

Faces of the Kalash photo exhibition continues at Satrang

ISLAMABAD: The ethnographic photo exhibition of Georg Morgenstierne's field-work in Chitral, "Faces of the Kalash", depicting the graphic picture of the cultural life of the people of Kalash dating back to 1929, was held at the Satrang Art Gallery here.

The curiosity and deep insight of the artist into the diversities of cultural life of the 1929 era Kalash is captivating as he portrays the daily life of the then people of this valley in a way as if they are roaming and making pleasantries before you live.

Every gesture and movement of the innocent looking people is painted oozing the reality of their era and one feels to be journeying with them on their highways and byways of life.

His pictures reflect the compactness of their life as well as the lingering clashes among their tacit looking passions and the hard facts of life. But reality reigns supreme portraying that they were the people of a planet of modesty and chastity,

People from different walks of life as well as officials from the diplomatic corps, the United Nations agencies and art lovers attended and liked the ethnographic photo exhibition. UNESCO and Norway together arranged the exhibition at the Satrang Art Gallery.

The five-day exhibition will continue till October 2, showcasing photographs from the Norwegian linguistics professor Morgenstierne's field-work in Chitral and the documented culture of Kalash. His photographs are being showcased for the first time in Pakistan.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, the UNESCO Representative to Pakistan, Vibeke Jensen, stressed upon the need of safeguarding the unique culture of the Kalash people. Promoting respect for cultural diversity is at the core of UNESCO's mandate and also features in the new sustainable development agenda 2030 that all UN member states have become signatories to. She said that the world would be a lot poorer without the Kalash people and along with them many other minority groups in the world if all of them were to disappear completely.

Speaking on the occasion, Tore Nedrebo, the Ambassador of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Pakistan, commended UNESCO's efforts to support the exhibition.

He said that the unique culture of the Kalash people was captured and documented by Morgenstierne, who was a language genius, and a professor of linguistics at the University of Oslo and carried out field-work from 1923 to 1971 in Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Iran.

The Norwegian Ambassador, speaking to Daily Times said that a lot of people came here to see the photographs of Kalash Valley. He pointed out that the objective of the exhibition was promoting Pakistan's unique and diverse culture. He added that these old traditions and cultures were dying now down and stressed on the need to preserve them.

Ole Reitov from Denmark, the Executive Director of Freemuse, told this scribe that he liked these photographs very much. He shared his memories regarding his visit of the Kalash region in the 1980s and said that it was a fascinating trip for him. After his visit he had broadcast four programmes on the region on the National Radio of Denmark.

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