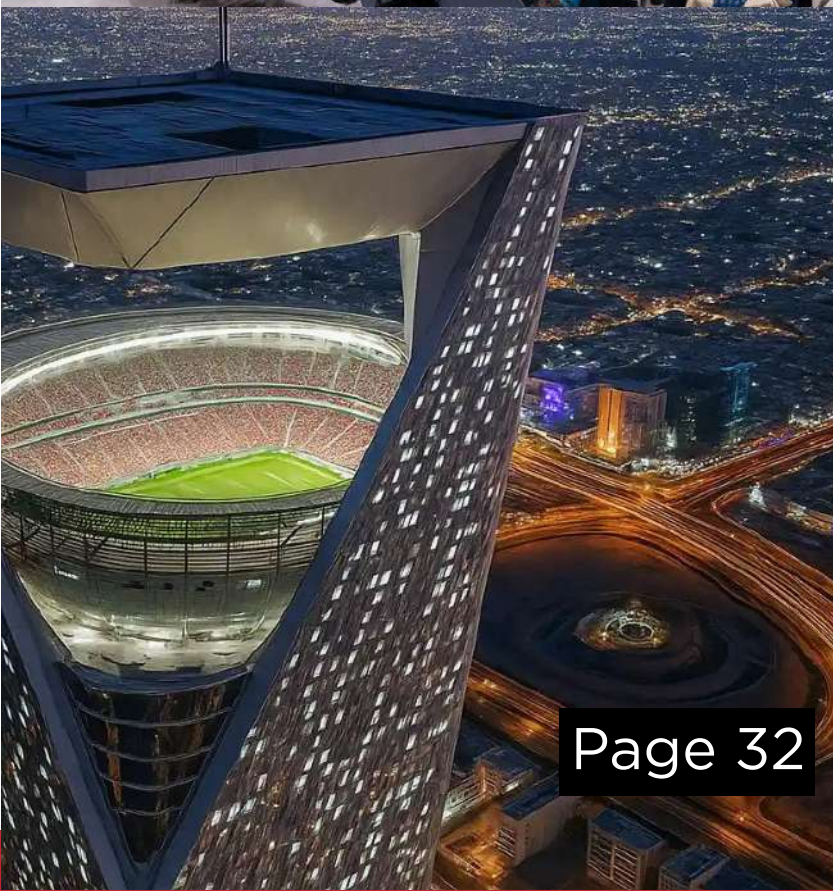
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A Magazine for Scholarly, Literary, Political, Economic and Religious *Activities*



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Editorial

Dr. Busharat Elahi Jamil - Assistant Editor



Unfortunately, the genuine character of Pakistan's constitution from 1973 has now been significantly twisted. The so-called political class and establishment have distorted the constitution for their own ends to the point where it, like the other two, is nearing the end. The military Generals like Zia and Musharaf used it and as well the SC for respective objectives to prolong their rules. On the other hand now Field Martial Asim Munir is also carrying on his predecessors' legacy of controlling the nation and national political public hegemony.

By using the political elite, the establishment distort the national solidarity and unit. As usual, a certain political elite has taken control of the nation's political and administrative structures, sacrificing public opinion and desires for their own interests. They have also supported the establishment in a particular social and political surgery. The current 27th constitutional amendment is set against the backdrop of politicians' 'YES BOSS' slogans. The vested interests of the political elite typically use such amendments in the Constitution to protect their corruption, personal political, and financial interests, allegedly at the behest of the establishment.

Apparently, those who shout corruption-free slogans are proving to be the most corrupt. Regrettably, corruption reigns everywhere in all major institutions of the Country. The judiciary, police, army and further financial system, and this corruption system are also being given legal protection through amendments and legislations. President's (Zardari) lifetime exemption is its worst example. In the current circumstances, Government's unbridled legislation will prove extremely harmful to Pakistan. A particular group has become so powerful and influential through ambiguous laws and amendments that equality, justice, the legal system, and the public's fundamental rights are vanishing throughout the nation.

The judiciary's identity and authority have been flagrantly breached by the 27th Amendment to the Constitution. Furthermore, the judiciary, which was once responsible for upholding the constitution and fundamental human rights, is now a spectacle in the hands of the powerful. However, the recent IMF investigation has revealed numerous startling facts about the nation's billion-dollar financial malfeasance. The two most corrupt institutions in Pakistan are the police and the judiciary. People are trying to flee the country because they are tired of the situation, but the FIA is illegally dumping persons at the airports, which is making people more hateful.

Sadly, neither the political elite nor their masters care about or are interested in finding solutions to the problems and challenges faced by the average person. The current state of affairs seems to indicate that the nation is about to undergo a significant revolution or shift, and that this status quo and the entire nation will be overtaken by a small push. The nation cannot afford more upheaval, thus the establishment and present leaders should respond sensibly. Respect for the desires and opinions of the general population is both the reality and the answer to today's issues.

It is tapping into a well-known colonial strategy of isolating and fragmenting an occupied population.

Since the ceasefire was announced on October 10, the division of Gaza into a so-called “green zone” under Israeli army control and a so-called “red zone”, where Palestinians have been displaced and contained, has solidified. Separating the two is the invisible “yellow line”.

The administration of United States President Donald Trump has signalled that reconstruction will be limited to the “green zone” where Israel and its allies have been working on plans for so-called “alternative safe communities”.

Although there are reports last week that these plans were dropped, colleagues in the humanitarian field have informed me that the first such community is still slated to be built in Rafah, southern Gaza and a further 10 are planned along the yellow line and into the north.

If plans for these “safe communities” proceed, they would cement a deadly fragmentation of Gaza. The purpose of creating these camps is not to provide humanitarian relief but to create zones of managed dispossession where Palestinians would be screened and vetted to enter in order to receive basic services, but would be explicitly barred from returning to the off-limits and blockaded “red zone”.

These plans represent a recycled version of what Israel has long wanted to do in Gaza. The creation of “bubbles” – an initial, telling euphemism that I first heard proposed by the Israeli authorities when I was part of coordinating humanitarian operations in Palestine as a United Nations official – was the first iteration of areas where Palestinians would be screened and would be conditioned to receive controlled assistance.

This is the grim reality of the so-called ceasefire deal in Gaza. It will not deliver peace; it will further shatter Gaza and the prospect for Palestinian sovereignty into pieces. If anything, it is a Gaza piece plan.

On Monday this week, the United Nations Security Council voted to legitimise the plan by endorsing a board of peace to manage Gaza and an international stabilisation force (ISF) to provide security. But what areas will these forces secure? There is no agreed-upon peace for these forces to keep. According to maps I have seen of the “alternative safe communities”, the ISF would be positioned along the yellow line and would secure these newly established camps.

Hamas has unsurprisingly rejected the UNSC resolution. It was obvious that its provisions were



How the US-Israeli ‘peace plan’ will partition Gaza

By Jonathan Whittall

not the outcome of a negotiated agreement. In the 20-point Trump plan, which was attached as an annex to the resolution, point 17 may now be invoked: “in the event Hamas delays or rejects this proposal, the above, including the scaled-up aid operations, will proceed in the terror-free areas handed over from the IDF [Israeli army] to the ISF”. In this way, the “alternative safe communities” may become the only enabled aid delivery centres, thereby prolonging the total blockade on Palestinians in Gaza.

The deadly logic of evacuation orders that marked the past two years and which drove Palestinians out of their homes, is now being extended into the UNSC-endorsed plan. Those who remain outside of the alternative communities, in the “red zone”, risk being labelled “Hamas supporters” and therefore ineligible for protection under Israel’s warped interpretation of international law and subject to ongoing military operations, as already seen in past days.

The fate of Palestinians in the “red zone” remains conspicuously absent from official planning. In fact, humanitarian organisations capable of saving lives are being squeezed out by an Israeli registration process designed to stifle criticism and vet staff for compliance.

The model of contained communities is not entirely new. The British created “new villages” in Malaya in the 1950s, the Americans created “strategic hamlets” in Vietnam in the 1960s, and the colonial authorities in Rhodesia (today’s Zimbabwe) created “protected villages” in the 1970s during so-called “counter-insurgency”.

Civilian populations were coerced and forced into camps where they were screened in return for aid. The plan was to diminish popular support for resistance groups who were fighting colonial rule. It failed.

In South Africa, the apartheid government created bantustans, pseudo-independent homelands designed to concentrate and control the Black population. They also failed to prevent the collapse of a settler-colonial apartheid regime.

In Gaza, the peace plan that has been imposed rather than negotiated will leave Israel’s occupation not only intact but emboldened. The UNSC has endorsed something that goes against the rulings of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the occupied Palestinian territory, essentially whitewashing a genocidal crime scene and creating a monument to impunity.

All of this unfolds during a so-called ceasefire, in which Palestinians continue to be killed for crossing invisible lines drawn by an illegal occupation.

The world might hail this phase as an end to the war, and states reluctant to sanction Israel are undoubtedly relieved to revive trade and reduce public scrutiny.

Moving beyond this dangerous status quo will require the very accountability the US and Israel have worked hard to avoid: implementing the rulings of the ICJ. While Western powers hollow out these institutions, new political coalitions are needed to demand the equal application of international law. At its most basic level, this requires the unhindered delivery of humanitarian aid to Palestinians wherever they are in the strip and Palestinian-led reconstruction that ensures Palestinians are not perpetually condemned to bare survival.

The precedent set in Gaza would not be contained within the fences of Gaza’s gated communities sealed by international forces: it would further erode the foundations of a so-called rules-based order. The only way forward is a return to the principle this entire process has so far ignored: the inalienable right of a people to determine their own future.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2025/11/22/how-the-us-israeli-peace-plan-will-partition-gaza>



Solving China-US 'existing issues' with mindset of creating 'additional gains': Global Times editorial

By Global Times

In recent days, China and the US have successively issued announcements, stating that based on the consensus reached during economic, trade talks in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, both will adjust relevant economic and trade measures. Over the past more than nine months, China-US relations have experienced ups and downs, prompting many to consider whether the two countries can move beyond the technical back-and-forth of “you yield a step, I retreat a step,” shift from “consumptive competition” to “cooperative growth,” and turn their attention from rivalry over existing resources to creating additional gains. Clearly, the answer is yes. China’s development and revitalization are fully compatible with “making America great again,” and the two countries can indeed achieve mutual success and shared prosperity.

For economic powers of the scale of China and the US, it is difficult to secure one’s own security by weakening the other, and impossible to gain lasting advantage by arbitrarily fragmenting markets. International trade theory shows that deep division of labor and complementarities between major powers are key to enhancing global welfare and improving economic efficiency. Currently, China-US bilateral trade volume accounts for about one-fifth of global trade. When bilateral trade has reached such an enormous scale, simply discussing adjustments to existing stocks is clearly insufficient to sustain the future development of the relationship.

Creating additional gains, exploring new areas of cooperation, innovating cooperation models, and expanding the overall “cake” are the indispensable paths for steady and long-term development of China-US economic and trade relations.

China has a complete manufacturing system, a rapidly growing middle-income population, a super-sized market, and abundant talent resources, and is committed to developing new quality productive forces. During the 15th Five-Year Plan period (2026-2030), strategic emerging industry clusters such as new energy, new materials, aerospace, and the low-altitude economy are expected to generate markets worth trillions of yuan or even more. The US, meanwhile, possesses strong technological innovation capabilities, a world-class consumer market, and a leading digital technology ecosystem, offering immense complementary potential with China in cutting-edge fields such as artificial intelligence and the digital economy. If viewing the China-US industrial chain relationship

from a collaborative perspective focused on improving efficiency across the entire chain, instead of from the competitive perspective of “who replaces whom,” it is entirely possible to create space for incremental cooperation in many more areas.

China is comprehensively advancing high-standard opening-up, aligning with international high-standard economic and trade rules, expanding space for two-way investment cooperation, and further upgrading and expanding its free trade zone network, providing broader opportunities for US companies. The US should also uphold the principle of reciprocal openness and create a fair, just, and non-discriminatory business environment for Chinese enterprises, which is equally in America’s long-term interest. In this process, constructive dialogue between China and the US on issues such as intellectual property protection, coordination of technical standards, and cross-border data flows will further remove barriers to cooperation.

Solving existing issues with mindset of creating additional gains not only marks a shift from “competing for the existing world” to a mindset of “jointly creating a new world,” but also a transformation from a power-oriented view to a responsibility-oriented one. Competition centered on existing resources focuses on who dominates and who suppresses, with a logic based on power distribution and control. This is essentially a zero-sum game, which will inevitably result to a lose-lose situation and ultimately be unsustainable. In contrast, relations centered on incremental growth emphasize who solves more problems and who offers more solutions, guided by a logic of shared responsibility and the provision of global public goods. Such a relationship not only will benefit both sides, but is also sustainable.

This shift in thinking will fundamentally change the fate of major countries rising and falling, which has long been seen as inevitably bound to conflict and war. It opens a new path for major countries to coexist based on win-win growth.

The world economy stands at a critical moment of difficult recovery. If nations remain fixated on zero-sum “competition on existing resources” of who gaining more, vying for a slightly larger market share or industrial layout as a zero-sum game of “your gain is my loss”, the fragile recovery will only be impacted by repeated policy shocks. From AI, quantum information, and deep-sea and deep-space exploration to climate change, biosecurity, and aging governance, these frontier fields that concern humanity’s future all share characteristics of high investment, high risk, and long cycles. To promote its development, no single country can bear the cost or build sufficiently broad applications and shared rules on its own. Research institutions, universities, and enterprises from China and the US can, within safe boundaries, establish more joint laboratories and R&D centers to jointly tackle major scientific challenges that humanity faces, transforming growth drivers from traditional factor inputs toward “intangible capital” centered on knowledge and innovation, and jointly exploring these “infinite frontiers.”

Over the past half century, despite ups and downs, China-US relations have continued to overcome difficulties and move forward, demonstrating their resilience and internal momentum. Looking ahead, only by viewing each other with a broader perspective, handling differences with greater maturity, and planning cooperation with a longer-term vision can the two countries get rid of “mutual depletion” and move toward “shared growth,” delivering tangible new gains for both their peoples and the world economy.

Source:<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202511/1347581.shtml>

The UN Security Council Endorses Trump's Gaza Peace Plan



By Ramesh Thakur

On 29 September, President Donald Trump announced an audacious 20-point Gaza peace plan. I cautioned earlier that there were many potholes to be navigated on the pathway to Middle East peace. One of these was the unilateralism of the plan that had been devised completely outside the UN framework.

