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Bridge-Europa - March 2016

Part of Pakistan Awareness Initiative -PAI

Voicing against injustice – in memory of those journalists lost in search of truth

CONTEXT

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Highlights

Energy: Pakistan’s unending energy crisis is both lethal and economic disaster. Last year’s heat wave combined with power failures in Pakistan claimed almost 2,500 lives and another summer is

right around the corner. Danish company Vestas Wind Systems in partnership with the Punjab government plans to create Pakistan's largest windfarm by adding 1,000 megawatt clean wind-based electricity.

Pakistan is really in immediate need to bring an end to this decades long disaster that has resulted in deaths, unemployment, and shutting down of large and small businesses.

Arts and Culture: Pakistani artists have also been actively busy to rebuild Pakistan's tainted image around the world. Faisal Qureshi is one of them. In January, he opened his first solo exhibition at KUNSTEN Museum of Modern Art in Aalborg, Denmark. His exhibition is supported by the Danish Centre for Culture and Development (CKU).

Pakistan had two well-known literary figures who participated in Karachi Literature Festival 2016 and the "Open Doors" program, conducted jointly by the Embassy of France in Pakistan and the Alliance Françaises of Lahore and Karachi. Professor Jean-Luc Racine, Specialist of India-Pakistan relations and Olivier Truc has been a journalist since 1986. Olivier is also a documentary producer, author and novelist.

Pakistan categorically needs a revival of cultural stimulation in every walk of life to entertain the nation long besieged by religious fallacies, political corruption, violence and scarcity of basic needs like water and sanitation. Investing in Pakistani youths is an investment in future of the nation where opportunities only exists for privileged families and youths.

Award, Scholarships and Youth's Development: Goethe Institute and Alliance Française de Karachi planning a project "Girl Power in Karachi" to help them achieve their dreams in dancing, music, sporting and other cultural talents. Organization for Community development, A Punjab based NGO awarded with The French Republic's Human Rights Prize for their work on women and children

France and UN's Center's "the Pakistani Youth for Climate Change" and Annick Girardin, Minister of State for Development and Francophonie efforts of inclusion of Pakistani youths is significant as Pakistan's warming climate, deforestation, unplanned urbanization, hunting, decreasing underground water levels and drinking water inaccessibility to almost 38.5 million put this nation in great need of climate change awareness.

DOSTI, a British Council programme that uses sport to bring stability to young people in Pakistan has won the prestigious international prize for "Adapted Programme of the Year" at the Peace and Sports Awards. A Pakistani project won 2015 Peace and Sports Award in Monaco.

The Burns' Night, hosted by the British High Commissioner provided Pakistanis with an opportunity

to know about the Scottish culture and higher education scholarship opportunities for Pakistani women and school children in collaboration with the British Council.

The British Government's Chevening Awards have really been beneficial to both the countries for knowledge sharing and preparing Pakistani professionals with the skills required competing in global economy with excellence. According to British High Commission Islamabad, there are as many as 1300 Pakistani Chevening Alumni in the country. Pakistan is also one of the top priority countries for Chevening awards. This year's Chevening Awards witnessed swelling interest of Pakistani applicants. British High Commission's Youth Advisory Board could effectively be instrumental in youth parliament for innovative and transparent ideas for politics and public policies.

Fighting Cancer: Norwegian cooperation in nanoparticle based cancer therapy is a necessity for Pakistan. Pakistan is way far from achieving health care goals for impoverished population. The robust use of chemicals has become an unavoidable part of our lives exposing more people to cancer.

Positive News: The foreign diplomats have agreed that the security situation has improved in Pakistan. Security has been a major hurdle in Pakistan's economic growth and one of the leading factors of massive brain drain and outflow of capital.

Welcome to the new British High Commissioner: Congrats to the incoming British High Commissioner Thomas Drew and we expect the British Government will find more ways to work directly with poverty ridden people and urban youths.

Congratulations: We are grateful to Dr. Ruth Pfau of Marie Adelaide Leprosy Centre (MALC) for her humanitarian services for Pakistan and congratulate her on receiving Staufer Medal in Germany.

Farewell: The former British High Commissioner Mr. Philip Barton will greatly be missed in Pakistan. During his tenure, he stayed optimistic, enthusiastic and stood with the people of Pakistan in highs and lows. His support for the Pakistani troops and civilian for their gallantry and confidence on Pakistani youths has elevated morals and made some visible changes. His strong ethical support to the APS victims made him a great friend in need.

Recent Achievements in Pakistan: Women Protection Bill in Punjab and Stiffer penalties for Honor Killings may bring some relief to the culturally imprisoned and suffocated women in Pakistan.

Proposition: foreign governments must directly reach out to the underprivileged and impoverished population as a large proportion of aids, grants, scholarships, events, trainings and inclusion end up going to the already advantaged fragment of society due to political and bureaucratic meddling.

Sincerely/ Team BridgeEuropa

Belgium:

http://countries.diplomatie.belgium.be/en/binaries/newsletter_november_2015_tm426-274915.pdf

Denmark: Punjab on track to host Pakistan's largest windfarm

3rd February 2016, Lahore – The Government of Punjab has embarked upon an ambitious plan to host the largest wind energy project in Pakistan. In collaboration with Vestas Wind Systems, the Punjab Government aims to add 1,000 megawatt wind-based electricity into its grid, and today issued a Letter of Interest (LOI) to Vestas regarding the first 250 MW stage of the proposed Quaid e Azam Wind Park in the south-west of the province.

Pakistan is facing a critical energy shortage, and the Punjab Government is keen on exploring avenues within renewable energy to improve its power supply. The potential for 4 x 250 MW indigenous wind power projects in Southwestern Punjab were identified by Vestas in late 2014 using the industry-leading Site Hunt® technology. The Government of Punjab and Vestas signed a memorandum of understanding in February 2015. As part of the MoU, Vestas with the support of the Danish Embassy, will work with the Government of Punjab to facilitate securing approximately 2.2 Billion USD of investment for these projects.

Attending the LOI ceremony today in the Chief Minister's House in Lahore were Chief Minister, Mr. Shehbaz Sharif, H.E. Ambassador Jesper Moller Sorensen, Political Director for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark and Mr. Gerard Carew, Vice President Sales, Pan-Asia region, Vestas, along with other senior officials.

Political Director Jesper Moller Sorensen, who served as Ambassador to Pakistan in 2013-2015 and introduced Vestas to Chief Minister Shehbaz Sharif during his tenure, explained that Pakistan is emerging as an interesting market for Danish companies, especially in the energy sector. He stated, "Pakistan is increasingly moving toward renewable energy solutions, where Danish companies are particularly strong. Denmark has long been a pioneer of wind energy, and Vestas is today a global frontrunner".

He further added, "I would like to congratulate both Vestas and the Punjab Government for taking their cooperation so far in such a limited time span. It has only been 1 1/2 years, since we presented the Government of Punjab to Vestas' technical expertise. I have no doubt that this project will

contribute greatly to overcoming Punjab's energy shortage. As this project unfolds, the Government of Denmark stands ready to support the Punjab Government with building further capacity and expertise in the field of renewable energy”.

The Danish government plans to engage with the relevant government stakeholders in Pakistan to transfer Danish experiences in the areas of wind policy, technical integration of wind, and financing. The first 250 MW project is targeted to start commercial operation in 2018.

