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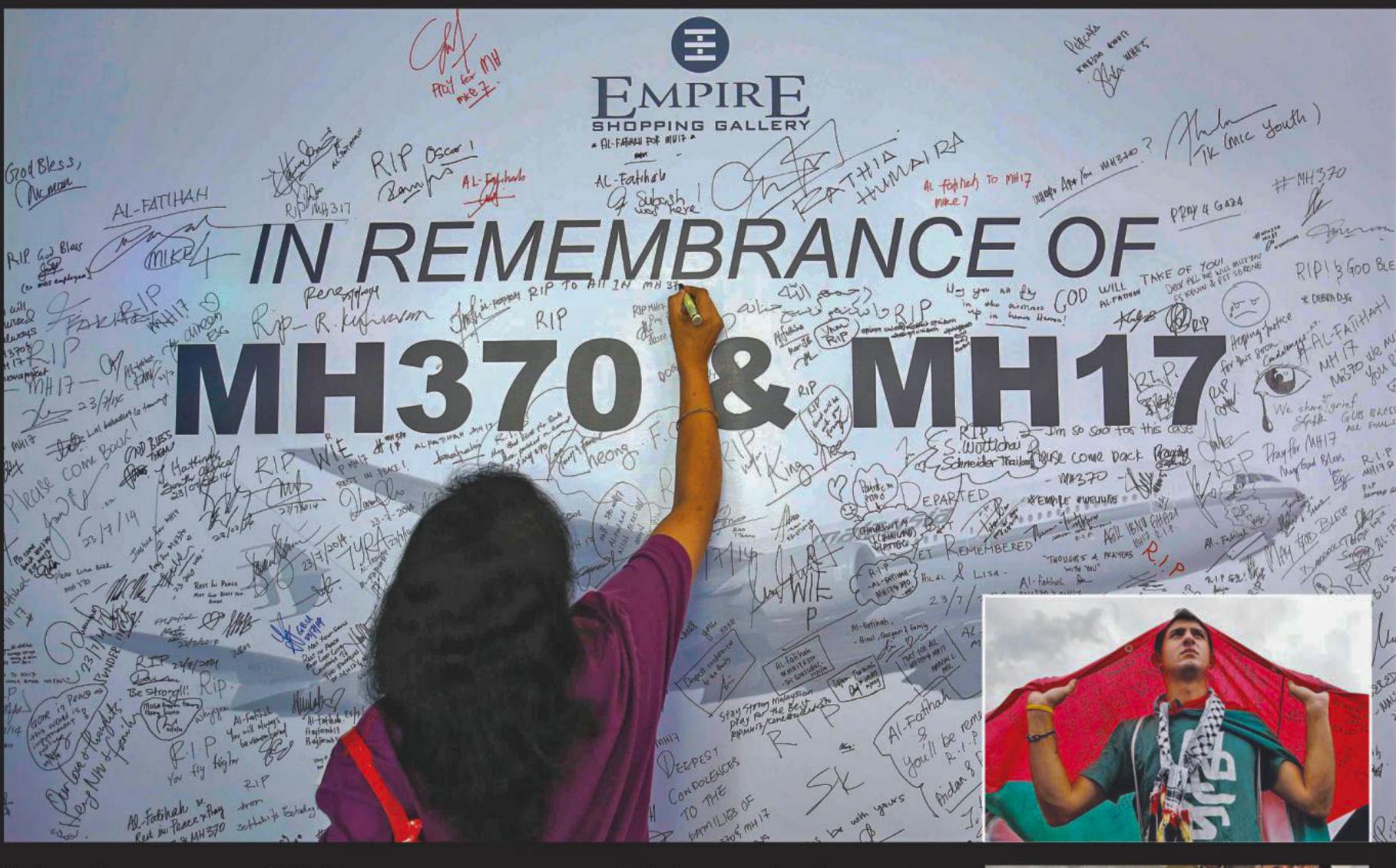
2014 The Year We Destroyed Innocence

UR world today has broken down the boundaries of communication and welcomed this enlightened age of global connectivity. But despite promoting allegiance and secularism, we are faced with a world where there are new walls made of an unforgiving material that not only refuses to break, but destroys everything it surrounds: Hate.

What would our forefathers say if they saw the world we live in today? Perhaps, cruel as it sounds, it is a blessing that the martyrs who died for peace cannot bear witness to today's age of human beings, who have an excess of everything but humanity.

When we were children, we were taught that there were two types of people in the world: the good and the bad. Those guilty of sin would be punished, and the innocent would always get justice. But the events that transpired in 2014 beg the question: what did the innocents do wrong?

Were the children in Boko Haram and Peshawar too greedy to exercise their basic human right to education? Were the thousands of Palestinians killed in Gaza to blame, for being born in the first place?



Perhaps the passengers of MH 17 were stupid to choose to travel by air. What were those wild animals in the Sundarbans thinking, swimming in water polluted with oil? Should the 1.6 billion Muslims in the world shun Islam, because they are all linked to ISIS? And how dare the residents of the Chittagong Hill Tracts consider their motherland their home? Let's all blame the innocent!

We cannot create a world where our children start believing that it's better to be the villain, because the innocent never win. A few centuries ago, when honour

encompassed all of a person's actions, women, children and the elderly were spared during war; armies fought with swords, not cowardly weapons like bombs; tribe leaders conceded defeat in order to save the remaining members. Today, our clothes and mannerisms are more civilised, but our actions are cowardly and disgusting. Where is our honour? Our humanity?

We are ashamed to be a part of this world rife with hate, where the innocent pay the price and wrongdoers roam free. Let us pray for a better 2015, a new age where justice is



served and innocent lives are not used as freely as pawns on a chessboard.

By Mehereen Aziz Photo: Reuters