On Monday, that particular pothole was successfully navigated with the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2803 by a 13-0 vote, with China and Russia abstaining. The resolution endorses the US-backed 'Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict', welcomes the establishment of a Board of Peace (BoP), authorises the creation of a temporary International Stabilisation Force (ISF), underscores the full resumption of humanitarian aid, calls for the withdrawal of Israeli troops based on standards, milestones and timeframes linked to demilitarisation, but permits an Israeli 'security perimeter presence that will remain until Gaza is properly secure from any resurgent terror threat' (Article 7). The terms for the BoP and other authorised entities run until 31 December 2027, with the possibility of renewal and with progress reports required every six months.

The resolution marks a major diplomatic victory for the Trump administration. Yet, it has many holes, some more gaping than others. This article discusses three of them.

The most immediately obvious is the abstention by two of the five permanent members (P5). That they did not vote affirmatively records their opposition to the package and the process. That they abstained indicates that they 'read the room', in particular wide Arab and Islamic countries' support for the plan, and for political reasons chose not to kill the resolution by casting a single or double veto, thus disowning any responsibility for the outcome.

For the longer-term prospects for peace in the decades-old conflict, nevertheless, this signals deep troubles ahead. China's doubts stemmed from the lack of detail on several key points like the structure, composition and terms of reference for the BoP and the ISF, the lack of any effective UN role, the glaring invisibility of Palestine and the neglect of 'Palestinian sovereignty and ownership'. Russia's representative recalled the Security Council's 'unfortunate experience of seeing solutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – pushed through by the United States – bringing about the opposite result of what was intended', noted the departure from the cornerstone formula of the two-state solution, and warned about the risks of a peace-enforcement role for the ISF.

Second, in my October analysis, I noted that 'Israel gets almost all its demands and conditions met ... Hamas, not so much'. When the UK, Canada and Australia announced their recognition of the State of Palestine, Israel bitterly denounced it as rewarding terrorism, while Hamas welcomed it as long overdue recognition of justice for Palestinians. With Resolution 2803, by contrast, Hamas has rejected it while Israel has grudgingly acquiesced to it. Neither of the two most critical actors in the conflict will play a role in the transitional governance arrangements. Israel is troubled by the reference to 'a credible pathway to Palestinian self-determination and

statehood'. The plan is centred on US interests, objectives, and policy priorities; Israel has a loud voice but no veto in US deliberations. Is the vagueness, ambiguity and uncertainty baked into Resolution 2803, necessary to gain wide support, worth the price already paid by Israel in lives lost and global diplomatic damage?

After the horrific attacks of 7 October 2023, Israel concluded that peaceful coexistence with Palestinians was not possible without destroying Hamas as a military, political and institutional force in Gaza, its replacement with a credible governance structure for the Strip to oversee its reconstruction and appropriate provisions, backed by credible guarantees, to prevent the return of terror to Israel. Anything less would be tantamount to national suicide in due course with the elimination of Israel as the only homeland for the world's Jews. But for Hamas to agree to complete demilitarisation, disarmament, abandonment of any role in government, and surrender or exile is to commit instant suicide on all these dimensions. Hence their acceptance and partial fulfilment of the first phase of Trump's plan that called for an immediate ceasefire and hostages-prisoners swap.

No one can be surprised that Hamas has rejected Resolution 2803, insisting that it 'imposes an international guardianship mechanism on the Gaza Strip' and that its fight against Israel is legitimate resistance against armed occupation. Besides, how can calls for democracy for the Palestinians be reconciled with refusing them the choice of voting for Hamas? Even more fundamentally, how can outsiders impose any political settlement that is opposed in key parts by both the two most significant actors in the conflict?

Third, Resolution 2803 is one of the strangest Security Council resolutions I can recall. Back in the day when I was the focal point for writing one of the late Secretary-General Kofi Annan's reform reports, we tried to recommend that legacy resolutions that had passed their use-by date should perhaps no longer be endlessly cited in resolutions dealing with the issue to hand. Historic resolutions on the Israel-Palestine conflict were an obvious target and for that reason the proposal was roundly rejected by many member states as soon as it was floated. They objected to Israeli intransigence in rejecting UN demands on occupied territories and on expanding settlements, believing that the core resolutions were still vital to any eventual resolution of the underlying conflict as the framework within which a peace agreement must be negotiated and concluded.

Yet, Resolution 2803 singularly fails to recall such landmark Council resolutions as 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1860 (2009), 2334 (2016), and also General Assembly Resolution 67/19 (2012). Between them, these resolutions establish that Palestinian territory is occupied, Israel cannot lawfully acquire territory by force, a settlement must be based on Israel's withdrawal to pre-1967 lines, the UN has the primary responsibility for humanitarian aid delivery and the protection of Palestinian civilians, and Palestine is a non-member Observer State with pre-1967 borders and East Jerusalem as its capital. The legal import of all this is significant, not merely cosmetic. Instead of being grounded in international law as recognised by the United Nations, Palestinian statehood is redefined as a future aspiration, contingent and dependent on Palestinian Authority reforms to the satisfaction of the United States and Israel. Moreover, the BoP will report to the Security Council but is not subordinate to it nor bound by past UN resolutions.

Nor is there any specificity on the proposed ISF, the key contributors to it, and its powers and functions. Will it be a traditional, consensual peacekeeping force or a robust peace-enforcement entity with the mandate and arms to match? The same vagueness and ambiguity exists with respect to the BoP. Will former UK prime minister Tony Blair, widely discredited and loathed for his role in the 2003 Iraq war, find a spot on it? Hamas is on record as having called on all factions to reject Blair's involvement. Hamas official Basem Naim, while thanking Trump for his positive role in the peace deal, explained that 'Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims and maybe a lot [of] people around the world still remember his [Blair's] role in causing the killing of thousands or millions of innocent civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq.'

Thus Resolution 2803 validates and legitimises Trump's Gaza peace plan. Will this restore UN centrality in the maintenance of international peace and security? Or will it batter the UN's already damaged credibility beyond repair? Time will tell.

Source: <https://toda.org/global-outlook/2025/the-un-security-council-endorses-trumps-gaza-peace-plan.html>



Opinion: Indigenous participation is vital to success of Canada's economic shift

By Harold Calla, Calgary Herald

Canada is at an inflection point. The job facing the federal government, the provinces and the private sector is to urgently restructure Canada's economy — a need driven by new tariffs and ongoing tariff threats from the U.S., our biggest trading partner. We need to quickly become more independent, resilient and sustainable.

The challenge is huge, but the moment is also an opportunity.

The political will to unleash major development projects and leverage our natural resources for opportunities in new markets has never been stronger. It's a bold vision, full of potential. It's also a goal that cannot be realized without meaningful Indigenous participation. And Indigenous participation benefits all Canadians.

Make no mistake, Indigenous communities are open for business. We had a thriving Indigenous economy before colonization and have worked hard to gain a foothold in the mainstream economy after being separated from it by the Indian Act. Across Canada, major economic development projects are taking shape.

Respecting Indigenous rights and removing barriers to economic inclusion is not only an economic imperative but also a strategic advantage that attracts investment.

Indigenous lands are critically important to proposed major projects across industries, from natural resource development and telecommunications to transportation. Moving forward requires meaningful consultation with Indigenous Peoples, their participation, and respect for Indigenous rights that are protected in law.

Free, prior and informed consent is a legal and moral standard upheld in Canadian courts. It is also a framework for successful partnerships and building prosperity. It leads to stronger, more sustainable development outcomes.

An excellent example of what is possible is the Cedar LNG project in British Columbia. Cedar LNG leverages Canada's abundant natural gas supply and B.C.'s growing LNG infrastructure to produce Canadian LNG for overseas markets. It's the world's first Indigenous majority-owned LNG project and will have one of the cleanest environmental profiles in the world. Cedar LNG provides incredible

opportunities for both the Haisla Nation and the region.

First Nations invest the financial benefits of economic participation in our communities, our regions and Canada. Increasing opportunities for meaningful participation will create financial and employment opportunities for all Canadians — and do much to advance economic reconciliation.

I'm encouraged to see that a majority of Canadians believe we need to do more to advance reconciliation and recognize their own individual role in that process. According to the 2025 Confederation of Tomorrow survey, about seven in 10 Canadians believe individuals like themselves have a role to play in efforts to bring about reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

To achieve more successes like Cedar LNG, barriers to Indigenous participation must be removed. That includes addressing the gap in access to financing. We've seen promising moves in this direction, such as the federal government's new Indigenous Loans Guarantee Program. But there is more work to do. Eventually, we would like to see the financing that supports First Nations' equity positions come through an Indigenous-led finance organization. This would ensure that decisions are independent of the Crown and move at the speed of business.

Another challenge is that many Indigenous communities, while they are rights holders, lack experience in dealing with the proponents of major projects and don't have the resources to do the evaluation needed for them to give informed consent. As Indigenous Peoples, we need to increase our administrative capacity so we can sit at the tables making decisions around this renewed economy, and consider issues around economic participation, equity positions and project approvals.

Support for Indigenous-led capacity-building opportunities for First Nations will help projects achieve informed consent.

Indigenous inclusion is essential to a restructured Canadian economy that is more resilient, sustainable and inclusive. This vision for a renewed economy will not be realized without Indigenous participation.

The benefits of getting this right include more economic growth and better environmental stewardship. Getting it wrong means legal challenges, project delays and the continued economic marginalization of Indigenous Peoples — with all the costs that go with that.

A mine will open and a mine will close. It's in between that we can generate wealth. Let's work together to make that happen, for the benefit of all Canadians.

Source:<https://calgaryherald.com/opinion/columnists/opinion-indigenous-participation-is-vital-to-success-of-canadas-economic-shift>

Mamdani's democratic socialism is a promise of true freedom for all

By Masoud Movahed



His politics stand in stark contrast to the command economies of the past, focusing instead on fairness, affordability and human flourishing.

In an astonishing victory, 34-year-old state legislator Zohran Mamdani won New York City's mayoral election. Defeating former state Governor Andrew Cuomo, who enjoyed strong backing from US President Donald Trump and the political establishment, Mamdani became the city's first Muslim immigrant mayor and its youngest in more than a century. The democratic socialist's victory sent shock waves through national politics, emboldening progressives across the country to run and to win on agendas as unapologetically ambitious as the moment demands.

Campaigning across the city, Mamdani reached out to various social groups, including African Americans, Muslims, Jews, Hindus, East Africans and South Asians, and especially the youth, many of whom had grown politically disengaged after the Democratic Party's demoralising performance in recent years. He brought people back into the political process, mobilising voters who otherwise might have stayed home.

Running on a platform calling for a more equitable distribution of wealth through higher taxes on the super-wealthy, a more affordable and accessible housing market, a free and faster public bus system, and universal, no-cost childcare for children from six weeks to five years old, Mamdani has brought into the mainstream a political discourse centred on equity, one the nation has arguably not witnessed since Eugene V Debs, the early 20th-century socialist organiser and five-time presidential candidate who championed workers' rights and economic justice.

When asked live on television what "democratic socialist" means, Mamdani replied: "When we talk about my politics, I call myself a democratic socialist in many ways inspired by the words of Dr [Martin Luther] King [Jr] from decades ago who said, 'Call it democracy, or call it democratic socialism. There has to be a better distribution of wealth for all of God's children in this country.'"

But what, really, is “democratic socialism”? To many, the term “socialism” evokes the economic system of the former Soviet Union, characterised by inefficient allocation of resources, state control and ownership of productive assets, and political repression under a brutally totalitarian regime. Yet that is not what socialism means.

As the late Erik Olin Wright, one of the most influential sociologists of the past half-century and a pioneering scholar of class analysis in capitalism, detailed, what was practised by the Soviet Union was not socialism but “statism”, an economic system in which state incumbents control investment and production through a centralised planning apparatus. Indeed, in common parlance, most people use the term “socialism” to describe what is most accurately referred to as statism.

Over the past century, struggles for more equal alternatives to capitalism have been waged under the banner of “socialism”. Yet the term itself has long been contested, its precise meaning the subject of intense debate both within and without the academic and policy circles.

If nothing else, Karl Marx himself saw socialism as grounded in two essential principles. First, it required the democratisation of not only political life, which refers to the procedural democracy exercised in most developed countries, but also economic life, so that ordinary workers have a voice in how economic resources are distributed. Second, socialism envisioned a reduction in working hours, so that people could cultivate their creative capacities outside the workplace. Indeed, Marx’s critique of capitalism stemmed largely from his belief that it curtails “human flourishing and self-actualisation”.

Yet the socialist experiments of the 19th and 20th centuries across the world bore no resemblance to these humanistic ideals. Socialism, once seen as an economic system that would extend democracy into realms capitalism would never allow, turned into a centralised, grossly inefficient, and authoritarian state apparatus of command and control of both the economy and society. Soviet-style dictatorships rife with corruption and venality turned socialism into a vehicle for state domination rather than human liberation. With shortages, rationing, and long lines in stores, socialism came to be seen by the 1980s as a failed project of social transformation in the places where it was implemented.

So, what is “democratic socialism”?

The term is composed of two words: “democratic” and “socialism”. Democracy is fundamentally a socialist principle. Indeed, democracy is the most effective political mechanism we know for ensuring that the state serves as an agent of the people. If “democracy” is the term to signify the subordination of state power to people’s power, “socialism” is the term to signify the subordination of economic power to people’s power. In democratic socialism, control over investment and production is organised through genuinely democratic means. The central moral objective of democratic socialism is that a national economy should be organised in such a way as to serve the needs and aspirations of ordinary people, not those of elites.

Democratic socialism thus represents an attempt to reconcile the egalitarian goals of socialism with the institutions of liberal democracy. It envisions an economy where markets still allocate resources, but the ownership of productive assets and the distribution of wealth are subject to participatory and democratic decision-making. The goal is not

to abolish markets, but to make them answer to the public, to ensure that economic outcomes reflect shared values rather than private power.

It is now well understood that capitalism grants prosperity to some while consigning many others to poverty. It denies the conditions for genuine human flourishing and development from vast segments of the world's population, even within the most advanced economies. "Freedom of choice," often celebrated by capitalism's defenders as its central moral virtue, is in fact only partial. The stark inequalities of income, wealth, and opportunity that capitalism produces narrow what might be called "real freedom": the genuine ability of people to pursue their life plans and act on the choices that truly matter to them.