Vestas Wind Systems, headquartered in Denmark, has delivered wind energy in 74 countries. It has installed 71 gigawatt of cumulative installed capacity globally. Mr. Gerard Carew, speaking on the occasion, briefed the participants about the project. He informed that Vestas is committed to growth in emerging markets with Pakistan a key focus in the Asia Pacific region. “We are delighted to have reached this next important milestone in our collaboration with the Government of Punjab. Through our industry leading Site Hunt® technology, Vestas identified opportunities for wind energy in Punjab previously not considered, and in a very short space of time by industry standards. We thank the Chief Minister and his Government for the support, co-operation, and progress made under our MoU thus far. We now look forward to completing the detailed project feasibility studies and working with interested stakeholders to secure equity and debt financing, confirm orders, and eventually begin construction of these exciting projects”.

Globally, wind power is booming like never before. In 2015 alone, more than 40,000 megawatts of wind power was installed worldwide. Among the main reasons for the positive development of the wind markets are the increasing economic advantages of wind power, rising competitiveness of wind power as compared to other sources of energy, and the need to select emission free technologies in order to alleviate climate change.

Vestas

Every single day, Vestas wind turbines deliver clean energy that supports the global fight against climate change. Wind power from Vestas’ more than 55,700 wind turbines currently reduces carbon emissions by over 60 million tons of carbon dioxide every year, while at the same time building energy security and independence. Vestas has delivered wind energy in 74 countries, providing jobs for more than 19,500 passionate people at our service and project sites, research facilities, factories and offices all over the world. With 52 percent more megawatts installed than anyone else in the industry and more than 71 GW of cumulative installed capacity worldwide, Vestas is the world leader in wind energy.

<https://www.vestas.com/>

Pakistani artist holds solo exhibition in Denmark to promote new image of Pakistan 04.02.2016

January 29: “People in Pakistan have experienced terror attacks and bomb blasts too many times, however they are still looking for good things and seeking hope. We are a brave nation, and this needs to be told to the world”. This was stated by Mr. Imran Qureshi, one of the leading contemporary artists in Pakistan, who has opened his first solo exhibition at KUNSTEN Museum of Modern Art in Aalborg, Denmark.

The exhibition, which is being supported by the Government of Denmark under its Pakistan Culture Development Program, was inaugurated by the Danish Minister of Culture, Mr. Bertel Haarder. The exhibition, which has drawn the attention of both the people and media in Denmark refers to social conditions in Pakistan, while also making references to the violence and injustice that affect innocent people around the world every day, especially in Pakistan.

Qureshi is also hoping that the exhibition will challenge the audience’s images of Pakistan, which he believes is mostly associated with bombs and terror attacks due to the way Pakistan is covered in the international media. “There are so many positive things happening in Pakistan, especially within the contemporary art scene and in the music, film and the fashion industry. People need to break the stereotype images of Pakistan and seek new images”, said Qureshi. He stressed that to achieve that, it was necessary to have cultural exchange activities such as this exhibition, which provided different cultures and nations the opportunity to meet, collaborate and learn more about each other.

Imran Qureshi has created two striking installations, which includes a huge floor painting and an enormous mountain, consisting of 30.000 sheets of crumpled red painted paper. Furthermore, the exhibition includes small, meticulous miniature paintings as well as large abstract paintings. The red colour explosions serve as pictorial metaphors of the violence and fear that has characterized the world since 9/11 2001. But beneath the surface, life and hope steadily trickles out of the landscape. The references to violence and the contrasts between life and death became uncannily present while Imran Qureshi was finishing the installations in Denmark. Two days before the arts museum opened his exhibition, militant groups attacked the Bacha Khan University in Charsadda city.

Ms. Helle Nielsen, Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of Denmark in Islamabad said that “Art and culture are important means to bridge differences, to create tolerance, and ultimately to provide opportunities for every single individual, regardless of who they are”. Ms. Nielsen expressed hope that the Pakistan Culture Development Program will provide the much needed platform and opportunity for Pakistan’s art and culture sector to thrive and play its role in the country’s progress and development.

Ms. Stinna Toft, the chief curator at Kunsten Museum of Modern Art, who has curated the exhibition together with curator Razia Sadik from Pakistan emphasized that Qureshi’s artworks evoked much more than references to terror and global violence. “Imran Qureshi is a tremendous artist and

craftsman and his artworks invite us to reflect on so many different aspects in life and society,” said Stinna Toft.

Artist Imran Qureshi exhibits more than 45 artworks at one of Denmark’s largest arts institutions. The enormous exhibition is the result of a long and profound artistic collaboration supported by the Danish Centre for Culture and Development (CKU).

The Right To A Better Life: Danida's Pakistan

http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x17d0sg_the-right-to-a-better-life-danida-s-pakistan-programme_news

France: Tribute to Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (Alliance française d’Islamabad, 21 February 2016)

The Alliance Française Islamabad, in collaboration with the Alliance Française Lahore, and with the support of the Embassy of France, dedicated an evening in homage to the music legend Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan on Sunday 21st of February 2016 at 4:30 PM at the premises of the Alliance Française Islamabad.

The tribute started with the presentation of its main biography “The voice of Faith” by its author, the French musicologist Pierre Alain Baud, followed by a short documentary; short film and a Qawwali performance. Then, the Mehr and Sher Ali Qawwal Ensemble brought the public back to Nusrat’s universe.

Nusrat, the "Shahenshah-e-Qawwali", still lives among us thanks to his most extraordinary and unique music and performances, including the mythical concert in 1985 at the Theatre de la Ville in Paris (France) that launched his international career.

It was at the Theatre de la Ville in 1985 that Pierre-Alain Baud, a French music researcher, journalist and associate researcher with the department of World Religions and Culture, Dhaka University, first heard Nusrat. He presented during the evening his book “Nusrat: The Voice of Faith,” which is a biography of Nusrat Fateh Ali and a deep account of his life as observed by Pierre-Alain Baud. Published in paperback in 2015 by Harper Collins India, the book has been described by Newline magazine as “... a valuable service ... which will serve as an important text and an engaging read, not only for Nusrat Fateh Ali fans, but for future generations”.

The book was originally published in French in 2008, under the title “Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan: Le messenger du qawwali.” and edited by Demi-lune (Paris, Demi-lune, coll. « Voix du monde »). The version in English is translated by Renuka George, also film-maker based in New Delhi. Renuka also spoke at the event.

The book presentation was followed by a short film on Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

The Qawwali concert begun right after the presentations. Performing on the evening was the Mehr and Sher Ali Qawwal Ensemble. Mehr and Sher Ali are followers of the Talvandi classical school of

Indian music. They were trained by their father who was a classical singer in Patiala and later a disciple of Fateh Ali Khan, the father of legendary Qawwal Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

Contact : chief.executive@afislamabad.org Dernière modification : 25/02/201

French guests at Karachi Literature Festival 2016 (5-7 February)

Two French guests participated to the 7th edition of the Karachi Literature Festival at the Beach Luxury Hotel from 5 to 7 February 2016.

Jean-Luc RACINE participated to the panel on “ Kashmir: The Never-ending Conflict” on 7 February together with Mirza Waheed, Barkha Dutt and Rafique Kathwari, moderated by Farhan Bokhari. A PhD from Sorbonne University, Mr. Racine is Emeritus CNRS Senior Fellow at the Centre for South Asian Studies (School for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences -EHESS- Paris), and Senior Fellow at Asia Centre, a Paris based think tank. His current research addresses three main issues:

- i) the internal dynamics of change in India;
- ii) the ways emerging India redefines her position on the Asian and on the global chessboards,
- iii) the geopolitics of South Asia, particularly Pakistan’s regional policy and India-Pakistan relations,

including in their Afghan dimensions.

He has been part of second track circuits for many years. He speaks regularly in Asian, European and US institutions dedicated to international affairs or security studies, and appears in French and English speaking medias on South Asian affairs.

He has written or edited more than a dozen of books on India and on South Asia, including one coedited with Pakistani scholars Soofia Mumtaz and Imran Ali: *Pakistan, Contours of State and Society*, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2003 His last edited books in French have been focussed on “India and Asia” (2009) and, as a special issue of the geopolitical journal *Herodote*, on the “Geopolitics of Pakistan” (2010).

