

Media Update

11 February 2021

UNESCO

PRESS RELEASE

UNESCO and Government of Pakistan Launch Coffee Table Book *'From Landi Kotal to Wagah: Cultural Heritage Along the Grand Trunk Road'*

Islamabad: UNESCO and the Government of Pakistan launched a new joint publication titled 'From Landi Kotal to Wagah: Cultural Heritage Along the Grand Trunk Road' on February 10, 2021 at the Pakistan National Council of Arts.

The result of a collaboration of more than two years, the coffee table book explores the built and intangible heritage along the Grand Trunk Road (GT Road) in Pakistan, combining a thoroughly researched narrative with a wealth of photos that illustrate the diverse and rich panorama of this 2500-year-old historical trade road. Over the centuries, the road has been extensively travelled by traders, pilgrims and great civilizations like the Greeks, Turks and Mughals who left their marks, perpetuating the mythical status of this legendary road. The aim of the book is to foster tourism, promote awareness and ultimately protect the little known historic sites (largely non-Muslim) along the GT road that spans over 2400km from Bangladesh to Afghanistan.

The development and publication of the book was supported by the Embassy of Switzerland, the European Union and the World Bank. The author is Mr. Salman Rashid, a preeminent travel writer and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. The book is richly illustrated with photographs taken by Mr. Asad Zaidi. It is distributed in a co-publishing arrangement with Sang-E-Meel Publishers.

At the book launch, Ms. Patricia McPhillips (Country Representative and Director, UNESCO) welcomed the guests and thanked all partners for their support and contribution. She stated that, 'through this book, UNESCO hoped

to highlight the vast potential cultural development in various parts of Pakistan, and the pressing need to preserve and protect heritage sites, in order to further our shared cause of encouraging cultural pluralism and social cohesion.’

Welcoming the publication of the book, Mr. Bénédict de Cerjat (Ambassador of Switzerland) highlighted the rich and impressive cultural heritage of Pakistan. He emphasized that the Grand Trunk Road is one of Asia’s oldest and longest major roads, which has linked Central Asia to the Indian subcontinent, facilitated trade for centuries and is still used for transportation. He commended UNESCO for its valuable initiative and encouraged the guests to follow the author’s journey and discover the many fascinating places along the historical road.

In her speech, Ms. Androulla Kaminara (Ambassador of the European Union to Pakistan) emphasized: “Over the centuries, along the Grand Trunk Road not only goods but cultures, ideas, religions and languages were exchanged, leaving a permanent trace on the societies along the road today. This rich heritage is an important manifestation of cultural diversity that needs to be protected and promoted, especially for its key role in attracting tourism and boosting economic growth – which are both priorities of the Government of Pakistan.”

The author of the book Mr. Salman Rashid spoke about the many years he has spent traveling along the GT Road, and the fascinating history and culture he has experienced in his travels, which can now be shared with readers through this book.

The Chief Guest, Mr. Shafqat Mahmood (Federal Minister for the National Heritage and Culture Division) appreciated the role this book will play in fostering tourism, while also preserving the history and heritage of Pakistan for generations to come.

All partners emphasized that this unique book serves to encourage the people and government of Pakistan to protect and preserve the heritage which forms an integral part of the history of the land that is now Pakistan.

The book will be available for sale online and in major bookstores after February 10, 2021.

UNICEF-WHO

Joint Statement

In the COVID-19 vaccine race, we either win together or lose together

Joint statement by UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore and WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

NEW YORK/GENEVA, 10 February 2021 – “Of the 128 million vaccine doses administered so far, more than three quarters of those vaccinations are in just 10 countries that account for 60% of global GDP.

“As of today, almost 130 countries, with 2.5 billion people, are yet to administer a single dose.

“This self-defeating strategy will cost lives and livelihoods, give the virus further opportunity to mutate and evade vaccines and will undermine a global economic recovery.

“Today, UNICEF and WHO – partners for more than 70 years – call on leaders to look beyond their borders and employ a vaccine strategy that can actually end the pandemic and limit variants.

“Health workers have been on the frontlines of the pandemic in lower- and middle-income settings and should be protected first so they can protect us.

“COVAX participating countries are preparing to receive and use vaccines. Health workers have been trained, cold chain systems primed. What’s missing is the equitable supply of vaccines.

“To ensure that vaccine rollouts begin in all countries in the first 100 days of 2021, it is imperative that:

- Governments that have vaccinated their own health workers and populations at highest risk of severe disease share vaccines through COVAX so other countries can do the same.

- The Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, and its vaccines pillar COVAX, is fully funded so that financing and technical support is available to lower- and middle-income countries for deploying and administering vaccines. If fully funded, the ACT Accelerator could return up to US\$ 166 for every dollar invested.
- Vaccine manufacturers allocate the limited vaccine supply equitably; share safety, efficacy and manufacturing data as a priority with WHO for regulatory and policy review; step up and maximize production; and transfer technology to other manufacturers who can help scale the global supply.

“We need global leadership to scale up vaccine production and achieve vaccine equity.

“COVID-19 has shown that our fates are inextricably linked. Whether we win or lose, we will do so together.”

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Note to Editors

Dr. Tedros will be addressing the UNICEF Executive Board today at 10:00 am EST. Watch it live on <http://webtv.un.org/>

About UNICEF

UNICEF works in some of the world’s toughest places, to reach the world’s most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone. For more information about UNICEF and its work for children, visit www.unicef.org. For more information about COVID-19, visit www.unicef.org/coronavirus. Find out more about UNICEF’s work on the COVID-19 vaccines [here](#), or about UNICEF’s work on immunization [here](#).

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