The promise of democratic socialism is not simply greater equality, but greater freedom. Its goal is to give all people the ability to truly shape their own lives. That's what Zohran Mamdani's platform represents. His policies, such as a rent freeze, fare-free buses and universal childcare, are not merely economic measures; they are instruments of real freedom for ordinary people. When most of one's paycheck disappears into rent, freedom is constrained. Housing stability helps people feel secure, make long-term plans, and avoid the stress of potential eviction. Housing stability is tied to human dignity. Fare-free public transit extends the freedom of mobility across the city. Free buses make mobility a right, not a privilege, and open up the physical and social space of freedom itself. And universal childcare liberates parents, especially women, from an impossible trade-off between childcare and participation in society. When the burden of childcare is shared by society, everyone gains the freedom to work, study, and engage in public life on equal terms. These policies redefine freedom not as the privilege of the few to accumulate without limit, but as the shared capacity of all to live with security, opportunity, and power over their own lives. That is the freedom democracy promises, and the one democratic socialism delivers.

Among capitalist countries today, the social democracies of the Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland) come closest to the ideals of democratic socialism. A much stronger working class, and its insistence on a firm commitment to social welfare over the narrow interests of elites, has long distinguished these nations from other varieties of capitalism. Yet in social democracies, wealth inequality remains strikingly high, despite a more even distribution of income compared to the other parts of the developed world.

Mamdani's election as mayor of New York City is a glimmer of hope that democratic processes can still serve the many rather than the few. His equity-centred platform, once dismissed as naive, won the confidence of a diverse majority yearning for justice and dignity. That victory, achieved in the face of relentless racism and Islamophobia, marks a collective triumph.

Yet elections are only beginnings. The hard work now lies ahead: translating promises into policy and hope into tangible change for a more humane and equal distribution of economic resources. The people have spoken; now it is time to deliver.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2025/11/21/mamdanis-democratic-socialism-is-a-promise-of-true-freedom-for-all>

UNICEF USA: Saving Children in Crisis Advances American Priorities | Opinion



By Patrick Quirk

At the root of historic migration flows and upticks in terrorist recruitment is a lack of support and resources for at-risk children. If we want to curb migration at our borders and limit the ability of drug cartels, terrorist organizations and armed groups to recruit at-risk youth into their ranks, we need to provide children with more access to nutrition, water, hygiene and sanitation services, education and economic opportunities in their communities of origin. On World Children's Day, let's recommit American resources and foreign aid to support children and keep them out of reach from these dangerous and destabilizing circumstances.

We can start with effective and efficient delivery of U.S. humanitarian responses to global emergencies aligned with active U.S. foreign policy priorities.

The United States recently terminated its sanctions on Syria to support the country's recovery following the fall of the Assad regime in 2024. With the Trump administration signaling its support for the interim Syrian government, the country has an unprecedented opportunity to rebuild, mitigate threats to children and unify its people. We can maximize the White House's effort in Syria by ramping up American soft power in the country—starting with foreign aid.

Organizations like UNICEF have a long history of delivering life-changing humanitarian aid to children in Syria. Even as the country spiraled into a decade-long civil war, UNICEF enhanced aid delivery and services for young people and families in Syria to meet rising demands for health care, access to clean water, nutrition, education and more. In 2024 alone, UNICEF's lifesaving programs helped 2.2 million children and women access basic health care, educated 1.8 million children and protected 560,000 children and caregivers from explosives. These efforts ultimately help reduce migration from destabilized countries like Syria, improve regional stability and prevent infectious diseases from reaching U.S. borders. Humanitarian aid is a natural complement to America's global economic enforcement and kinetic capabilities and can help protect U.S. national security interests across the Middle East.

We also can't ignore opportunities to demonstrate American soft power in Africa. Aflame in civil war, Sudan is experiencing some of the world's most widespread violence, devastation and displacement. Despite significant challenges on the ground in Sudan,

UNICEF is delivering ready-to-use therapeutic food to address severe malnutrition, supporting frontline health workers as 70 percent of hospitals in conflict-affected areas are inoperative and extending education and skills training to children who have been impacted by years of conflict.

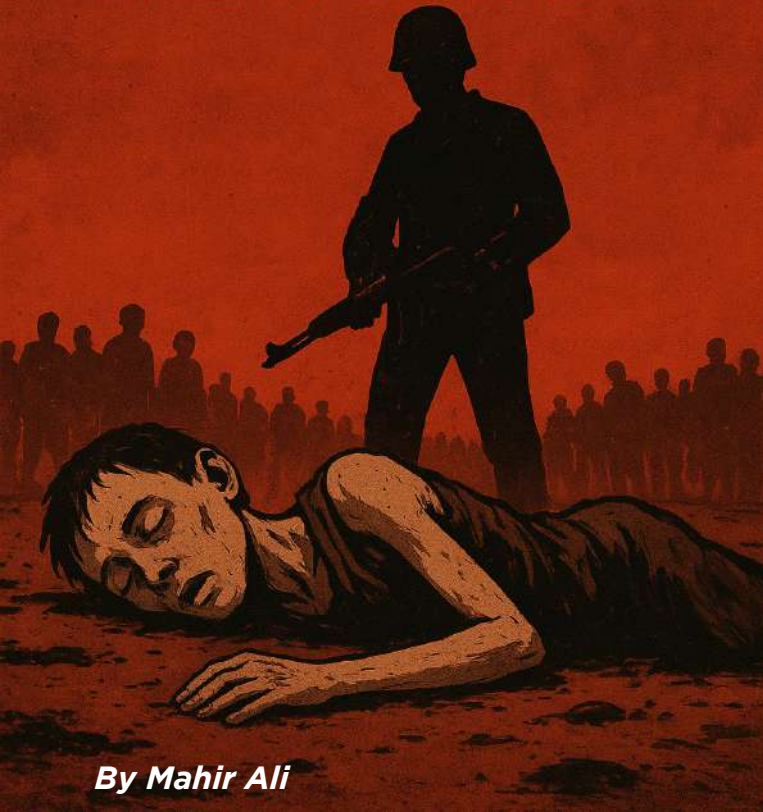
UNICEF is also in place to support surrounding African nations, like South Sudan, one of the poorest nations in the world, where systems are stretched thin from migration outflows emanating from the conflict by its northern neighbor. South Sudan has experienced severe human trafficking and the use of child soldiers by government and non-state armed groups. But UNICEF is on the ground there, working to deter the recruitment and use of children in conflict and helping former child soldiers reintegrate into their communities. UNICEF helped secure the release of 15 boys in South Sudan who were prisoners of war and forced into armed groups.

By providing medical care, counseling, education and a safe place to live, UNICEF programs and frontline workers help children reclaim their lives and futures—and most importantly, undermine the efforts of armed groups operating in Eastern Africa. UNICEF's hands-on work in Sudan and South Sudan helps reduce displacement across the region, which ultimately decreases humanitarian emergencies and refugee flows. By stabilizing communities in some of Africa's most fragile countries, UNICEF restores children's livelihoods, prevents dangerous threats from reaching American shores and advances national security interests.

Children are a key to global stability. Providing them with food, basic health care, education and programs to combat recruitment into armed groups helps limit migration, tamp down deadly diseases and mitigate conflicts from spiraling into further disorder, death and chaos. Amid ongoing debates about America's appetite for foreign aid spending, we can't forget how frontline humanitarian organizations are saving and improving the lives of vulnerable children overseas, while on the same coin delivering on a healthier and safer world for children here at home. Congress must take notice and ensure these critical programs are adequately funded.

Source:<https://www.newsweek.com/unicef-usa-saving-children-in-crisis-advances-american-priorities-opinion-11068601>

ANOTHER GENOCIDE



By Mahir Ali

THE well-publicised massacres in El-Fasher over the 10 days since the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) captured the city after a nearly year-long siege have revived international interest in the Sudanese conflict, albeit without any obvious efforts to halt the horrendous bloodshed.

Donald Trump has threatened that US forces might enter Nigeria with “guns a-blazing” to tackle “the terrorist thugs” attacking “our **CHERISHED** Christians”. Like far too many other countries on the African continent, Nigeria does indeed experience atrocities perpetrated by the likes of Boko Haram, but it’s not just Christians who are terrorised. Besides, as the US president may or (more likely) may not be aware, decades of US military involvement across Africa has failed to

substantially tackle the nefarious activities of Al Qaeda affiliates and offshoots.

The focus on a particular religion reflects the narrowness of Trump’s mentality — or perhaps his mendacity, given he never expressed any concern about the Christians lives lost, or at risk, in Gaza. And while concerns about Nigeria are all very well, it’s far from being Africa’s most concerning trouble spot. That qualification belongs to Sudan, which has been embroiled in various forms of strife pretty much since it won independence from British colonialism in 1956. But nothing in its recent past matches the level of violence it has suffered since a popular uprising toppled its military dictator seven years ago.

Omar al-Bashir had been in power since 1989 and, among other crimes, deserves to face justice for the Darfur genocide of 2003, when the state-sponsored Janjaweed militia was unleashed against the region’s non-Arab inhabitants. Under the leadership of an exceptionally vicious warlord — Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, aka Hemedti — it eventually evolved into the RSF, and initially shared power with the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) after a military coup in 2021 overthrew the semi-civilian post-Bashir arrangement that was supposedly intended to lead to some form of democracy.

All hell broke loose following a 2023 falling-out between the RSF and SAF, with

Khartoum among the targets of the former's wrath. Since then, both sides have violated human rights to varying degrees. Over the years, they have also acquired regional allies that serve as conduits for weaponry and diplomatic support.

The RSF is said to be particularly reliant on the UAE, which has supplied weapons from sources such as the UK and China, as well as mercenaries from Colombia. The relationship stretches back to the years when the RSF sent troops to aid the Saudi-Emirati military assault against Yemen. Abu Dhabi isn't just returning the favour. Its interests include a steady flow of gold from Sudanese mines, as well as access to fertile food-growing terrains and control over Red Sea ports. The first of these is already paying dividends.

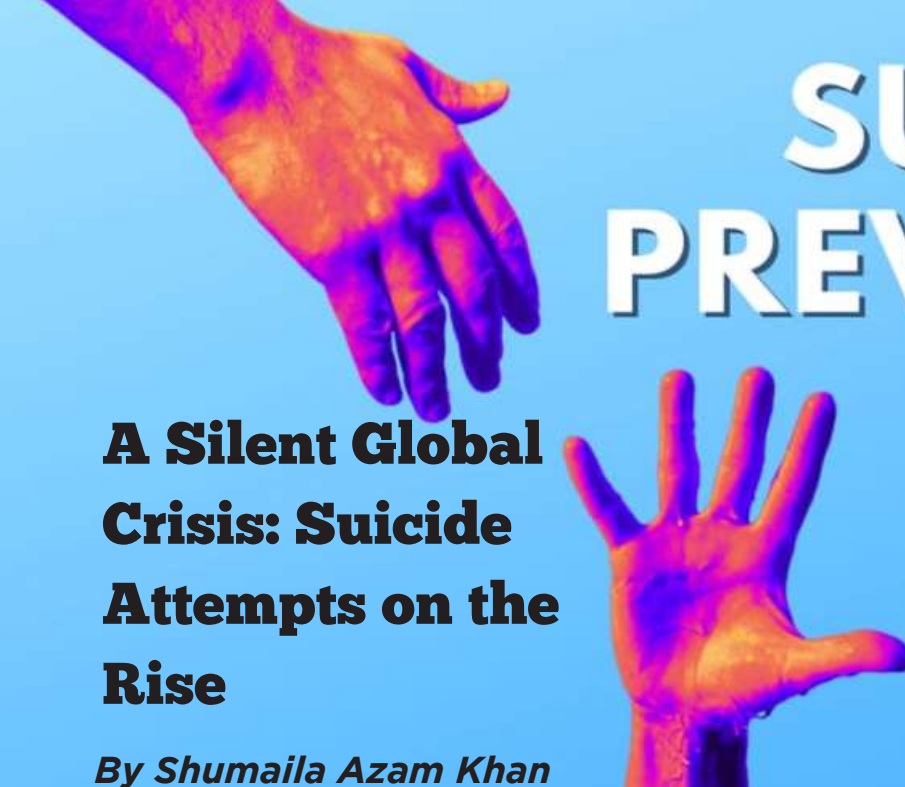
Sudan's nightmare seems endless.

The Emiratis are also reportedly acquiring ports and islands off the Yemeni coast in collaboration with Israel to enhance their regional hegemony, as well as using their clients in Libya and Somalia to support their proxies in Sudan. But, to be fair, the SAF enjoys the backing of the UAE's regional rivals such as the Saudis, Qatar, Egypt and Turkiye. China, Russia and even Ukraine would also find it hard to wash their hands clean of the compounding mess in Sudan.

One can only wonder, yet again, what the so-called international community is worth if it cannot halt genocides. The one launched in Gaza in October 2023 has at least temporarily been stalled, albeit unconvincingly, and even though the primary perpetrator clearly has other intentions. The mass killings in Sudan can only be paused, and perhaps even halted, if the chief sponsors reconsider their patronage. The sheikhs often tend to cave in if the pressure comes from an indispensable ally, although it might take more than a stern word to fully grasp that propping up Haftar or Hemedti is not in their best interests.

No one should be under any illusion, though, that persuading the UAE somehow to retract its vital backing for perhaps the vilest protagonist would serve as a panacea for Sudan. Besides, it's useful to remember that beyond the continent's third largest country, the 21st-century scramble for Africa continues apace, and neither the former colonial or neocolonial powers nor the novice would-be hegemons in the Gulf and beyond intend to relent anytime soon. In Gaza and far beyond, the victims don't count for much. Whether the future can be any different from the present and past remains to be seen.

Source:<https://www.dawn.com/news/1953269/another-genocide>



SUICIDE PREVENTION

A Silent Global Crisis: Suicide Attempts on the Rise

By Shumaila Azam Khan

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

According to World Health Organization (WHO) more than 720,000 people die by suicide annually and for each death, there are many more attempts.

There is mounting evidence—both internationally and within Pakistan that suicide attempts are rising at a deeply alarming rate. Mental-health professionals warn that this trend reflects an intensifying crisis of psychological distress, particularly among vulnerable and marginalized communities.