He is presently editor of the *Asia Yearbook (Annuaire Asie)* published by the French Government press *La documentation française* (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 forthcoming).

Olivier TRUC

Olivier TRUC participated in three panels at the KLF 2016:

- **Words and Images of the Day**

Saturday, 6 February 2016

together with Barkha Dutt, Farhan, Bokhari, and Fasih Ahmed

Moderator: Ghazi Salahuddin

- **The White Stripe on the National Flag**

Sunday, 7 February 2016

together with Shaheen Attiq-ur-Rahman, Reema Abbasi, Sono Khangharani, and John O’Brien

Moderator: Nazish Brohi

• **Compressed Tales: Urdu Digests and Digest Writers**

Sunday, 7 February 2016 -4.15 p.m.–5.15 p.m.

together with Shakeel Adilzada, Neelofar Abbasi, Haseena Moin, Haseeb Asif, Noor ul Huda Shah, and Mubashir Ali Zaidi

Moderator: Zaheda Hina

Olivier Truc has been a journalist since 1986 and has been based in Stockholm since 1994. He is currently the Nordic and Baltic regional correspondent for Le Monde. Olivier, who also previously worked for French daily newspaper Liberation, writes articles covering subjects spanning from politics, to economy, to social issues like immigration and minorities, with a special interest for the Arctic issues over the past years, and stretching from short news pieces to features and profiles. He also produces television documentaries, including several 26 and 52 minutes documentaries broadcast in France, two of them awarded. One of the documentaries, "The last dive", tells the story of the North Sea divers who risked their lives and sanity to help Norway realize its dreams of oil prosperity. Two other documentaries shot in Norway and in France are about children born to German fathers during World War II, while one delves into the neo-Nazi movement in Sweden. Olivier's last documentary, "The Reindeer Police", portrays a group of Norwegian policemen who belong to a special unit tasked with preventing conflicts connected to reindeer herding in Lapland. Olivier has also written three books: "L'Imposteur" (The Impostor) (in French, 2006, Calmann-Lévy), and Dykaren som exploderade (The diver who exploded)(in Swedish, together with Christian Catomeris, journalist at SVT Aktuellt, 2008, Norstedts). Both books are based on personal stories, in-depth portraits and interviews.

Olivier's first novel has just published (in French, Métaillé, September 2012, published in UK/US in 2014). "Forty Days Without Shadow" is a thriller steeped in Sami and Nordic culture, figuring two officers in the local Reindeer Police.

His second novel ("The Wolf Strait", not translated yet), following «Forty Days Without Shadow », was published in France in September 2014. Dernière modification : 19/02/2016

Jean-Luc Racine in Pakistan as part of the programme « Open Doors »

(1-7 February 2016)

Within the "Open Doors" program, conducted jointly by the Embassy of France in Pakistan and the Alliance Françaises of Lahore and Karachi, Professor Jean-Luc Racine, Specialist of India and India-Pakistan relations, gave a series of lectures in three Pakistani cities, Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi, from 1 to 7 February 2016.

Mr. Racine gave lectures in various universities (Forman Christian College, Quaid-e-Azam University)

and Pakistani Think-tanks (Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, Jinnah Institute, Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies) and held important discussions with several Pakistani researchers. He participated in the Karachi Literature Festival, in a roundtable on the issue of Kashmir. Jean-Luc Racine, a PhD from Sorbonne University, is Emeritus CNRS Senior Fellow at the Centre for South Asian Studies (School for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences -EHESS- Paris), and Senior Fellow at Asia Centre, a Paris based think tank. His current research addresses three main issues: i) the internal dynamics of change in India; ii) the ways emerging India redefines her position on the Asian and on the global chessboards, iii) the geopolitics of South Asia, particularly Pakistan's regional policy and India-Pakistan relations, including in their Afghan dimensions.

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Pakistan, Contours of State and Society, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2003

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To learn more and to discover the publications of Professor Jean-Luc RACINE:

<http://www.centreasia.eu/auteur/jea...>

For more information on the "Open Doors" program, click on the following link:

<http://www.ambafrance-pk.org/Open-D...>

For more information on the Karachi Literature Festival: <http://www.karachiliteraturefestiva...>

Dernière modification : 19/02/2016

Homage to Intizar Hussain

The French Embassy in Pakistan pays tribute to the renowned novelist, historian, critic, journalist, biographer, chronicler, Intizar Hussain, who breathed his last today in Lahore. The French Embassy presents its condolences to his family and to all his dear ones.

A friend of France and its culture, an essential reference in literature of South Asia, Intizar Hussain has been praised by France for the richness and variety of his work, by conferring upon him the prestigious Award of "Officier des Arts et des Lettres" on 20th September 2014 in Lahore.

Experienced translator of famous French writers Sartre, Camus and Gide, he continued to be a

fervent advocate of dialogue between modern literature in Pakistan and that of contemporary France and a great promoter of the dialogue between cultures.

Pakistan – Attack against the university in Charsadda (January 20, 2016)

France condemns this morning's attack against Bacha Khan University in Charsadda, in northwestern Pakistan, which left many people dead and several dozen injured.

We extend our condolences to the victims' families.

At this difficult time, France stands alongside Pakistan and assures it of its solidarity in the fight against terrorism.

Pakistan – Attack against a vaccination center (January 13, 2016)

France condemns the attack that left many people dead on January 13 outside a vaccination center in Quetta during an anti-polio campaign.

We extend our condolences to the victims' families

France assures Pakistan of its solidarity

Girl Power in Karachi

The Embassy of France in Pakistan is proud to announce that the Franco-German Cultural Fund will be financing the project "Girl Power in Karachi" in 2016.

The project has been elaborated by Goethe Institute and Alliance Française de Karachi to help create spaces where young women could pursue and express their music, dance and sporting aspirations and talents.

Some football workshops will for instance be organized during the Euro 2016 through this project.

Pakistan - Attack in Mardan (December 29, 2015)

France condemns the attack of December 29 on the NADRA office in Mardan (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province), which killed many civilians and left several dozen injured.

We offer our condolences to the victims' families.

France stands alongside the authorities and the people of Pakistan in the fight against terrorism.

New Year Greetings from the French Embassy in Pakistan

The Ambassador Mrs. Martine Dorance and the entire team of the Embassy of France in Pakistan present to you their best wishes for the year 2016

پاکستان میں فرانس کی سفیر ماغنتین دوغانس اور سفارت خانے کا پورا عملہ نئے سال 2016 کے موقع پر
آپ سے نیک خواہشات کا اظہار کرتے ہیں

Human Rights through cinematography (10 December 2015)

To celebrate Human Rights Day 2015, a number of movies focused on topics related to human rights were screened in Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi and Faisalabad on 10 December 2015. Migration, women's and children rights, health and corruption are among the topics of the movies selected for the screenings.

Human Rights through Cinematography is organized jointly by the European Union and its member states, Alliances Françaises in Karachi and Lahore, the Goethe Institut, the Quaid-e-Azam University and the Swiss Confederation.

Movies like Sabogal, Ho Yaqeen, Something Better to Come, The Shelter, Akiyaya, Journey of Hope, Journey to Portugal, My sweet Pepper Land, Welcome, and Bajrangi Bhaijaan have been screened across different locations in Pakistan to varied audiences.

In Karachi and Lahore, two movies, "My Sweet Pepper Land" and "Welcome" were screened in front of large audiences at the two Alliances françaises.

