



World Press Photo Exhibition comes to Pakistan; free public entry until 31 March

ISLAMABAD, 5 March 2018: The world-famous photojournalism exhibition – World Press Photo 2017 was inaugurated today at the Pakistan National Council of Arts in Islamabad.

The exhibition has been organised in Islamabad by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in collaboration with the World Press Photo Foundation, the Netherlands, the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Pakistan, and the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA). The objective is to promote human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the lens of photojournalism.

A total of 150 high quality photos, selected from 80,000 entries submitted by 5,000 photojournalists worldwide are showcased. The photos touch upon topics such as universal human rights, freedom of expression, women's rights, migration, climate change, nature, and sports. The exhibition also shows the prize-winning photo of Pakistani photographer Jamal Taraqai. The exhibition will be open for public from 6 March (Tuesday) and continue until 31 March. The entry is free.

Ambassador of the Netherlands, Mrs Ardi Stoios-Braken, opened the exhibition. Acting Resident Coordinator of the United Nations, Mr Hassan Mohtashami, Director General of the PNCA, Syed Jamal Shah, Curator and Exhibitions Manager at World Press Photo, Ms Babette Warendorf, and the Pakistani award-winning photojournalist Mr Jamal Taraqai also graced the opening ceremony.

The Dutch Ambassador said the promotion and protection of human rights are very important for the Netherlands. "It is important that a debate around human rights takes place in Pakistan. We proudly stand for equal rights for all, especially for women and girls, but also the freedom of religion and belief and rights of all kinds of minorities. We value freedom of expression, and stand behind the messengers of that freedom in the form of journalists, lawyers or other human rights defenders."

The Acting UN Resident Coordinator was of the view that photography is a powerful tool to create awareness and affect change. "The visual narrative created through these powerful photos gives a unique chance for viewers to understand better other people and places, and the events shaping theirs and other lives. The exhibition provides the people of Pakistan with an unprecedented opportunity to expand their knowledge and understanding about the challenges people face throughout the world and their actions to maintain dignity and maintain their rights."

Sharing her thoughts about the World Press Photo, Babette Warendorf said the best visual journalism is not just a picture but a story. "It should matter to the people to whom it speaks. It is an honor to present the photo of our first Pakistani winner Jamal Taraqai in Islamabad.

The great work in this exhibition helps us fulfill our purpose: connecting the world to the stories that matter.”

The award-winning Pakistani photographer said photojournalism is instrumental in highlighting the voices often unheard in our societies. “Images selected for the exhibition are equally inspiring for both educated and uneducated people, to think and learn about human rights. I am honored to win an award for Pakistan and I urge the government to help photojournalists in overcoming challenges and hardships they face. ”

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World Press Photo Exhibition 2017 has been shown worldwide in more than 100 cities of 45 countries. The World Press Photo Foundation was formed in 1955, when a group of Dutch photographers organized a contest to expose their work to international colleagues and exchange knowledge with them. That annual competition has since grown into one of the most prestigious awards in photojournalism and visual storytelling, the exhibition it produces is seen by four million people worldwide each year, and the World Press Photo Foundation has become much more than a contest. Freedom of expression, freedom of speech and freedom of the press are indispensable to promote human rights, and quality visual journalism is essential for the accurate and independent reporting that makes these freedoms possible.