Globally, suicide remains a leading cause of death among young people. Declines in suicide deaths over decades do not necessarily mean fewer attempts; there are several regions and demographics where self-harm and attempts remain high. According to experts, suicide has become the 4th most common cause of death among Pakistani youth — a distressing statistic given that a large portion of the population is young.

Trends & Concerns in Pakistan

In some cases, methods of suicide are especially disturbing: reports suggest that 40% of suicides in recent years in Pakistan are due to extreme distress, and possibly reflecting lack of access to other means or a cry for help rather than intent to die.

Why Attempts Might Be Increasing

Several overlapping factors likely contribute:

Growing prevalence of mental health disorders (depression & anxiety).

Economic hardship, unemployment, poverty, and financial stress.

Social pressures — youth face academic stress, family pressures, peer pressure, and lack of opportunities.

Lack of mental-health services and stigma: in many places, there aren't enough trained professionals; people may hesitate to seek help.

Trauma, disasters, losses — in communities facing instability, displacement, environmental disasters or conflict, mental health and suicidal behaviour often spike.

Prevention & Awareness

Experts and health organizations emphasise the need for:

Better mental-health care access, psychiatric counselling and support services.

Awareness campaigns to reduce the stigma around depression and suicide, so people feel safe seeking help.

Early detection and support for people showing signs of distress, especially youth and people facing social or economic hardship.

Hold on to Hope: Trust in Allah

In today's world, many young and old are struggling silently with pain, stress, and hopelessness but there is always a light in the darkness: trust in Allah Almighty.

The Qur'an reminds us:

“Do not despair of the mercy of Allah.” (39:53)

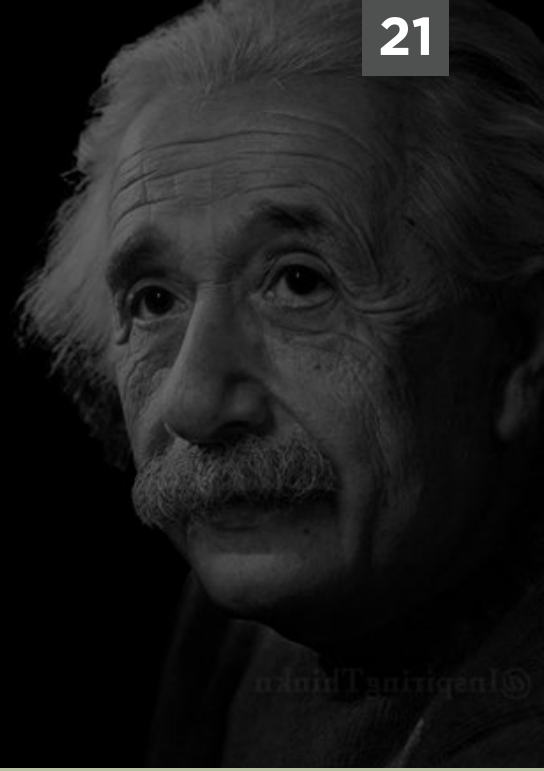
No matter how heavy life's burdens feel, Allah's mercy is greater. Every hardship is a test, not a punishment. Those who connect with Allah through prayer, remembrance, and faith find strength, patience, and hope even in the toughest moments.

Suicide ends lives permanently, yet problems are often temporary. With trust in Allah, hearts can heal, and paths forward can open. Faith gives courage where despair seeks to take over. Hope shines where darkness seems endless.

Let us support each other, speak to those who are in pain and remind ourselves and others that Allah never abandons His servants. In His mercy, there is always a way forward — a chance to breathe, to heal, and to continue.

Quote of the day by Albert Einstein:

“Logic will get you from A to Z; imagination will get you...”



Albert Einstein, one of the greatest scientific minds in history, revolutionised our understanding of the universe through his theories of relativity and quantum physics. Born in 1879 in Ulm, Germany, Einstein's genius extended far beyond mathematics and science. He was also a philosopher, a humanist, and a visionary who believed that creativity and curiosity were as vital as knowledge itself. His discoveries reshaped modern physics, but his words and ideas about imagination, learning, and life continue to inspire millions around the world.

This quote of the day - “Logic will get you from A to Z; imagination will get you everywhere,” - is widely attributed to Albert Einstein. It reflects Einstein's well-documented admiration for creativity and free thought. Throughout his life, Einstein emphasised that logic alone - though essential - was not enough to achieve groundbreaking discoveries or personal growth. He believed imagination played a vital role in innovation, problem-solving, and the advancement of humanity.

Meaning of the quote

Einstein's quote draws a beautiful contrast between logic and imagination. Logic follows established paths, it helps us navigate what is already known, from A to Z, in an orderly and structured manner. It represents the disciplined use of knowledge, rules, and facts. Imagination, on the other hand, transcends these boundaries. It allows us to dream beyond the alphabet - to envision what does not yet exist, to connect the unseen, and to create the future. Imagination invites us to explore, to wonder, and to believe in possibilities that logic may not yet comprehend. In every leap of imagination, we discover new doors opening, inviting us to explore worlds yet unimagined.

Einstein himself often said that many of his greatest ideas began as thought experiments - imaginative explorations that challenged conventional thinking. Without imagination, there would be no art, science, or progress. The quote encourages us to balance rationality with creativity, to see that true genius lies in the harmony of both. Einstein's ability to think beyond numbers and formulas gave birth to ideas that reshaped how humanity perceives reality and continues

to inspire innovation in every field today. His message reminds us that when logic meets imagination, possibilities become infinite, and even the impossible can be achieved.

These words of Einstein are to remind us that logic keeps us grounded, but imagination is what frees us. Discovery, art and innovation are all powered by imagination - it transforms knowledge into wisdom and dreams into reality. In science, education, or our daily lives, by being able to adopt imagination, we can transcend the boundaries of things and look at the world as it is, or as it would be. In doing so, we become not just thinkers but creators of our own destiny. In simple words, we can say, logic can serve to find our way in the paths of life, whereas imagination provides us with wings to reach new heights.

Einstein's philosophy serves as a powerful call to action for educators, leaders, and innovators to not only master the facts and rules of their domains but also to intentionally cultivate and value the creative and unconventional thought processes required to envision a world fundamentally different, and better, than the one we know today. His timeless insight reminds us that imagination is the heartbeat of progress - it fuels invention, nurtures dreams, and gives birth to possibilities that logic alone could never uncover. It is through imagination that humanity continues to evolve, explore, and expand the boundaries of what's possible. In every great discovery and every act of creation, we find the living proof of Einstein's belief, that imagination truly knows no limits. Einstein's words continue to echo through generations, reminding us that every great leap - whether in science, art, or life - begins first in the mind. They inspire us to dream boldly, think freely, and imagine endlessly, for it is through imagination that we shape not just ideas, but the very future of humanity itself.

Einstein's wisdom teaches us that imagination is not just a gift, but a responsibility; to envision, create, and contribute to a better world. He also reminds us that imagination is the spark that turns ordinary minds into extraordinary forces.

Einstein's timeless quote continues to inspire dreamers, thinkers, and innovators everywhere. It reminds us that while logic builds the foundation of knowledge, imagination drives discovery. In every breakthrough or creative act, it's imagination that opens the door to progress and possibility - pushing humanity toward a brighter, limitless future. His words serve as a guiding light for generations to come, encouraging each of us to think beyond boundaries, dream without fear, and create a world shaped by vision, curiosity, and endless imagination. In the end, Einstein's reminder is simple yet powerful; nurture your imagination, for it is the force that turns today's questions into tomorrow's extraordinary realities.

Source:https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/books/quote-of-the-day-by-albert-einstein-logic-will-get-you-from-a-to-z-imagination-will-get-you/amp_articleshow/125014637.cms

A Living Example, A Quiet Hero, A Guide

Today, as my father-in-law turns 87, I find myself reflecting not only on his long and remarkable life, but on the lessons he has quietly planted in my heart. He has never been a man of many words, yet every action, every gesture, and every small kindness carries more weight than the loudest speeches. In him, I have found a mentor, a friend, and a soul whose simplicity and grace have shaped our entire family.

Earlier this year, I had the extraordinary blessing of traveling with him for about 30 days — through Islamabad, Lahore, Rabwah, Qadian, Amritsar, Delhi, Rampur, and Hyderabad. This was not just a journey across cities; it was a journey through time, history, family, and the deepest corners of his heart. We talked about everything — faith, life, family, relationships, elders, community, politics, childhood, and his cousins and daughters, whom he is proud of yet never boastful about, especially knowing many of his other relatives did not have the same opportunities or role models. That trip changed me.

In Islamabad, he reunited with nine cousins — meeting several after forty years. I watched the warmth with which he embraced them, the softness in his voice, and the joy in their eyes. They reminisced fondly about their childhood, and I realized something profound: **staying connected with family is not a chore — it is an act of love**. He taught me that showing up matters, even after decades.

In Rabwah, his teenage home, he guided me through the narrow lanes where he once lived with nine siblings under the modest

A Tribute to My Father-in-Law on His 87th Birthday



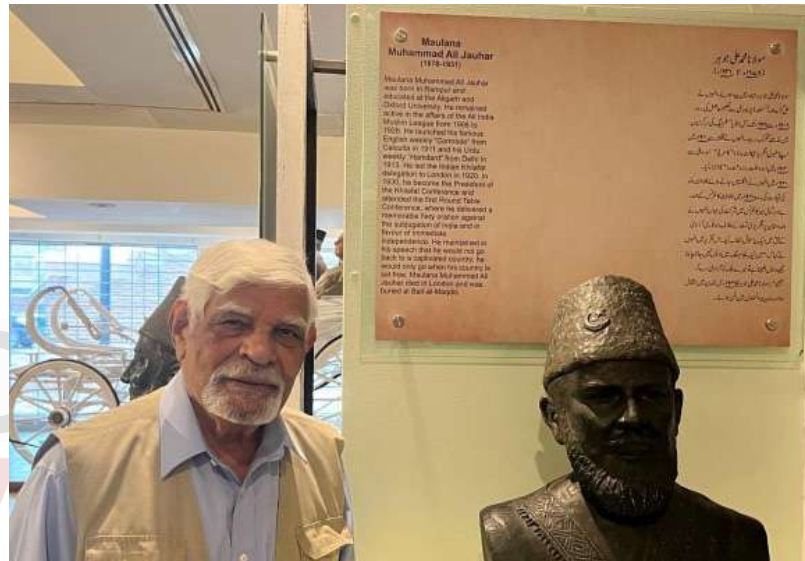
By Shukoore Ahmed



income of his father. He spoke not of hardship, but of happiness. Their tiny home was filled with laughter, unity, and contentment. As I listened to him, I understood: **happiness has nothing to do with the size of a house — it comes from the heart that beats inside it.**

I saw this spirit again in Kalim Uncle's home — a small three-bedroom house with one bathroom and four daughters, yet overflowing with warmth. He welcomed me without hesitation, making me the seventh person staying there for a month. Nabeela followed the same spirit she inherited from her parents, opening our home in the same way, without a single complaint. Another lesson: **hospitality is not about space — it is about spirit.**

In Qadian, a place sacred to our family, he searched tirelessly for his paternal grandmother's resting place. When we finally found it, I saw a quiet fulfillment in his eyes — the fulfillment of honoring one's elders. He is one of the few people I have seen who has invested months, even years, into preserving his ancestral history. He completed his father's wishes by compiling his paternal grandfather's collection of books — twice — with dedication and reverence. He also completed his father's biography, which will be printed soon.



This deeply inspired me. I began compiling the history of my grandparents and my parents' siblings, fulfilling a long-held wish of my own father, who had left behind a small manuscript about his mother. My father-in-law **taught me that remembering your roots is an act of gratitude.**

In Amritsar, we spent an entire day in the Partition Museum. He spoke softly but powerfully about those tragic days — families torn apart, hopes lost, sacrifices made. He connected the dots of our history in a way I had never heard before, including the struggles of those who traveled from South India to Punjab during those turbulent years.

In Rampur, the hometown of his grandfather, Maulana Zulfiqar Ali Khan, I received an unexpected masterclass on my own great-grandfather's sacrifices for India's independence. There is something humbling about learning your history from someone who lived close enough to feel its heartbeat. We offered prayers in the mosque built by his grandfather's family and met one of the remaining family members while recording some of the oral history.

In Hyderabad, we visited his sister — the mother of fourteen children. He is the only

uncle who has visited them five times. I watched how he spoke to each child with respect, interest, and encouragement. He remembered everyone's names, their challenges, their dreams — and he made every child feel seen. **This is mentorship in its purest form: noticing people.**

He traveled with about \$6,000 on this trip and entrusted me to track the expenses. When I tallied everything, I realized he had spent over 75% of it gifting nieces, nephews, and relatives. He purchased only about \$200 worth of items for himself. That generosity was not new — he supported his father monthly for over 30 years while maintaining a modest lifestyle for himself in a smaller home with very limited personal needs.

He teaches by example that true wealth is measured not by how much you keep, but by how much you give.

Most people spend their lives searching for heroes in books, stories, and legends. But his daughters, grandchildren, and all of us who know him are blessed to have a living hero in our family — a hero who never sought credit, never demanded praise, and never asked for anything yet gave endlessly.

On his 87th birthday, we celebrate not just his years, but his character — his humility, his kindness, his dignity, his loyalty, and his deep devotion to family, faith, and bringing out the best in everyone.

May God bless him with health, peace, joy, and countless prayers from the generations he has quietly shaped.

Happy 87th Birthday to a man whose life continues to teach me what truly matters.

Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/tribute-my-father-in-law-his-87th-birthday-shukoor-ahmed-tjpac>

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A photograph showing British Bangladeshi Mansoor Ahmad, a man with glasses and a brown jacket adorned with several medals, seated at a conference table. He is looking towards the camera. To his right, two other men are seated at the same table, one using a laptop and the other looking down. The background shows a large conference hall with many other attendees seated at long tables. A sign with the word "UKRAINE" is visible on a table in the background.

British Bangladeshi Mansoor Ahmad addresses United Nations Forum on Minority Issues

Recipient of numerous national, international humanitarian prestigious awards, prizes and recognitions British Bangladeshi Mansoor Ahmad addressed at the 18th session of the United Nations Forum on Minority Issues held on November 27-28, at the Palais Des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland. He spoke on the persecution, oppression and plight of religious minorities in Bangladesh.