Debates followed in each city on Human Rights analysed through these movies (women's rights, migration, right to justice and state), with prominent Pakistani speakers such as Mr. I . A . Rehman, M. Ghazi Salahuddin, Mrs. Bina Shah and Mr. Framji Minwalla. *Dernière modification : 15/12/2015*

French Human Rights Price 2015 goes to a Pakistani organization

On the occasion of International Human Rights Day, France reaffirms its commitment to respecting and promoting human rights.

We pay tribute to the commitment of those who are fighting everywhere to defend fundamental freedoms, risking their freedom and sometimes their lives.

The French Republic's Human Rights Prize, awarded by the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights, has been presented on 11 December to NGOs whose commitment is particularly exemplary. The "Organization for Community development", Pakistani NGO based in Punjab, was one of the awarded 2015, for its very much community based project aiming at reinforcing cyber

skills, especially of women and children, to avoid hate speech and diffuse positive messages on dialogue between communities.

This year, the exceptional mobilization of states within the framework of COP21 provides an opportunity to increase awareness within the international community of the close links between human rights and the environment and to promote a united response to the climate challenge. Annick Girardin, Minister of State for Development and Francophonie, chaired a meeting on this topic today together with Mary Robinson and civil society representatives.

“Pakistani Youth for Climate Change” book launch (8 December 2015)

The Ambassador of France in Pakistan launched jointly with the United Nations Information Center the “Pakistani Youth for Climate Change” publication on 9th of December in Islamabad.

This inspiring collection of essays and drawings of young people from around the country was also presented to the public at the Pakistan standee at the COP21 in Paris on the same day, making sure that young Pakistani people have their voice in the global conversation on climate change.

Read the book here: <http://issuu.com/uninformationcentr...>

View more pics here: <https://flic.kr/s/aHskpKVyG8>

Germany: Ambassador Ina Lepel visited the City of Lights, “Karachi”

German Ambassador Ina Lepel visited Karachi on 10 and 11 February, 2016. Together with Consul-General Rainer Schmiedchen she visited the German Cultural Institute, addressed the business community and inaugurated a research center at ICCBS, Karachi University.

Furthermore, Ambassador Lepel along with CG Schmiedchen met the Governor of Sindh. He informed that the security situation in Karachi has improved considerably, compared e.g. to 2011/12. Ambassador Lepel regarded her visit very fruitful and informative and vowed to come back.

Statement by a Federal Foreign Office Spokesperson on the terrorist attack on a university in Pakistan date of issue 20.01.2016

A Federal Foreign Office Spokesperson issued the following statement today (20 January) on the attack on a university in Pakistan, which media reports say claimed the lives of at least 21 people:

The German Government condemns today’s attack against teaching staff and students of a university in north-west Pakistan in the strongest possible terms. I would like to convey our profound sympathy to the families of the victims, and to wish those injured a speedy recovery.

In the attack, not only were further innocent people targeted by terrorists – so were the country's efforts to educate young people, a very important goal for Pakistan. Once again, it is blatantly obvious that the attackers and people behind such attacks are only interested in their own criminal aims and not in the country's development and future. Germany will continue to support Pakistan resolutely in its education and economic development endeavours and in the fight against terrorism.

Statement by a Federal Foreign Office Spokesperson on talks between India and Pakistan

A Federal Foreign Office Spokesperson issued the following statement today (7 January) on the ongoing talks between India and Pakistan:

"We are pleased to see desire and willingness on both sides to come together.

The visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Lahore and the talks with Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on 5 January are a good start and an important step towards now improving relations between India and Pakistan in a lasting way.

We utterly condemn the terrorist attacks on the Indian air force base in Pathankot and on the Indian Consulate-General in Mazar-e-Sharif. The responsible parties must be identified and held accountable.

The attacks and other attempts to sabotage the dialogue must not be allowed to endanger the rapprochement."

Dr. Ruth Pfau honoured for Humanitarian Work

In recognition of her services in Pakistan Dr. Ruth Pfau from Marie Adelaide Leprosy Centre (MALC), was awarded the Staufer Medal in Gold on December 21st by the Consul-General, Mr. Rainer Schmiedchen, on behalf of the Chief Minister of the German State Baden-Württemberg

German-Pakistan cooperation in Finance

A delegation of high-ranking Government officials including Senator Saleem Mandviwalla and Finance Minister Sindh, Murad Ali Shah visited Germany from December 1 to 4. The main agenda was the discussion of the financial relations between provinces and the center in federal states.

The Netherlands: Her Majesty Queen Máxima is to visit Pakistan

News article | February 5, 2016

Her Majesty Queen Máxima is to visit Pakistan from Tuesday 9 to Thursday 11 February in her role as the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development.

Army Public School

We will never forget.

Today we remember the innocent lives lost in the Army Public School tragedy in Peshawar last year. Our thoughts are with the families and friends of the victims. We stand united with the people of Pakistan. We will never forget.

Pakistan Minister for Commerce meets Minister Ploumen

Minister Khurram Dastgir Khan visited the Netherlands this week and met with the Dutch Minister for Commerce Mrs Lilianne Ploumen.

Minister Dastgir praised the Netherlands as an engaged and constructive partner for Pakistan, and welcomed the latest trade figures which estimate the annual trade volume at more than \$1 billion. Minister Ploumen announced her wish to organise more Pakistan-Dutch trade missions.

Norway: Pakistani-Norwegian cooperation in nanoparticle based cancer therapy

Last updated: 27.11.2015 // Researchers from The Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) in Trondheim participated in the scientific seminar "Nanotheranostics: New concepts in Imaging and Drug Deliver" in Islamabad on Thursday 26 November.

Professor Catharina de Lange Davies is heading a research project at the Institute of Physics at NTNU which is cooperating with Nuclear Medicine Oncology and Radiotherapy Institute (NORI) in Islamabad. The title of the project is "Capacity Building In Cancer Nanotheranostics Using Multifunctional Particles". Dr. Abida Raza is Head of Department of Diagnostic Labs Nuclear Medicine and in charge of the cooperation from the Pakistani side. Dr. Raza visited Trondheim in June this year.

The aim of the project is to improve cancer diagnostics and therapy using drug loaded nanoparticles. The Pakistani-Norwegian collaboration is supported by Norway through the institutional cooperative program.

The Minister of Planning, Development and Reforms, Mr Ahsan Iqbal, participated in the concluding ceremony. He congratulated the Pakistani-Norwegian scientific cooperation.

The UK: British High Commissioner-Designate listens to young people on Pakistan's future.

Mr Thomas Drew CMG, hosted a group of young, inspiring students from leading universities from across Pakistan as part of the British High Commission's youth advisory board.

The British High Commissioner-Designate, Mr Thomas Drew CMG, hosted a group of young, inspiring students from leading universities from across Pakistan at the British High Commission, Islamabad.

All the students were part of the British High Commission's Youth Advisory Board, which was launched from the Great Debate competition. The members of the Board consist of the finalists of the competition that ran from September 2015 to December 2015 by the British High Commission in leading Pakistani Universities across four provinces and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The Board gives a unique platform to generate debate among young people around issues concerning them and to give advice on the UK's work on education and engagement with young people in Pakistan.

The British High Commissioner-Designate also presented scholarship awards to Gadhaun Aslam of the Forman Christian College Lahore who won the Great Debate competition and to Iza Afridi from the COMSATS University Abbotabad, the first runner up of the competition.

Speaking at the meeting with Youth Advisory Board, the British High Commissioner-Designate to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG said:

I am delighted to meet the British High Commission's first ever Youth Advisory Board today and very impressed to hear their views about various issues concerning to them.

Young people of Pakistan make up two-thirds of its population. They have a vital role to play in ensuring economic, political and social progress. Listening to this group of unique and gifted students, harnessing their ideas, enthusiasm and expertise will help us better engage with young people in Pakistan and promote a culture of debate among this country's future leaders.

I believe that Pakistan has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reshape itself to be the kind of country its people want. I hope the young people of Pakistan will continue to generate a wider conversation about the kind of Pakistan they want in 2047. That is 100 years from the birth of Pakistan. It is also when the young people of today will be leading Pakistan.

Thomas Drew began work as the British High Commissioner-Designate on Monday, and this event was one of his first engagements since arriving in Islamabad. The British High Commissioner-Designate has previously served as Political Counsellor in the British High Commission, Islamabad. Since then he has been the National Security Director in the Foreign Office and the Principal Private Secretary (Chief of Staff) to Foreign Secretaries William Hague and Philip Hammond.

ENDS

British High Commission-Designate to Pakistan looks forward 'to a great job in a great country'

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 18 February 2016

Part of: Pakistan

The British High Commissioner-Designate to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG, spoke to Pakistani media

in the UK before leaving for Islamabad at the end of this week.

In his speech, which was partially delivered in Urdu, he said:

I feel hugely privileged to have been appointed to the job. Nearly ten years ago, I moved to Pakistan for the first time, to be the Political Counsellor in the British High Commission. I became a great friend of the country and its people. I feel a great sense of energy at going back. I am energised at seeing old friends the prospect of discovering more of the beautiful country, but mostly by prospect of doing work which is so important for both our countries. Pakistan matters to the UK and, I like to think, the UK matters to Pakistan: for each other's security, regional stability and for each other's prosperity.

Central to that are the 1.5 million British people of Pakistani origin who have made the UK their home. I saw that at first hand when I visited British Pakistani community leaders in Bradford last week. We are like a family. Our human, cultural and historical links mean that our relationship is long term. It is broad as well as deep. Our problems are shared. So is our potential.

My most important task is to help unlock that potential. Pakistan's potential is huge. It has a young and dynamic population. It has improving infrastructure. Its geographical location puts it at the centre of the global market and a new Silk Road. In Karachi it has one of the world's 10 biggest cities. But to make the most of these long term opportunities, Pakistan also needs to overcome a range of challenges and threats. And we in Britain will help in whatever way we can. That means helping Pakistan become more stable, more prosperous and better governed. That is in Britain's interests as much as in Pakistan's. And it is as much about trade, education, health and good governance, as it is about security.

All Ambassadors like to say how important the relationship between their two countries is. The sentiment is important. But as the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, I will be in the fortunate position of having the resources to back it. Our High Commission in Islamabad is one of our biggest diplomatic missions in the world. So is our bilateral assistance programme to Pakistan.

I have myself seen how central Pakistan is to Britain's foreign and domestic policy, in all the jobs I have done since last returning from Pakistan in 2008. As the Foreign Office's National Security Director, I had a strong sense of the security challenges that Pakistan faced and the sacrifices it was making in trying to overcome them. I realized how important they were too to Britain's own national security. Most recently, I was Principal Private Secretary (or Chief of Staff) to Foreign Secretaries William Hague and Philip Hammond. There I had an overview of the whole breadth of our foreign policy interests. Pakistan was never far from the centre.

So my job is a great one because Pakistan matters. But it is also a great one because I believe the UK can make a difference. Indeed we are already making a difference in a whole range of areas.

Some of my favorite statistics are about education, where 6.3 million Pakistani primary school children have benefited from direct UK support, thanks to our Department for International Development; or where the British Council has committed to train one million teachers of English by 2018 to improve the way English is taught in schools.

We do important work in health too, where, for example, nearly one million births have attended by professionals supported by the UK.

But this is just the tip of the iceberg. Our joint work ranges from tax collection and poverty relief, to the prosecution of terrorists or countering improvised explosive devices.

What then specifically do I want to achieve over these next three years? You should not expect a radical change of direction. Our commitment is for the long term, and my predecessor Philip Barton has done an excellent job. Like him, I believe that Pakistan is on the up.

So, Firstly, our work together on security, regional stability and other immediate challenges will continue to be critical. But, secondly, I hope that we can make the most of a period of relative stability to focus even more, in our work together, on tackling the longer term challenges that are fundamental to Pakistan's future prosperity. Challenges around economic growth, governance, health and education and those linked to changing demographics and climate. The 2018 elections will be critical to this ambition – a chance further to strengthen democracy and democracy's institutions. I want British businesses too to play a part in the growth of Pakistan's economy. Though trade between our two countries increased 12% in 2014, it is still lower than it should be between such important partners. I will do what I can to change that. Syed Ibne Abbas, the excellent Pakistani High Commissioner to the UK, has the great ambition that, by the end of his tour, trade and economic issues should be at the top of the agenda between our two countries whenever our Ministers meet. I very much endorse that.

Finally, I want to continue to nurture the human links between our two countries. This is the foundation for everything else. Culture, language and sport matter. And what a better way to start than to have the Pakistan cricket team tour the United Kingdom this summer! Don't be surprised if you find that 'urgent business' brings me back to the UK suspiciously near to those matches. In short, a great job in a great country. There is a lot to do, and I am really looking forward to getting going."

Change of British High Commissioner

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 11 February 2016

Part of: Pakistan

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan His Excellency Mr Philip Barton, CMG, OBE left Islamabad at the end of his assignment on the 11 February

His replacement, Mr Thomas Drew CMG, will start work as British High Commissioner-Designate in Pakistan on 22 February.

On his departure, High Commissioner Philip Barton said:

I leave Pakistan with great sadness, but with a sense of optimism about the relationship between the UK and Pakistan and the future of the country itself. I am very grateful for all the hospitality, kindness and support I have received from the people of Pakistan.

I wish my successor all the best for his tenure. He is coming to one of the best jobs in the British Diplomatic Service.

Before the arrival of Thomas Drew CMG, Deputy High Commissioner to Pakistan, Patrick Moody, will assume the role of Chargé d'affaires.

For more details, contact the Press Attaché at +92 51 2012000

British High Commissioner “More Optimistic Than Ever” about the future of Pakistan

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 3 February 2016

Part of: Pakistan

Pakistan offers its people democracy, which is more than can be said for 40% of the world's population.

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Philip Barton CMG OBE today delivered his farewell speech at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad.

The seminar was entitled ‘The Future of UK-Pakistan Relations: A Departing Perspective’, and was delivered to an audience of dignitaries from across politics, media and academia.

The High Commissioner began the speech by saying:

I leave Pakistan next week at the end of my tenure as High Commissioner, after my two years here, but also having first visited the country more than 20 years ago. But I leave more optimistic than ever about the future of the country. I believe the country is now on a positive trajectory in four crucial areas – democracy, security, the economy and regional relationships.

I salute the bravery of the Pakistan military – and their civilian counterparts in the police and other law enforcement agencies – as they carry out the very difficult task of tackling terrorism across the

country. The Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies' statistics show a 48% fall in terrorist related attacks in 2015. Pakistan offers its people democracy, which is more than can be said for 40% of the world's population. The security situation is improving. The economy is growing – and poised to accelerate, if further structural reforms can be made.

The High Commissioner set out reasons why Pakistanis can be positive about the country's future, given improvements in the economy, the security situation, democracy and the relationship Pakistan has with its neighbours. He outlined the positive role the UK had in Pakistan in the past, and the partnership we would like to continue in the future. The High Commission set out the breadth of the UK relationship:

Through UK Aid and the work of the Department for International Development, there are 1.3 million Pakistanis who have had micro finance loans thanks to the UK. We have helped 270,000 women gets CNIC cards supporting their citizenship rights. 5.2 million of the poorest families in Pakistan are being supported by the Benazir Income Support Programme, part-funded by the UK. This programme is also providing incentives to over 1 million children to attend and stay in school, through its conditional education transfers. Nearly 1 million births have been attended by professionals supported by the UK.