The two-day UN session's theme was "The Contribution of Minorities to Diverse, Resilient, and Peaceful Societies," which was served as a platform for dialogue and cooperation on minority rights.

In his address Mansoor said that minorities are fearful at the current situation in Bangladesh. Their anxieties are growing day by day. In recent years—and with alarming acceleration in 2024 and 2025—the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Bangladesh has been subjected to a sharp rise in targeted attacks, hate campaigns, and organized attempts to restrict their religious freedoms.

He said, following political instability in August 2024, extremist groups capitalized on the unrest. In Panchagarh, a mob destroyed 117 Ahmadi homes, burned the community mosque and offices, looted property, and injured at least 22 individuals, including a 16-year-old boy who later died from his injuries after months of medical treatment. Similar incidents occurred across multiple districts—Rangpur, Rajshahi, Nilphamari, Sherpur, and Dhaka—where Ahmadi mosques were set ablaze, families were displaced, and individuals faced threats and harassment. The financial losses from these coordinated

attacks are estimated at nearly 200 million taka.

Mansoor added that Khatm-e-Nubuwwat held an international conference in Dhaka on 15th November 2025 demanding that the government declare Qadianis (Ahmadiyyas) a non-Muslim minority. Speakers openly threatened that if the Qadianis are not declared non-Muslim, tougher programmes would be announced.

Mansoor drew attention to the UN forum adding that the situation calls for urgent attention. Ensuring protection of the Ahmadiyya community in Bangladesh—along with all religious minorities—is essential to safeguarding human rights, preventing sectarian escalation, and upholding Bangladesh's commitments under international law.

Mansoor Ahmad has been involved with many National & International voluntary organizations and charity groups and has voluntarily been contributing for the services of the humanity for a period of 19 years. He has been honoured with a good number Awards, Prizes and Recognitions like International Humanitarian Prize, British Empire Medal, British Citizen Award, House of Lords Award for Community, Cohesion and Integration, All England Lawn Tennis Club Recognition, British Community Honours Award for Education, Mayor's Covid-19 Award, Lord Lieutenant of Greater London Recognition, School Governor Award, Community Awards.

Mansoor Ahmad has attended many national and international forums and spoke on various humanitarian issues. He addressed United Kingdom Houses of Parliament, European Humanitarian Forum (Brussels), International Forum of Civic Participation (Moscow), Humanitarian Xchange, (London), United Nations (Geneva) etc. He also authored numerous articles published in prestigious national, international journals, magazines and daily newspapers.

Mansoor Ahmad is a lifelong devotee of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in the United Kingdom. He is a qualified accountant and has been serving as Manager, Accounts and Finance with Al Shirkatul Islamiyyah, one of the largest charities in UK.



Billion-dollar Grand Egyptian Museum opens, displaying full Tutankhamun collection for first time

Located in the shadow of the pyramids, the new museum will be the world's largest dedicated to a single civilisation, containing 50,000 artefacts.

A trove of golden treasures and antiquities detailing life in ancient Egypt will go on public display at Cairo's record-breaking new museum.

Located in the shadow of the pyramids, the Grand Egyptian Museum will be the world's largest dedicated to a single civilisation, containing 50,000 artefacts.

Monarchs, world leaders and heads of state are set to attend the grand opening ceremony, with the Egyptian presidency touting it as “an exceptional event in the history of human culture and civilisation”.

Preparations for the grand reveal at the billion-dollar museum have been shrouded in secrecy, but visitors will no doubt be keen for a glimpse of the iconic relics from the glittering tomb of boy-king Tutankhamun.

The museum, which has been open for limited visits over the past couple of years, has been closed for the last two weeks.

What's in the Grand Egyptian Museum?

Visitors will pass through a towering glass facade that echoes the nearby

pyramids to reach the atrium and the 24,000 square meters (258,000 square feet) of permanent exhibition space beyond.

From there, a grand six-storey staircase lined with ancient statues leads up to the main galleries and a view of the nearby pyramids.

The museum's 12 main galleries contain artefacts spanning from prehistoric times to the Roman era.

Two halls are dedicated to the 5,000 artefacts from the collection of King Tutankhamun, which will be displayed in its entirety for the first time since British archaeologist Howard Carter discovered it in 1922 in the southern city of Luxor.

Zahi Hawass, Egypt's most renowned archaeologist and former minister of antiquities, said the collection of Tutankhamun is the masterpiece of the museum.

"Why this museum is so important, and everyone is waiting for the opening?" he said. "Because of Tutankhamun."

Hope for tourism boost

The Egyptian government hopes the museum will draw more tourists - and the foreign currency that comes with them.

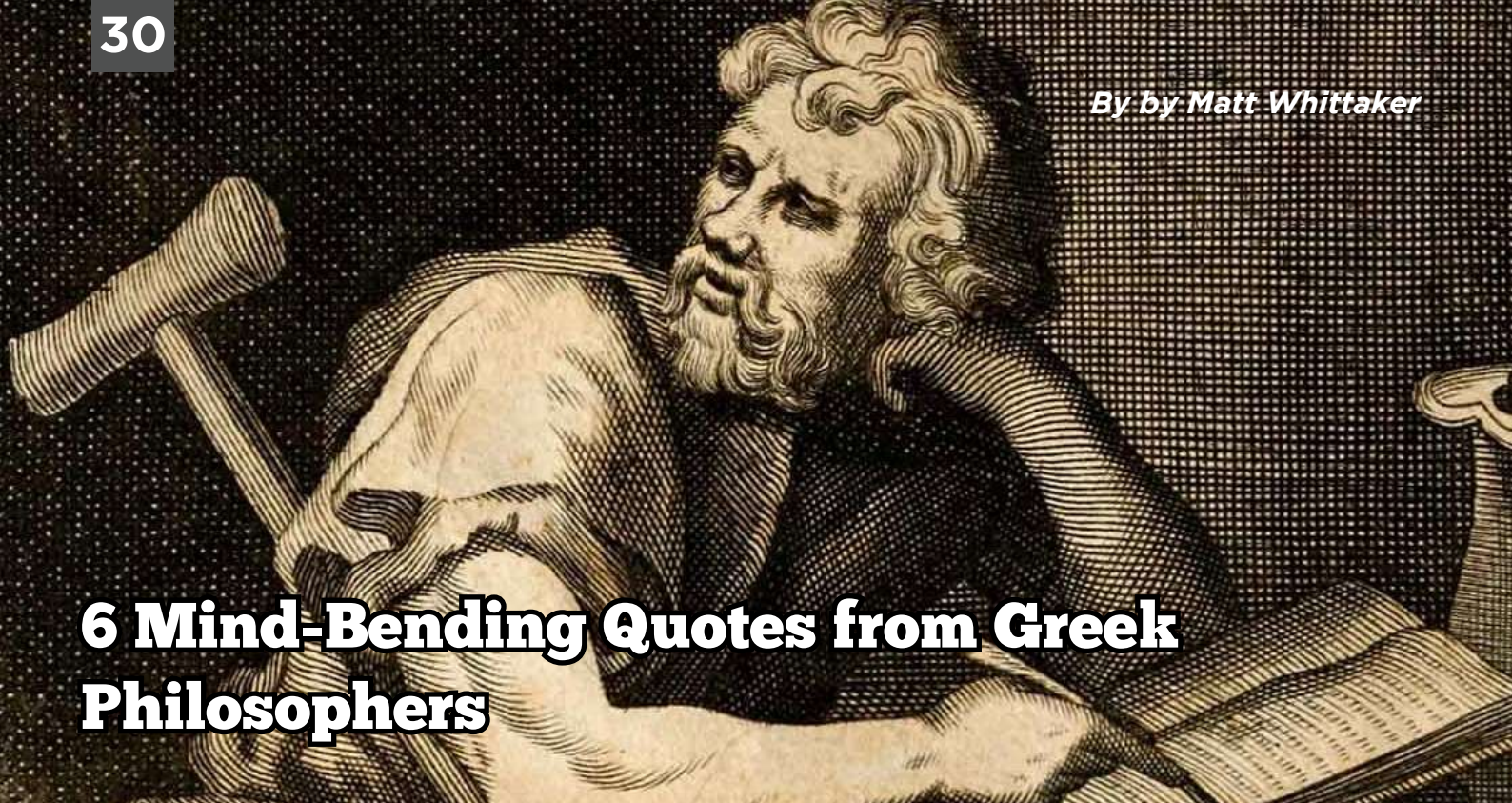
The tourism sector has suffered during years of political turmoil and violence following the 2011 Arab Spring uprising.

In recent years, the sector has started to recover from the coronavirus pandemic and the effects of Russia's war on Ukraine - both countries are major sources of tourists visiting Egypt.

By 2032, the government hopes to almost double the 15.7 million tourists who visited the country in 2024.

The museum will be open to the public from Tuesday.

Source:<https://news.sky.com/story/billion-dollar-grand-egyptian-museum-opens-displaying-full-tutankhamun-collection-for-first-time-13461640>



6 Mind-Bending Quotes from Greek Philosophers

intriguing quotes.

Much has been made of Greek philosophers. In various media, their quotes are frequently used. What made this all possible came from the early shift from myth to reason, using writing enabled the sharing of ideas, and the open spread of ideas. And some of these quotes to wrestle with are head-spinning. Please read on.

“No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it’s not the same river and he’s not the same man.” – Heraclitus

Nicknamed “The Obscure” for his inscrutable writing, Heraclitus of Ephesus (c. 475-535) in Asia Minor believed as shown in his quotes. Heraclitus believed in *panta rhei*, or “everything flows.” So, what makes his quote so mind-bending? The quote sticks to his philosophy of constant flux. Once one steps into the river, the water one touches swirls away. As for man, his awareness, thoughts, and feelings change constantly. Time can’t be stopped or returned to. The world is constantly moving, constantly changing.

“The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing.” – Socrates

Creator of the aptly named Socratic method, Socrates developed this disciplined questioning to explore ideas, spark serious thinking, and discover fundamental assumptions. Socrates lived a life of poverty. Many considered him eccentric or offensive, in opposition to Athenian standards. Put on trial for corrupting Athenian youth and impieties, city officials executed Socrates in 399 BCE.

Given Socrates’ life, why is this quote considered baffling? First, this quote is viewed as a paradox: someone knows they know nothing. This turns wisdom on its head. Despite being a challenge to one’s pride, knowing nothing opens up experiences or events as opportunities to learn.

“If there were no absurdity, there would be no wisdom.” – Antisthenes

Antisthenes (c. 445-365 BCE), an Athenian like Socrates and his student, too, later founded the Cynic philosophy movement. Sadly, he also witnessed his mentor’s execution. He, too,

earned a reputation for provocation, plainness, and wit. Antishenes pushed for a simple life; he prized deeds over words and disliked luxury.

So why is this quote perplexing? Simply because the quote flips logic around. Opposite to wisdom is absurdity-“the state or quality of being ridiculous or wildly unreasonable” (Oxford Dictionary). To Antisthenes, wisdom isn’t always apparent; nonsense is needed to expose absurdity to arrive at the truth.

***“Nothing exists except atoms and space; everything else is opinion.”
- Democritus***

A pre-Socratic scholar with a large body of work, Democritus is best remembered for his atomic theory of the universe. Born in Abdera, Democritus (c. 460 BCE to 370 BCE) wrote on various topics such as farming, philosophy, and painting. Known as the “Laughing Philosopher” due to his cheerful nature. He laughed as wisdom involved joy. So how does Democritus’s quote throw a philosophical curveball? Democritus considered only atoms and empty space to be real. Things like morality, color, taste, emotion, and more are just interpretations—one’s senses how they interpret their reaction to atoms, not the actual thing. One is forced to tackle what’s true and not perception.

“First say to yourself what would you be; and then do what you have to do.” - Epictetus

Unlike other Greek philosophers, Epictetus’s life began in slavery. He gained permission to study philosophy with Stoic thinkers, who profoundly influenced him. Upon being free, Epictetus opened a Stoic school in Greece. Physically impaired with a lame leg, possibly from birth or in childhood. He was known for his Stoic endurance. Born in Abdera, Democritus (c. 460 BCE to 370 BCE) wrote on various topics such as farming, philosophy, and painting.

With Epictetus’s quote, how does it baffle the reader? Let’s break down the quote. By reading the first part, “first say to yourself what would be be” the individual is required to intentionally choose goals and values. Or in short, don’t drift through life. The second section of the quote, “then do what you have to,” urges one to follow that vision. Epictetus believed that people acted first and then rationalized later. Such a trait can be overcome with discipline and consistency.

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” - Aristotle

As one of history’s most famous philosophers, Aristotle was a student of Plato and tutored Alexander the Great. Born in 384 BCE, this famous Greek died in 322 BCE. He believed greatness wasn’t momentary, but rather daily. This could be achieved through consistency and discipline. Why does Aristotle’s quote sound confusing millennia later? His quote is that excellence is not an event but a routine. The mind bender breaks down extraordinary and normal. These should become a habit; there are no shortcuts.

Source:<https://www.thecollector.com/quotes-from-greek-philosophers/>



Saudi Arabia's NEOM Sky Stadium Redefines the Future of Sports Architecture

By Jesse James

Saudi Arabia's ambitious vision for the future continues to take shape with the announcement of the NEOM Sky Stadium, an engineering and architectural marvel unlike anything the world has seen before. Estimated to cost \$1 billion USD, the multi-purpose venue will be suspended 350 meters—approximately 1,150 feet—above the desert floor, built directly into The Line, NEOM's ultra-modern, zero-carbon mega-city. Positioned as both a symbol of national pride and a cornerstone of the Kingdom's global sporting aspirations, the NEOM Sky Stadium represents the next frontier in sports, design, and sustainability.

A Stadium in the Sky

The NEOM Sky Stadium is not merely another world-class venue; it's an architectural reimaging of what a stadium can be. Rather than existing as a standalone complex, it will be vertically integrated into The Line—the linear urban metropolis that forms the centerpiece of Saudi Arabia's NEOM development. This placement allows the structure to seemingly float above the desert landscape, with panoramic views that stretch across the surrounding expanse.

The arena will accommodate 46,000 spectators, offering them an immersive experience where the boundary between architecture and environment blurs. From within, fans will overlook both the pitch and the futuristic urban corridors of The Line, with its mirrored exteriors reflecting the changing hues of the desert sun. The design's vertical integration maximizes space efficiency while maintaining the project's zero-carbon mandate—an essential tenet of the NEOM masterplan.