On education, 6.3 million Pakistani primary school children have benefited from direct UK support. The British Council will train 1 million teachers of English by 2018, to help improve the way English is taught in schools. Every year, the British Council enables 220,000 people to take nearly half a million UK exams here in Pakistan. We have helped 118 Pakistani Universities to develop partnerships with over 90 universities in the UK.

We have quadrupled our Chevening scholarship programme for people to study fully-funded Masters degrees at the UK's top universities. There are now some 1300 Pakistani Chevening Alumni. Thanks to the UK-backed Counter-terrorism Associated Prosecution Reform Initiative conviction rates in terrorism cases have increased from 5% to over 50% in Punjab and from 3% to over 30% in Khyber Pakhtunwa. 91 public prosecutors representing every province of Pakistan have either completed or are undergoing intensive, bespoke 12-week counter terrorism training. 5000 military and law enforcement personnel have been trained in countering IEDs.

The High Commissioner also argued that people in Pakistan now have more space to think about the longer term future, including challenges around demography, the environment and the economy. He concluded the speech:

I am very confident about the future relationship between the UK and Pakistan. We are of course linked by history. One of the highlights of my time in Pakistan was to visit the Regimental Museum of the Punjab Regiment – my grandfather's regiment - in Mardan and to be shown three documents

(from among the 400,000 the museum holds) that he had signed in the 1920s. But it is the people to people links that represent the present and the future. They are why the partnership between the UK and Pakistan is enduring.

Scottish band performs in Pakistan to pay tribute to Robert Burns

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 25 January 2016

Part of: Pakistan

The links between Scotland and Pakistan are deep and enduring.



On 23 January, the British High Commissioner hosted a charity dinner to pay tribute to Scotland's national poet and songwriter, Robert Burns. In addition to the traditional annual Burns' Night Supper, the Scottish Ceilidh (pronounced kay-lee) rock band Bahookie, featuring Scott Arnott (drums and vocals) and Neil Thompson (vocals, piano and guitar) provided music for the evening. Bahookie – who had flown in from Scotland especially for this charity event – were joined by pipers and drummers from the band of the 8th Azad Kashmir Regiment.

The Burns' Night celebration included traditional Scottish food, such as Haggis, Neeps and Tatties, Scottish dancing and tributes to Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns.

Proceeds of the event will support the education fund of the Government College for Women, Rawalpindi.

Speaking during the event, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Philip Barton, CMG OBE said: Burns' Night is one of our biggest annual celebrations. I am delighted to be able to host a charity event, while bringing to Pakistan some of Scotland's finest traditions.

Burns' Night is an ideal time to think about the impact Scots and Scotland have had on the world, including their significant contribution to education in Pakistan. Scotland, in collaboration with the British Council, provides scholarships for Pakistani School Children and Pakistani women to study Masters qualifications.

These people-to-people and educational links and a shared love of music and culture unite Scotland and Pakistan. I would like to thank the Bahookie band, and the military pipers and drummers for bringing us a wonderful night of music and dancing in Pakistan.

Joanna Reid, Head of DFID – the UK’s development body – in Pakistan, who was born and raised in St Andrews, Scotland, said:

The links between Scotland and Pakistan are deep and enduring. From our proud traditions, the importance of hospitality and beautiful mountainous landscapes, our countries have much in common. The significant population of people of Pakistani origin in Scotland play a lead role in our culture, our politics and our society.

Scotland has also left its mark on Pakistan: from the traditional bagpipe bands in the Pakistani army highlighting our shared history, to the modern factories of Sialkot and the Punjab producing bagpipes and tartan for use in Pakistan and export to the UK.

It is wonderful to be able to introduce my Pakistani friends and colleagues to the traditions of Scotland, to the Haggis, to our music and our culture.

The British High Commission hosts the Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs for friendly cricket match

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 16 January 2016

Part of: Pakistan

The British High Commission team won the match by six wickets and chased the total target of 150 runs in 29th over out of the total 30 overs.



The British High Commission cricket team invited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pakistan to a friendly cricket match in Islamabad today. The UK team featured a number of British diplomats including British High Commissioner Philip Barton CMG OBE.

The British High Commission team won the match by six wickets and chased the total target of 150

runs in 29th over out of the total 30 overs. Mr Alistair Goodwill was named Man of the Match based on his impressive all round performance. He scored 31 runs and took two wickets. Other standout performances include 21 runs and five wickets by Syed Nasir Abbas, 25 runs and one wicket by Imran Butt and three wickets by Asim Khan from the British High Commission's team. From Ministry of Foreign Affairs Adnan Akbar scored 30 runs and took two wickets whereas Sajjad scored 24 runs.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, the British High Commissioner congratulated the winning side and said:

Sport connects both our countries. Cricket runs in the blood of the UK and Pakistan. While England is the home of cricket, Pakistan has one of the best cricketing teams in the world and undoubtedly the most committed supporters.

I congratulate the winning side for their outstanding performance today. I am very glad that the British High Commission had the opportunity to host today's exciting contest against our diplomatic colleagues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I am pleased that both sides have taken time out today to come together, away from our usual business, to highlight the sporting links between our two countries. Further friendly contests can only improve the relationships between the British High Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and between the UK and Pakistan.

UK Trade & Investment hosts Lahore-based business leaders

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 15 January 2016

Part of: Pakistan

The event highlighted the planned establishment of British Business Centres across Pakistan this year, starting in Karachi.



UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) Pakistan hosted a Business Networking Dinner for the Lahore-based business community on 13 January 2015. Ms Malahat Awan was introduced as the incoming CEO of the British Business Centre. Ms Awan explained that the Centre will provide services to British and Pakistani companies to enable them to find new business in the UK and Pakistan.

Mr Ben French, the UK Representative for Punjab, said:

The UK's business engagements in Pakistan are important, and they are growing every day. There are more than 100 British companies operating in Pakistan today, with many more dealing through Pakistani agents and distributors.

Pakistani businesses must consider and explore the trade and investment opportunities the UK presents, not least thanks to the fantastic cultural and people-to-people links. Furthermore, the UK Government has been working really hard to encourage British businesses to invest in Pakistan. These are exciting times for Pakistan and for the UK's relationship with Pakistan. Increased security, CPEC and growing UK-Pakistani business links are laying the foundation for transformation within the Pakistani business sector and the country's economy, and could be the cornerstone for economic growth for Pakistan.

UKTI has been working successfully in Pakistan for almost 20 years. It is the trade and investment relations arm of the British High Commission in Pakistan helping companies in the UK to increase their competitiveness throughout the country. It also offers professional, authoritative and personalized assistance to help companies in Pakistan locate and expand their business in the UK.

Message from the British High Commissioner on the Eve of Christmas and Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's Birthday

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 29 December 2015

Part of: Arts, culture and sport, Local communities and Pakistan

I would like to wish everyone in Pakistan celebrating Christmas, 'Bara Din Mubarak'.



In his message the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr Philip Barton CMG OBE, said: On behalf of the British High Commission and the people of the United Kingdom, I would like to wish everyone in Pakistan celebrating Christmas, 'Bara Din Mubarak'.

Christmas is a time to celebrate faith and community. I hope all Christians in Pakistan have a safe

and happy Christmas.

On 25 December, the people of Pakistan also celebrate the birthday of Quaid-e-Azam, Muhammed Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan. The principles of his vision for Pakistan: freedom, good governance, tolerance, respect for minorities, the rule of law are just as important today as they were in 1947. This year, the UK also celebrated an important birthday – it is 800 years since the Magna Carta, which established similar principles in England, was sealed.

As I have traveled around Pakistan this year, discussing the Magna Carta and what it means to the people of Pakistan today, I have been struck by the determination to create a better future for the country. This determination is paying off. Pakistan is more secure, more prosperous, more democratic. Real challenges remain, but I have met remarkable people across Pakistan whose energy and enthusiasm for their country fills me with hope for the future.

UK remembers the victims of the Peshawar School attack

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 15 December 2015

Part of: Pakistan

British High Commissioner releases statement on first anniversary of the attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar



Philip Barton CMG OBE, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, has offered his “heartfelt condolences” on the first anniversary of the attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar.

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Philip Barton CMG OBE said:

A year ago today, a barbaric terrorist attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar resulted in the death of over 150 people, the vast majority of them school children. On behalf of the United Kingdom, I would like to express my heartfelt condolences to all those who continue to be affected by that attack. We remember the sacrifice of all those killed in this horrific act of terrorism, in particular those young people cut down in their prime. We salute the courage of their parents and families who continue to suffer.

In recent weeks, countries across the world from France to the Lebanon, from the United States of America to Pakistan have seen terrible acts of indiscriminate violence by those who seek to terrorise our societies. As an international community, we stand united in our determination to stand up to terrorism.

Pakistan has suffered more than most. The United Kingdom stands shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan as it tackles this scourge.

Following the attack on 16 December 2014, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II sent a personal message of condolence to the President of Pakistan, His Excellency Mamnoon Hussain. The British Prime Minister David Cameron also wrote to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The British Chief of the Defence Staff wrote to Pakistan's Chief of the Army Staff, General Raheel, to express the British Armed Forces' heartfelt sympathy.

Gaudhan Aslam of FC COLLEGE wins British High Commission GREAT DEBATE competition

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 13 December 2015

Part of: Pakistan

The Great Debate competition has provided a unique opportunity to celebrate the UK and Pakistan's shared culture of vibrant discussion.



Peter Upton The Head of British Council Pakistan Presenting award to Gaudhan Aslam from Forman Christian College, Lahore who won the GREAT Debate final.

After four of debating across 12 of Pakistan's major cities the finalists gathered in Islamabad on 13 December for the grand final of the British High Commission's Great Debate competition. Launched in September, in collaboration with the British Council, the Great Debate competition has provided a unique opportunity to celebrate the UK and Pakistan's shared culture of vibrant discussion. The competition also served as a platform for students to show their talent in the art of

debating and to test of their skills. Twelve winners were selected from the rounds of Great Debates held in over a hundred universities across the country, including in some of Pakistan's remotest areas such as interior Sindh and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

Peter Upton, the Head of British Council Pakistan was also present at the event. The British Council and the British High Commission are strategic partners in the GREAT Debate competition. The aim of the collaboration is to raise awareness of the UK as an equal partner of Pakistan in the fields of education and culture.

The four prestigious judges of the debates were the British High Commission's Political Counsellor, Jennifer Cole; the Director United National Information Center, Vittorio Cammarota; the Director General, Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, Farman-ullah Anjum; and the prominent TV anchor Sidra Iqbal.

Gadhaun Aslam from Forman Christian College, Lahore won the final beating 11 other finalists selected from the twelve heats held across the country and is awarded a British High Commission scholarship of £2000. The runner up, Iza Afridi, COMSATS University from Abbottabad is awarded a scholarship of £1000.

In addition, all of the finalists were invited to join the British High Commission's newly formed Youth Advisory Board, a platform aimed at generating debate among the youth around issues concerning them and to give advice on the UK's work on education and engagement with young people in Pakistan.

Speaking ahead of the final of the Great Debate, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Philip Barton CMG OBE said:

I am very pleased that the British High Commission's Great Debate has highlighted the talent among the young people of Pakistan. I look forward to hearing more from them as they form our first Youth Advisory Board of Pakistan. The youth of Pakistan make up two-thirds of its population. They have a vital role to play in ensuring economic, political and social progress. We will keep in touch with these 12 unique and gifted students and use their enthusiasm and expertise to help us engage with the wider youth of the country and to promote a culture of debate among the future leaders of Pakistan. I believe Pakistan has a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reshape itself to be the kind of country its people want. I hope the young people of Pakistan will continue to generate a wider conversation about the kind of Pakistan they want in 2047. That is 100 years from the birth of Pakistan. It is also when the young people of today will be leading Pakistan and will have their opportunity to shape the country.

The power to make arguments, to persuade others and to put your point across coherently – is a

really important skill for the future. I am delighted the UK is playing a part in helping young people in Pakistan make the most of the opportunities presented to them.

Speaking at the event, the Head of the British Council Pakistan said:

Words matter the ability to shape ideas, to organise arguments and to put forward a coherent analysis matters. Our world is shaped by words, ideas, and ideals. This event demonstrated how young people in Pakistan have the skills that can shape the future of this country through peaceful debate.

Winning the competition Gaudhan Aslam said

I am overjoyed and honoured to have won the GREAT Debate held by BHC. It was an intriguing roller coaster ride from the Regional round to the Final one. I am surely blessed and it was an awesome learning experience. I thank BHC for arranging a fantastic opportunity!

Impact Evaluation of DFIDs Electoral Programmes in Pakistan

From: Department for International Development

First published: 8 December 2015

Part of: Evaluations completed: April 2014 to March 2015 and Pakistan

This evaluation aims to assess the effectiveness of DFID's election programmes and to inform the design of future election programmes in Pakistan.

Documents



Impact Evaluation of DFIDs Electoral Programmes in Pakistan

PDF, 1.21MB, 77 pages



DFID Management response to Impact Evaluation of DFIDs Electoral Programmes in Pakistan

PDF, 374KB, 4 pages

Detail

DIFD's election programmes in Pakistan are Supporting Electoral Reforms in Pakistan (SERP) and Supporting Transparency, Accountability and Electoral Processes (STAEP) which correspond with the supply and demand sides of electoral reforms respectively. The impact evaluation looks specifically at the contribution of SERP and STAEP to voter turnout in the 2013 elections and to strengthening of democratic processes in Pakistan.

British Council DOSTI project wins International Peace Award

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 4 December 2015

Part of: Pakistan

The DOSTI programme operates in Karachi to bring together vulnerable and ethnically diverse young boys and girls aged 12 to 18 in safe spaces



A Pakistani project has been announced as the winner of the 2015 Peace and Sport Awards ceremony in Monaco this week.

DOSTI, a British Council programme that uses sport to bring stability to young people in Pakistan has won the prestigious international prize for “Adapted Programme of the Year” at the Peace and Sports Awards.

The DOSTI programme operates in Karachi to bring together vulnerable and ethnically diverse young boys and girls aged 12 to 18 in safe spaces to be coached and trained through a Sports and Peace project.

These young leaders and peace advocates work with their own and other communities to promote conflict resolution, harmony and cohesion. The award was presented on at the 8th annual awards ceremony in Monaco, hosted by IAAF President Lord Coe, under the High Patronage of H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco.

Shazia Khawar, the British Council's Director of Society in South Asia, said:

The British Council in Pakistan and the DOSTI Team are deeply honoured to have been recognised

and acknowledged globally at this event and at having won this prestigious award. We believe that dialogue and compassion are better than violence and given the current context of spiralling levels of violence and conflict engaging young people to be peace champions has become even more critical.

The British Council's DOSTI project is active in eight locations or 'centres' in Karachi, targeting 12-18-year-old school-going and community youth. It is implemented by foundations, schools and community organisations with British Council support. The project helps young people and those living in high-conflict zones not only through sport, but also through courses on self-esteem, conflict resolution, substance misuse awareness, life skills, preparation for employment and re-integration into communities. In addition, there are targeted initiatives for groups that need extra support, such as young women and their mothers.