The concept challenges conventional stadium architecture by prioritizing vertical mobility and modular construction. Rather than sprawling horizontally across acres of land, the NEOM Sky Stadium will be stacked within the city's structural core, connected to high-speed transit systems that deliver fans directly into the venue. The result is a breathtaking vision of how urban planning, sustainability, and sport can coexist.

Central to Saudi Arabia's 2034 FIFA World Cup Bid

The NEOM Sky Stadium serves as one of the defining projects in Saudi Arabia's bid to host the 2034 FIFA World Cup, signaling the country's intent to merge technological innovation with global hospitality. Should the bid be successful, the stadium will play a

pivotal role in hosting key matches and international ceremonies, positioning it as both a global landmark and a showcase of Saudi ingenuity.

Beyond the tournament, the venue's purpose extends far into the future. The stadium will serve as the home ground for a forthcoming professional football club, as well as a year-round site for concerts, entertainment, and international sporting events. By embedding a fully functional arena within NEOM's infrastructure, Saudi Arabia aims to create a continuous cycle of use that transcends the traditional lifespan of major event venues.

Engineering Ambition Meets Environmental Responsibility

Sustainability sits at the core of NEOM's philosophy, and the Sky Stadium is no exception. The structure will operate entirely on renewable energy, drawing power from NEOM's integrated clean energy grid. From advanced solar harvesting to zero-emission transport systems, every aspect of the project is designed to align with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 environmental targets.

The design's integration into The Line also allows for reduced land impact and resource efficiency. Spectators will reach the venue using the city's high-speed electric transit network, eliminating the need for expansive parking zones and minimizing carbon emissions. Inside, the stadium will utilize advanced climate control systems, water recycling technologies, and adaptive lighting to maintain comfort while reducing energy consumption.

This fusion of technology and ecology represents a new standard for how major venues are conceived. The NEOM Sky Stadium will not only redefine what a stadium looks like but also how it behaves—operating as a living, breathing part of a sustainable city.

The Line: Context for a New Era of Urban Living

To understand the magnitude of the NEOM Sky Stadium, it must be viewed within the broader context of The Line. Envisioned as a city stretching 170 kilometers in length, only 200 meters wide, and rising over 500 meters tall, The Line aims to house nine million residents while functioning with zero cars, zero streets, and zero emissions.

Every element of The Line, including the Sky Stadium, is interconnected through vertical layers of living, work, and leisure spaces. The city's mirrored façades reflect both innovation and minimal environmental disruption. Within this framework, the stadium becomes more than a sporting venue—it becomes a cultural anchor for an entire ecosystem built on sustainability, connectivity, and advanced living technologies.

By embedding the arena within The Line, Saudi Arabia reimagines not just the future of sports infrastructure but of community engagement itself. Attending a match or concert becomes an integrated part of daily life, seamlessly accessed through vertical elevators and high-speed pods.

A Global Hub for Entertainment and Culture

The NEOM Sky Stadium is designed to transcend traditional boundaries of sport. While football will remain its primary focus, the space will double as a global stage for music, arts, and large-scale events. The combination of its elevation, renewable energy systems, and panoramic architecture creates a venue that is both visually iconic and experientially unmatched.

Its multi-functional design will allow rapid reconfiguration for diverse events, from esports tournaments and film festivals to world-class concerts. This adaptability aligns with

NEOM's broader mission to create dynamic cultural and entertainment hubs that cater to both residents and global visitors.

A Vision Anchored in the Future

Construction of the NEOM Sky Stadium is scheduled to begin in 2027, with completion expected by 2032—well ahead of the 2034 World Cup. This timeline reflects Saudi Arabia's determination to not only meet global expectations but to surpass them.

In many ways, the Sky Stadium encapsulates the driving philosophy behind NEOM: the pursuit of innovation without compromise. It embodies the merging of architectural ambition, environmental consciousness, and technological precision, resulting in a design that points toward a future where cities themselves become living ecosystems.

While skeptics have long questioned the feasibility of NEOM's grand vision, the unveiling of the Sky Stadium reinforces that Saudi Arabia's ambitions are more than conceptual—they are materializing, one extraordinary structure at a time.

The Future of Spectacle

The NEOM Sky Stadium isn't just a structure; it's a statement. By placing sport at the intersection of design and sustainability, Saudi Arabia aims to redefine how the world experiences collective moments. From its suspended vantage point above the desert to its carbon-neutral operation, the stadium is both a technological marvel and a cultural emblem for a country reshaping its global narrative.

As the world turns its attention toward 2034, the NEOM Sky Stadium promises to serve as a lasting symbol of what's possible when imagination and engineering collide. It's not just the future of sports architecture—it's the future of cities themselves.

Source: <https://stupiddope.com/2025/10/saudi-arabias-neom-sky-stadium-redefines-the-future-of-sports-architecture/>

IMPORTANT NOTICE

We are truly grateful to our esteemed readers for their continued interest in **The Global Voice** and **Aabgeenei Magazines** through which we have been able to fulfil our vision of promoting understanding of different sections of society through our informative articles. This has been a non profit organisation running without any financial help from others. We would be very grateful for any monetary contribution you can provide on a monthly basis so we can continue bringing you true and unbiased journalism.

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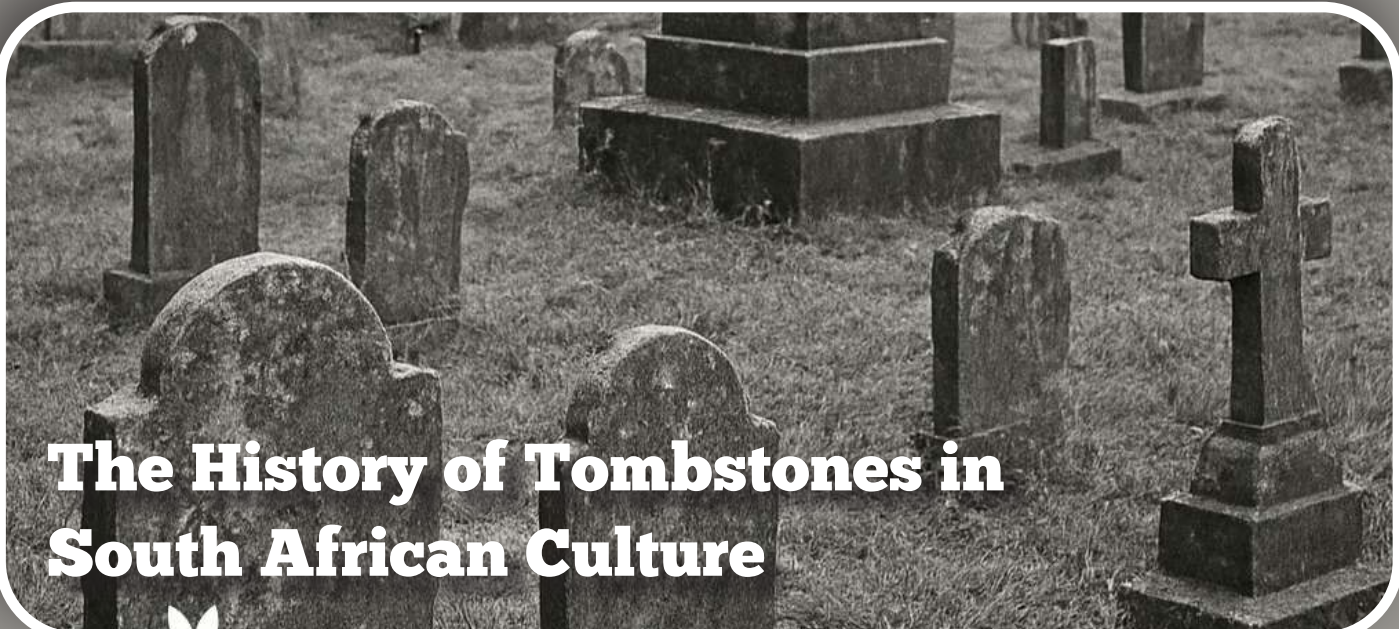
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The History of Tombstones in South African Culture

The history of tombstones in South African culture reflects a deep respect for remembrance. At Mankweng Tombstones, based in Pretoria with branches across South Africa, we craft affordable tombstones delivered nationwide and beyond. Known for quality and compassion, we help families honor loved ones. This article explores the roots of tombstones in South Africa and offers tips for choosing a meaningful memorial.

Roots of Tombstones in South African Culture

Tombstones in South Africa began with simple markers like stones or wood, used by communities like the Zulu and Xhosa to honor the deceased. Colonial influences introduced engraved headstones, blending tradition with new styles. These memorials symbolize a connection to ancestors, a value still central today. For insights on unveiling ceremonies, see our guide on who should conduct the tombstone unveiling.

Modern Tombstone Practices

Today, tombstones in South African culture use durable materials like granite, balancing tradition and modernity. At Mankweng Tombstones, our modern tombstone designs offer personalized options, from engravings to shapes. Affordability is key, and our lay-by options make memorials accessible to all.

Tips for Choosing a Tombstone

- **Pick Durable Materials:** Granite withstands South Africa's weather.
- **Personalize Simply:** Add a meaningful quote or symbol.
- **Plan for Upkeep:** Choose low-maintenance designs.
- **Stay Within Budget:** Opt for affordable tombstones with trusted providers.

Why Mankweng Tombstones

Mankweng Tombstones delivers quality, affordable tombstones across South Africa and beyond. Our craftsmanship and care make us a trusted choice for families. Visit our blog for more memorial tips. Choosing a tombstone is a heartfelt way to honor a life. We're here to help you create a lasting tribute rooted in the history of tombstones in South African culture.

Source: <https://mankwengtombstones.co.za/the-history-of-tombstones-in-south-african-culture/>



Europe at a crossroads with China trade

By Daniel Williams

Does the continent follow Donald Trump's trade war against China, or join Beijing in fighting it?

In its current fight with China over trade issues, the European Union is finding that its own economic and political weaknesses put it in a disadvantage when dealing with Beijing's commercial and military juggernaut.

Formally, the EU speaks with a single voice on international commerce. In reality, each of its 27 sovereign states can make separate foreign trade deals. Regarding China, Hungary circumvents heavy protectionist tariffs on Chinese-made electric vehicles by inviting China to build an EV plant with its borders.

European politicians are also at odds with one another over whether to take a hard line on China.

EU shortcomings in defending itself have encouraged Beijing to view Europe as an alternative destination for exports that formerly would have gone to the United States, which is engaged in its own trade war with China launched by President Donald Trump.

Europe faces an array of pressures from Beijing to play the role of Beijing's New Best Friend. Some of the pressures are coercive. China is adept at fashioning retaliatory tariffs or other restrictions on European exports to discourage the EU from taking protectionist measures. European firms that wish to continue doing lucrative business with China oppose moves to engage in a US-style tit-for-tat tariff trade war.

China also employs covert means to sway European public opinion to challenge EU policies. It funds opposition politicians on the sly, publicly sanctions political voices that express wary of China's mercantile policies, organizing spy rings to gather information on EU plans and flexing destructive muscle through covert sabotage of European economic infrastructure.

Continental academic researchers say Beijing's actions are designed to wear down or warn off the EU from policies meant to redress trade imbalances favorable to China. The EU countries ran a 305 billion trade deficit with China last year.

Ivana Karaskova, who heads the China Observers in Central and Eastern, a research group based in the Czech Republic, during a recent parliamentary hearing advised the EU to “acknowledge China as an actor with an influencing agenda targeting European society and democratic processes.”

Karaskova argued that “China has a clear plan for Europe. It sees Europe as able to be influenced and tailors its influence accordingly.”

She said Chinese leader Xi Jinping has three economic and political goals vis a vis Europe:

- Keep open trade with the continent.
- Maintain access for China of advanced technologies available for sale.
- Discourage Europe from aligning itself with the United States in its ongoing trade war with Beijing.

The EU must “take steps to close the opportunities for malign actors,” she concluded.

Europeans harbor their own displeasure with Donald Trump and his “America First” trade policies, which forced the EU into negotiations to reduce its favorable trade balance with the US. That apparently encouraged China to conclude that European might join China in fighting Trump’s global use of tariffs to reduce its balance of payment deficits.

During an early July visit to Brussels, Wang Yi, China’s tough-talking Foreign Minister, tried to persuade EU leaders to join it in battling Trump and his “unilateralism and bullying.”

But the EU does not seem to regard China as a viable ally. China’s exporters dump cheaply priced products in Europe, undercutting local producers, economists say. Moreover, China’s economic, diplomatic and arms support for Russia in its war on Ukraine exclude close strategic relations, even in trade. Top EU leadership regards the war as an existential threat to the whole continent.

If China doesn’t “change on the economic imbalances, and they don’t change on their embrace of Russia” an EU official remarked in an interview with Hong Kong’s South China Morning Post newspaper, “it might be to their advantage. But it’s not to ours.”

A follow-up EU-China meeting in Beijing held in late September resolved neither issue. On trade, EU officials complained about China’s dumping its excess manufactures onto the continent. EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, the organization’s top executive, met briefly with Xi Jinping, and threatened to open a trade war. “It would be difficult for the EU to maintain its current level of openness,” she said. The Commission both manages EU domestic policy and runs its foreign relations

In a written statement, Xi said relations with the EU are at “a critical juncture” and “the right strategic choices” must be made.

For all the tough EU talk, there is doubt that Europe possesses sufficient diplomatic heft to battle China economically. Jacob Gunter, an analyst at the Mercator Institute for China Studies, a Berlin-based think tank, said China can depend on Europe’s own exporters as well as companies that operate factories in China to argue against EU retaliatory efforts.

If the EU were to launch a US-style trade conflict and moves to move industries from China, Beijing could quickly impose new tariffs or non-tariff barriers on European exports – in particular, agricultural products and beverages. Business owners and their employees in those sectors are important European voting blocs and prefer the status quo, Gunter asserted.

“China doesn’t need to have an explicit conversation with these companies ... to encourage them that they should be lobbying for a more docile European strategy in order to maintain good business operations for them in China,” Gunter told the EU parliamentary hearing. In addition, “Exports are good for jobs. Lost exports mean lost jobs.”

China’s ability to fight Trump’s global trade war provides a relevant cautionary tale. Trump placed high tariffs on Chinese goods. Beijing restricted sales of rare earth metals, which are critical components of high-technology products, and canceled orders for soybeans, of which the US is a leading supplier.

In the end, Trump reduced tariffs and China canceled its retaliation – but, unlike many countries around the world, China showed it can fight back.

To cow Europe into accepting imbalanced trade, China can also exploit Europe’s demand for goods whose production it dominates, Gunter said. He specified production batteries, solar panels and photovoltaic algorithms used to enhance solar energy tools Europe needs to replace fossil fuel usage.

“Time is a critical factor in this regard,” Gunter advised. “Not only do we see greater and greater dependency on Chinese imports, including in critical areas, but China is becoming less dependent on European technology” – leading toward a situation of “dependency imbalances” that are “very much against European interests.”

There are tactics the EU can use to enhance its negotiation position, analysts suggest. The EU ought to identify Chinese industrial needs that Europe can best supply – sophisticated machinery, for instance – and use them as leverage in negotiations. In effect, the EU would mirror China’s own trade weaponization tactics.

Europe should also encourage industries for which it’s feasible to move production out of China and transfer it to the “Global South,” that is, to countries in Central and South America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific Ocean that can serve as an economical alternative to China.

Finally, the EU should use measures it has in place to challenge China for its use of economic punishment to influence internal politics. The measures – called the anti-coercion instrument – carry punishments that include restrictions on trade and access to continental financial markets. They can be applied to any country.

The regulations date from 2021, when China banned imports from Lithuania after the Baltic state permitted Taiwan to open a diplomatic office in Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital. The legal capability has never been applied: The anti-coercion instrument has never been used.

“Europe needs to speak the language of power,” suggested Tim Ruhlge, a researcher at the EU Institute for Security Studies.

Coupled with the war in Ukraine and American pressure on Europe to increase its own armed defenses, the economic conflict with China presents Europe with big decisions to make. Perhaps clarity will arrive at year’s end, when von der Leyen is scheduled to deliver a new EU “security doctrine.”

Source: <https://asiatimes.com/2025/11/europe-at-a-crossroads-with-china-trade/>

When a human being reflects on the secret of his creation, one truth becomes evident: survival and progress depend not on individual pursuits but on collective principles. No individual, nation, or society can achieve true development unless its foundation rests on justice, fairness, love, and peace. A structure built solely on power, wealth, or authority is inherently fragile and destined to collapse. In contrast, a society founded on justice and peace not only endures but also provides generations with tranquillity, enlightenment, and spiritual fulfilment.

History testifies that justice and peace have always been the greatest necessities of life. They reveal the essence of humanity. Justice means that every individual receives their due rights and that no one is wronged. This is not confined to a particular time or culture; it is a universal obligation for all societies in every era.

The Holy Qur'an declares:

“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due, and when you judge between people, judge with justice.” (Surah An-Nisa 59)

This verse makes it clear that justice is not merely a judicial or governmental responsibility; it is a sacred duty for every individual, family, and state. Justice requires that fairness prevail in all dealings, ensuring that no one's rights are violated.

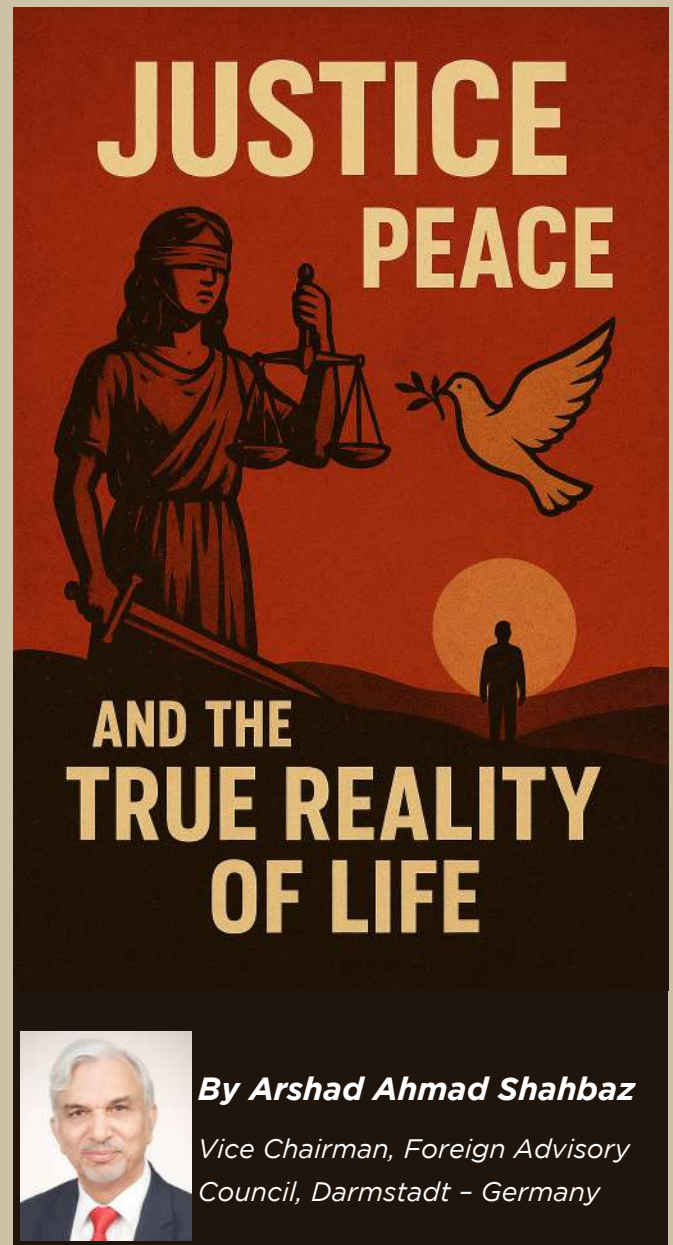
At a time when the world operated through power and tribal bias suppressed fairness, Islam laid down the foundation of justice. The Holy Prophet^(saw) proclaimed:

“Even if Fatimah, daughter of Muhammad^(saw), stole, her hand would be cut off.”

This declaration established an uncompromising standard of justice that defied the oppressive norms of ignorance.

Without justice, the concept of peace and tranquillity in life is merely a dream. Peace is a fundamental human need. Without it, worship, education, commerce, and progress lose their meaning. However, peace cannot be secured through power alone. Devoid of justice, peace is like a lamp placed upon a pile of gunpowder—temporary and fragile. True peace is attainable only through justice.

The Qur'an emphasizes:



By Arshad Ahmad Shahbaz

Vice Chairman, Foreign Advisory
Council, Darmstadt - Germany

“Repel [evil] with that which is better. Then the one between whom and you there was enmity will become as though he were a devoted friend.” (Surah Hum-Sajda 35)

This verse highlights that peace is achieved not only through justice but also through love, gentleness, and good conduct.

Today, when justice is frequently sacrificed for selfish interests, even sacred places of worship fall victim to violence. Mosques, temples, churches, and other sacred spaces connect humans to their Creator. Attacking them is, in reality, an attack on human morality and spiritual values.

The Qur'an states:

“And if it were not for Allah’s repelling some people by others, destruction would have overtaken monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in which the name of Allah is mentioned frequently.” (Surah Al-Hajj 41)

This verse establishes that God created balance among nations to protect places of worship, ensuring that humanity is not deprived of divine remembrance. All sacred spaces fall under this divine protection, as they are vital for spiritual growth. To dishonor or destroy them is to undermine the very foundations of human existence. History reminds us that when houses of worship were violated by injustice and bloodshed, civilizations faced natural calamities and societal collapse. These events underscore that peace cannot exist without justice and respect for sanctity.

For over seven decades, Gaza has been drenched in blood. Innocent children’s smiles vanish in explosions. Mothers’ arms remain empty. The blood of the innocent shakes the conscience of humanity. The scales of justice are so burdened with oppression that they have become bloodstained. The cries of Gaza’s children and the tears of mothers present humanity with an urgent question: Is humanity still alive? This tragic reality demonstrates that without justice, peace can never be established.

The life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ remains the brightest example of justice and peace. During the conquest of Makkah, he ﷺ forgave his enemies, showing that true strength lies in forgiveness and mercy. In Madinah, he ﷺ guaranteed equal rights for all faiths and safeguarded justice. The Constitution of Madinah was the first charter in history to demonstrate that peace cannot exist without justice.

Similarly, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (AS) taught:

“Establish justice and fairness in your hearts and show mercy to all humankind. This is the path that leads to God and makes the world a cradle of peace.” (Malfoozat, Vol. 1)

In Essence of Islam, it is noted:

“A true believer is one who loves justice and does not oppress even an enemy.”

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (may Allah be his helper) also stated:

“Without justice, peace cannot be established. Wherever there is no justice, there is no peace. If any nation or country wants to end wars, it must adopt justice and

equality. The teachings of the Qur'an guarantee the rights of every human being. It is our duty to implement these principles in our personal and collective lives. (Address, Capitol Hill, USA, 2012)

The modern world reflects the grim reality of a justice deficit. Powerful nations impose their will on weaker ones, exploit resources, and disregard fairness. As a result, regions across the globe suffer from war, conflict, and oppression.

Human greatness does not lie in how much power one can impose on others, but in how much support one can provide to their hearts. Oppression may appear to succeed temporarily, but history shows that oppressors never endure. Love and justice may seem fragile, yet these are the principles that withstand centuries. Justice and benevolence are essential for progress. Benevolence extends beyond justice, fostering compassion and selflessness, and building societies where every heart finds tranquillity and every home becomes a cradle of peace.

Ultimately, it is evident that justice, peace, fairness, and tranquillity are not mere ideals but the true reality of life. Justice stabilises society, peace calms hearts, love binds humanity, and sanctity of worship anchors spiritual responsibility. The only way to rescue today's world from war, hatred, and calamities is to uphold justice in decisions, fairness in conduct, love in relationships, and respect for sacred spaces. This is the light that can guide humanity out of darkness into true prosperity and enduring peace.



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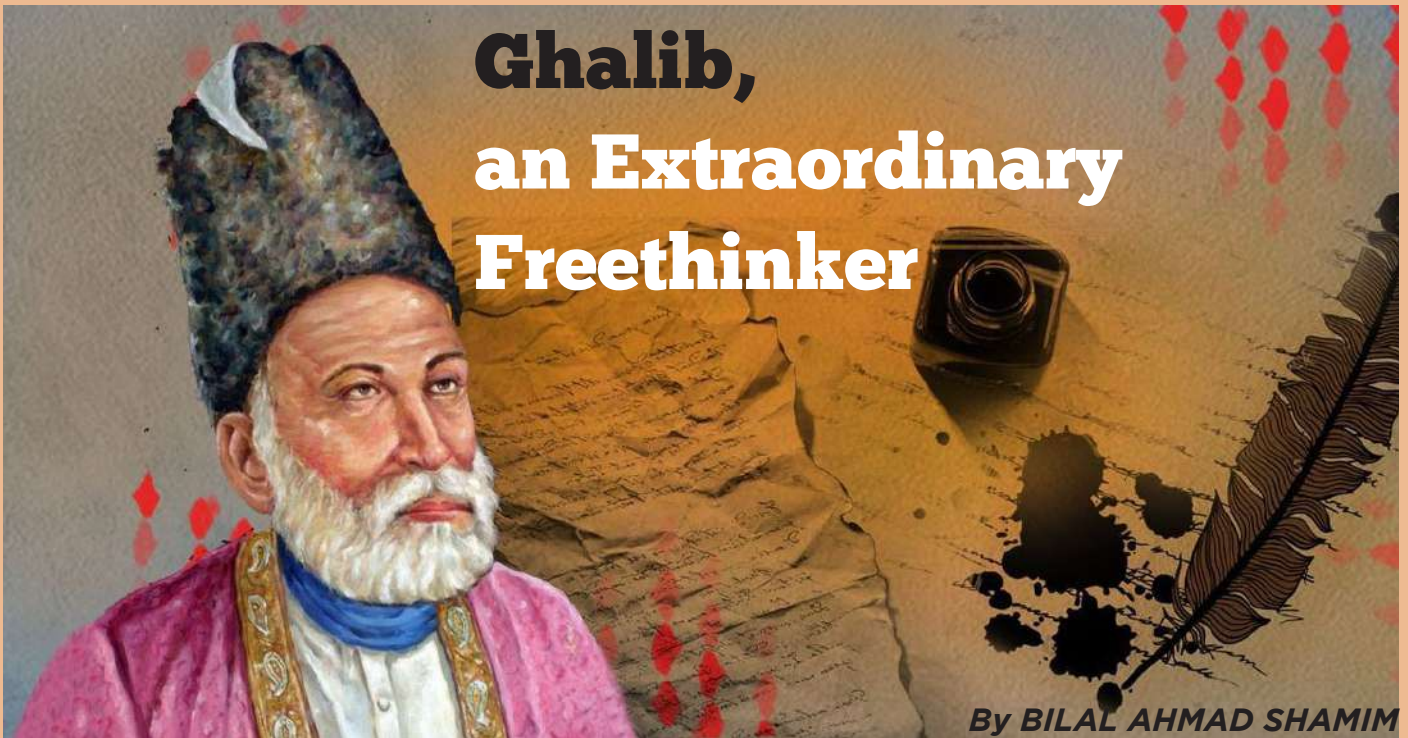
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Ghalib, an Extraordinary Freethinker



By **BILAL AHMAD SHAMIM**

Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib needs no introduction. His couplets are evocative and emotive . Countless couplets penned by Ghalib have attained proverbial status . For example,

Tum salaamat raho hazaar baras
Har baras ke hon din pachaas hazaar.

Or savour this one :

Mout ka ek din muayyan hai
Neend kyu raat bhar nahin aati.

Or take this one :

Hum ko ma'loom hai jannat ki Haqeeqat lekin,
Dil ke khush rakhne ko Ghalib ye khayaal achha hai.

These couplets are so simple in style and lucid in meaning that they render the translation redundant for anyone knowing even a smattering of Hindustani language.

Ghalib was not a stickler for religious regimen, yet he had not renounced Islam. He bibbed two or three small potations of wine at night only and never boozed.

He says:

Mai sey gharaz nishaat kis roo-siyaah ko,
Yak goonah beykhudi mujhe din raat chaahiye.

(Who on earth says I desire pleasure by wine-boozing. All I want is just a unique ecstasy day and night.)

Dr Abdul Rehman Bijnauri , a foremost literary critic remarked:

‘There are only two divine scriptures in India- one , the Vedas and the other ‘Deewan-e-Ghalib.’

Despite being a free thinker, Ghalib was fully aware of the subtleties of sin and virtue.

He perceived the frailties of man with the human eye. We can describe him in the following lines:

Na soofi bood, nay mulla, na bey taufeeQ roohani,
Faqat mee karad bar duniya nigaah ba chashm-e- insaani.

(He was neither a mystic nor a cleric, yet he was not sans the gift of spirituality. He perceived the world with the eye of a common man.) Ghalib condemned mummery in observing religious rituals and strongly deplored the hypocritical attitude of such people as observe fast just to feed themselves luxuriously at the time of Iftaar- the time of breaking fast.

He says :

Tan parvari khalq fazoon shud zi riyaaZat,
Juz garmi- e- Iftaar na daarad Ramzaan heyCh.

People have become more interested in feeding their bellies than in doing any supplications. Such people see nothing worthy in Ramadan except a strong desire to feed on the delicacies at the time of Iftaar.)

As regards the existence of Paradise, Ghalib condemned the desire for paradise just for relishing the promised luxuries and houries. He , however, believed in absolute obedience to God without the greed of being rewarded with Paradise, as is evident from this couplet.

Ta'at mein taa rahey na mai-o-angbeen ki laag,
Dozakh mein daal do koyi le kar Bahisht ko.

Someone should dump the Paradise into the Hell so that obedience to God may not be influenced by the love of being rewarded with wine and honey.)

At another place Ghalib says:

Ba soz-e- Ghalib aazaada raa-o-baak madaar,
Ba shart aan ke tuaan guft naa musalmaananish.

You may cast down the libertine and outspoken Ghalib into the fire provided you can first pronounce him a non-muslim or a non-believer.)

Asserting his self-respect, he says:

Bandagi mein bhi woh aazaadah-o- khud been hain ke hum
Ultey phir aaye dar-e-ka'ba agar wa na hua.

Even in servitude we are so headstrong

And opinionated, that finding

The gate of the Ka'ba shut

We forthwith beat a retreat.)

We, therefore, must say:'Haq maghfirat karey, aZab aazaad mard tha' (May Allah be forgiving towards him, he was an extraordinary free-thinker.)

India should leverage Hasina crisis to reset Bangladesh ties, rooted in partnership between peoples rather than personality politics

India faces a critical and historic decision regarding Bangladesh's request to extradite former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who was sentenced to death in absentia by the country's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) on October 17.

Instead of refusing the request or providing her shelter, New Delhi could use this moment to strategically recalibrate its relationship with Dhaka. This recalibration must be grounded in principle and long-term goals.

India should consider facilitating a mediated return for Hasina while also expanding its focus beyond her and the Awami League to build more durable, people-oriented ties with Bangladesh.

The gravity of the tribunal's verdict against Sheikh Hasina is undeniable. The ICT found she ordered lethal force during the 2024 student-sparked uprising, utilizing drones, helicopters and live ammunition, resulting in an estimated 1,400 deaths according to the United Nations.

Despite Dhaka's firm extradition request under their shared 2013 treaty, New Delhi has responded cautiously and diplomatically. India's reluctance is likely more than mere bureaucratic foot-dragging and suggests it has legitimate legal grounds to delay.

Crucially, the bilateral treaty contains a "political offense" exception and India's own Extradition Act permits the discretionary refusal of requests deemed politically motivated or those involving human rights risks.

Many Indian analysts view the current extradition request, and to a large extent the entire trial process, as fundamentally political. They argue that handing Hasina over would inadvertently legitimize a regime in Dhaka they see as detrimental to New Delhi's interests.

Given this complex political context, a mediated return would be the most constructive path forward. To make this possible, India should demand full transparency from Dhaka, including access to tribunal evidence and assurance that international fair-trial standards, especially for trials conducted in absentia, were rigorously met.

Extradite or not, India ought to end its Hasina dependency

By Abu Jakir



Pressing for transparency and international standards not only fulfills India's domestic legal obligations but also signals clearly to Dhaka that New Delhi is acting in the name of justice and institutional strength, not blind loyalty to a former ally.

If extradition is declined, India's refusal must be dignified and legally defensible, publicly articulating its rationale by citing treaty exceptions, potential procedural flaws, rights-to-life guarantees and concerns over political persecution.

Refusing extradition under these circumstances would not be shirking responsibility but a careful, measured use of legal safeguards. If Bangladesh remains insistent, India could propose a constructive alternative: a monitored accountability mechanism, possibly involving third parties or international observation, rather than a simple outright refusal.

Crucially, while New Delhi addresses the Hasina extradition question, it must simultaneously reshape its long-term diplomatic posture, moving away from its long-standing reliance on Hasina and her Awami League political party.

India must recognize and engage with the emergence of a "nooton Bangladesh" (new Bangladesh), a nation some analysts argue is now defined by its populace rather than dynastic politics.

The current political climate is pivotal. Hasina's overthrow and replacement by an interim government led by Muhammad Yunus, who had already articulated his intention to build a forward-looking relationship with India, underscore this shift.

With a possible election date in February next year and a return to parliamentary democracy in Bangladesh, India should begin preparing for a bilateral reset.

Focusing solely on Hasina risks trapping India in a zero-sum relationship with her Awami League, a party that may or may not return to its former dominance at the ballot box. India should instead pivot to strengthening people-to-people ties in education, trade, culture and border-region development.

By supporting civil society, youth and student networks and local governments in Bangladesh, India can build a durable foundation of trust that will endure future shifts in political power in Dhaka.

This approach could also boost India's soft-power standing in Bangladesh. By prioritizing the welfare of the Bangladeshi people over the politics of the ruling elite, New Delhi can reposition itself as a genuine partner for Bangladesh's future rather than remaining tied to its Hasina-led past.

To be sure, risks do exist. Facilitating Hasina's return could trigger a domestic backlash in Bangladesh, while refusing extradition might inflame anti-India public sentiment in Dhaka. Meanwhile, cultivating deeper societal ties will take time before yielding clear geopolitical returns.

Still, these risks are manageable and justified: They are worth taking precisely because they are grounded in a long-term strategy rather than driven by short-term political convenience.

Legally and politically, India is probably not obliged to deliver Hasina on a silver platter. But if it handles this moment wisely, India could turn the Hasina crisis into an opportunity to pivot toward more forward-looking and resilient bilateral relations, grounded not in the politics of personality but in partnership between peoples.

Source:<https://asiatimes.com/2025/11/extradite-or-not-india-ought-to-end-its-hasina-dependency/>

Is Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Conduct Strengthening the Taliban Narrative? A Constitutional and Legal Inquiry into Provincial Divergence from Federal Policy



By Hairan Momand



In contemporary Pakistan, the delicate balance between provincial autonomy and federal supremacy faces one of its most sensitive tests. The emerging political and security discourse in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) regarding Afghanistan and the interim Taliban government has sparked constitutional, legal, and strategic concerns. The central question revolves around whether a provincial government, under the pretext of political autonomy or ideological affinity, can diverge from federal foreign and security policy. More critically, whether such divergence inadvertently strengthens external non-state or quasi-state actors such as the Afghan Taliban, thereby generating possible repercussions for Pakistan's sovereignty, internal security, and federal cohesion.

The Constitution of Pakistan creates a federal parliamentary democratic system in which subjects of defense, foreign affairs, national security, and international treaties remain exclusive federal domains. Article 97 clearly states that the executive authority of the Federation extends to matters with respect to which Parliament has power to make laws. Foreign policy falls squarely under this mandate. Likewise, Article 141 and 142 establish the legislative supremacy of the Federation in matters of defense and external relations. A provincial government's attempt—whether symbolic, political, or practical—to shape or signal an alternate foreign policy regarding the Taliban presents a constitutional contradiction and raises questions of governance discipline within the federation.

Moreover, the diplomatic recognition of foreign governments rests solely with the Federation. Article 173 underscores the federal prerogative in international agreements, while Article 256 prohibits private entities or individuals from maintaining allegiance to foreign forces. While a province does not directly recognize a foreign regime, gestures normalizing political engagement or projecting support for the Taliban can be interpreted domestically and internationally as a deviation from national diplomatic direction. This is especially critical given Pakistan's complex relations with Afghanistan, the ongoing security challenges, cross-border terrorism, and the global sensitivity attached to Taliban recognition.

Critics argue that the KP political administration's public tone—empathetic posture toward the Taliban government, criticism of federal Afghan policy, and resistance to certain counter-terror directives—may embolden Afghan authorities and militant networks. When a provincial narrative indicates mistrust in federal decisions regarding security and

Afghanistan policy, it creates two consequences: it weakens Pakistan's diplomatic posture and gives non-state actors psychological leverage. Historically, insurgent groups thrive on political fractures, blurred state messaging, and competing internal centers of legitimacy.

It is imperative to differentiate between legitimate political expression and structural overreach. Political actors may critique federal decisions, but when a provincial government begins projecting itself as an alternate center of Afghan policy thought, its position transitions from political dissent into jurisdictional encroachment. Article 149 empowers the Federation to direct provinces in matters of national importance, especially those affecting peace and harmony. Should provincial conduct jeopardize national interest or violate federal policy unity, the Federation may issue legal directions. Non-compliance, in principle, could attract constitutional remedies such as Article 148(1)-(3), mandating provincial cooperation in federal affairs, or in extreme cases, Article 149 invocation or even constitutional reference under Article 184(1).

However, federal intervention must be measured, lawful, and rooted in cooperative federalism rather than coercion. Pakistan's history shows that heavy-handed federal action, especially in politically charged environments, risks deepening polarization. Yet, non-intervention in situations where a province cultivates alternate foreign policy signaling weakens the federation's coherence. Therefore, constitutional balance demands that provincial political rhetoric remains within the limits of national security discipline, while the Federation maintains an administrative and diplomatic monopoly without displaying punitive bias.

The KP-Taliban convergence debate cannot be divorced from the historical context of the Afghan conflict, Pakhtun social linkages across the border, and the ideological framing of militancy post-2001. The province has experienced immense violence and displacement due to militancy; local sentiment is thus layered, emotional, and often skeptical of policies seen as externally imposed or militarized. This context explains political sympathy narratives, yet constitutional boundaries remain non-negotiable. The federation exists precisely to provide singularity in defense and foreign posture.

The implications of a province signaling divergence on Afghanistan policy go beyond internal federative strains. International actors observe Pakistan's internal political dynamics closely. Mixed messaging not only weakens diplomatic standing but risks reinforcing narratives that Pakistan's Afghan approach is divided or inconsistent. Such perceptions can undermine counter-terror diplomacy, FATF-based compliance credibility, and strategic partnerships.

Constitutional democracies thrive on dissent, but states survive through policy unity in national security matters. Provincial political leaderships must exercise rhetorical maturity, recognizing that symbolic support for an external ideological regime—even indirectly—can create long-term security, diplomatic, and constitutional repercussions. Similarly, federal authorities must treat political differences democratically while ensuring that no province becomes a parallel signaling station on foreign engagements.

In the final analysis, Pakistan's federation is strongest when political plurality exists within constitutional bounds. The KP-Taliban discourse is a test of constitutional discipline, policy coherence, and strategic maturity. Ultimately, the state can accommodate narrative variations, but it cannot afford narrative fragmentation on core national security subjects. The path forward lies in constitutional clarity, institutional dialogue, and a shared commitment to safeguarding state integrity alongside democratic provincial autonomy.

Arshad Ahmad Shahbaz Honoured with Award for Promoting Intercultural Harmony in German Society

Wiesbaden, Germany (Special Report)

In a dignified ceremony hosted by the Ministry of Social Affairs of the German state of Hessen, renowned social worker Arshad Ahmad Shahbaz received an honorary award in recognition of his long standing, sincere and selfless services to society. The distinction was presented by the State Advisory Council for Foreign Residents of Hessen, acknowledging his remarkable contributions to social welfare and intercultural harmony.

The award ceremony took place on the evening of 20 November 2025 at the State Parliament House in Wiesbaden. It was attended by representatives of social and welfare organizations, local political figures and members of intercultural associations. The presence of prominent community activist Malik Kamran from Rüsselsheim, along with Akbar Javed and Muhammad Yaqoob both active members of the Foreigners' Advisory Board in the scientific city of Darmstadt added further prestige to the event. The atmosphere radiated warmth, sincerity and mutual respect.

When the name of Arshad Ahmad Shahbaz was announced, the auditorium resounded with enthusiastic applause, expressing deep appreciation for his exemplary service. The award certificate was handed to him by the guest of honour, Hessen's Minister for Labour, Integration, Youth and Social Affairs, Ms. Heike Hoffmann, who presented it with great respect and delight. The moment became a cherished memory for all attendees and the broader community.

Also present on stage were Ms. Katrin Hechler, State Secretary in the Hessian Ministry for Labour, Integration, Youth, and Social Affairs. and Mr. Enes Glegin, Chairman of the Central Foreigners' Advisory Council of Hessen. Their participation further enhanced the significance and splendour of the occasion.

For the past two decades Arshad Ahmad Shahbaz has served the Foreigners' Advisory Board of Darmstadt as an active member and vice chairman. With tireless dedication, he has worked to promote love, peace, mutual respect and societal harmony.

Over the years, he has launched several practical initiatives to strengthen relations among diverse nationalities and cultures. These include intercultural friendly sports tournaments such as basketball, cricket and football welfare activities, visits to senior citizens' homes, tree-planting campaigns and charity walks. He has also maintained active communication with government departments to seek guidance and support for individuals with migration backgrounds. As a result, trust, cooperation and mutual respect among various communities, seniors, youth and people from different cultural backgrounds have grown stronger.

Speaking after receiving the award, Arshad Ahmad Shahbaz said he has always strived to help migrants and people of foreign origin integrate successfully into German society. He emphasized that everyone has a role in fostering love, respect and peace, and that true societal harmony can only be achieved through continuous dialogue and cooperation among different groups and cultures.

He further stated that, for him, the award represents a continuation of humanitarian service and a renewed commitment. In his view, the real strength of any society lies in mutual trust and respect values that form the foundation of a successful, balanced and peaceful community. At the end of his remarks, he reiterated his guiding message that brings healing to humanity. "Love for all, hatred for none."

A message that inspires hope and breathes new life into a suffering world. The ceremony concluded with warm applause, heartfelt good wishes and a shared resolve to continue promoting positive and constructive social engagement.