New UK Head of Consular Services commits to supporting British Nationals in Pakistan

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 3 December 2015

Part of: Pakistan

The Consular team's work in Pakistan ranges across wide areas of assistance, with an increasing focus on helping vulnerable British Nationals.



The British High Commissioner Mr. Philip Barton CMG OBE, introduced Mr Jon Ryan as the New Head of Consular Services in Pakistan and Afghanistan at a reception he hosted at his Residence in Islamabad.

The event was attended by partners of the British High Commission's Consular Section, including representatives of Pakistani law enforcement authorities, members of the press, travel agents, and members of the UK's network of consular wardens.

Mr Jon Ryan said about his appointment:

The close relationship between the UK and Pakistan is important. We estimate that over 1.3 million

people in Britain are of Pakistani heritage and this community makes a significant contribution to British cultural and economic life. There are more than 1.0 million journeys every year between our two countries, making Pakistan a priority post for HMG to provide a modern and efficient consular service.

The Consular team's work in Pakistan ranges across wide areas of assistance, with an increasing focus on helping vulnerable British Nationals. We enjoy a close working relationship with Pakistani authorities.

Unfortunately, from time to time, there are challenging cases such as tackling forced marriages and child abductions. Our work encourages a change in attitude around the practice of forced marriages and raising the awareness among young British Nationals that help is available.

Our services also include publishing comprehensive travel advice for visiting British nationals. Ahead of any visit to Pakistan, I encourage everyone in the UK to consult our travel advice.

Lord Maude and Shahbaz Sharif host forum to build trade ties between UK and Pakistan

From: Foreign & Commonwealth Office, UK Trade & Investment and The Rt Hon Lord Maude of Horsham

First published: 2 December 2015

Part of: Pakistan

Trade and investment forum brings together political and business decision makers



Lord Maude, UK Minister for Trade and Investment and Shahbaz Sharif, Chief Minister of Punjab host a high profile a trade and investment forum in London on 2nd December.

The UK-Pakistan Energy and Infrastructure Forum will bring together key political and business decision makers to discuss high value investment and export opportunities between the UK and Pakistan.

Over 150 businesses from the UK, Pakistan and China will be at the event to discuss growing trade, investment and collaboration between the three countries. The event will focus on the energy and

infrastructure sectors, where the UK and Pakistan have already established strong partnerships, and will also explore opportunities to secure investment and contracts in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor.

Lord Maude said:

I am delighted to host this trade forum with Chief Minister of Punjab, Shahbaz Sharif. Pakistan is an important partner for Britain and Punjab is a thriving province at its heart. There has never been a better time for British businesses to invest in Pakistan and I am confident this forum will build partnerships to create jobs and economic growth in both countries.

Over 100 British businesses currently operate in Pakistan whose growing economy is a key target market for the Government's commitment to increase British exports. The Government recently launch a Prosperity Fund of £1.3 billion over the next five years to promote the economic reform and development needed for growth in partner countries, including Pakistan.

Further information

Follow Foreign Office Minister Lord Maude on Twitter @UKTradeMinister

Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter @foreignoffice

Follow the Foreign Office on Facebook and Google+

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British High Commissioner awards fellowships to outstanding Pakistani Journalists

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 26 November 2015

Part of: Pakistan

The 2016 SAJP Fellowship is a tailor-made journalism skills development course developed by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office for high calibre journalists.



The High Commissioner, Mr. Philip Barton CMG OBE, today hosted a ceremony to award fellowships

to seven exceptionally talented journalists from Pakistani media. The High Commissioner presented the fellowship awards under the South Asia Journalism Programme to the selected journalists. The 2016 SAJP Fellowship is a tailor-made journalism skills development course developed by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office for high calibre journalists. The programme will enable journalists to explore different ways in which the media can play a role in democratic processes. It also focuses on the ways in which the media are accountable, and the wider context within which political institutions operate.

The British High Commissioner also welcomed back the 18 Pakistani Scholars from the 2014/15 Chevening Scholarship programme, who have returned from the UK this year after completing their fully-funded one-year master-level studies.

Congratulating the selected Chevening Fellows of the SAJP Programme and welcoming the Chevening Scholars of 2014/15, the British High Commissioner said:

I am pleased to see today the selected fellows of Chevening South Asia Journalism Programme and the returning scholars from the Chevening one year masters programme.

I congratulate the SAJP Fellows on making it through the tough selection process. They should be proud of being selected for the Chevening Fellowship. The South Asia Journalism Programme is unique for this region and the fellowship is a great professional development opportunity to identify and support the next generation of media leaders from the South Asia region.

I also welcome our Chevening class of 2014/15 who have returned to Pakistan with new knowledge, improved confidence and new skills after the successful completion of their courses in the UK. The Chevening Scholarship brings immediate benefits for individual scholars and long-term benefits for the UK and Pakistan by creating a wealth of shared knowledge and skills.

Very few get the opportunity to study in the UK at this level. I hope that those who do develop an appreciation of UK policies and approaches and bear these in mind when contributing to developments in their country.

Contact: Press Attaché, British High Commission, Islamabad; tel. 051 201 2000

Editor's Notes:

Pakistan remains one of the top priority countries for Chevening awards. This year Chevening received record number of applications from across the globe and more eligible application from Pakistan as compared to the last year. This shows the importance the UK puts in its relationship with Pakistan."

The South Asia Journalism Programme Fellows will attend course in London at the University of Westminster's Department of Journalism and Mass Communications. They will participate in seven

weeks of lectures, visits, and discussions that introduce them to key UK academics, media, and political figures in the field. They will also spend time meeting their peers in some of the UK's top media organisations, as well as running a symposium on a topic of their choice in the final week. Following is the list of this year's selected Chevening South Asia Journalism Programme Fellows is:

Sr#	Name	Employer
1.	Tariq Mahmood	92 News Channel
2.	Rasheed Khan Safi	Daily Mashriq Peshawar/Radio Buraq
3.	Fakhar Durrani	The News International
4.	Naureen Shams	FM 107
5.	Alefia Hussain	The News on Sunday - Jang Group of Publications
6.	Nazish Zafar	Geo News
7.	Abdul Waseem Abbasi	The News International

The creation of the alumni-led Chevening Alumni Association of Pakistan offers a platform for participants – whatever field they have chosen to pursue – to share their ideas on how to strengthen Pakistan and to work together for the betterment of the country.

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UK's prestigious Chevening scholarships continues to offer opportunities

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 25 November 2015

Part of: Pakistan

The newly launched Chevening - British Library Fellowship is collaboration between the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British Library.



A fully-funded learning and development opportunity for outstanding professionals has been announced today by The British High Commission. The newly launched Chevening - British Library Fellowship is collaboration between the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British Library. The Fellowship offers international experts from South Asia and Africa region a year-long professional research placement in the UK. One of the two fellowships focuses on the acquisition and preservation of news in South Asia, and the other on how big data and open data benefit libraries across the world.

Applications are now open for the Chevening/British Library Professional Fellowships, which are tenable from 2016/2017 and will provide a 12 month long opportunity to carry out research at the British Library. Selected fellows will benefit from embedded working and hands-on training within a specific team, as well as having access to a range of organisational training and development opportunities, such as the British Library's Digital Scholarship programme.

The British Library is the United Kingdom's national library, and is one of the world's greatest research libraries, housing a collection exceeding 150 million items developed over 250 years. The fellowships will capitalise on the breadth and depth of the Library's collections and expertise, enabling new types of research, informing strategy, and fostering international collaboration. Candidates with personal, intellectual, and interpersonal attributes reflecting their potential to rise to positions of leadership and influence are encouraged to apply. More details are available [Share this page](#).

British High Commissioner Commits that UK will remain “Shoulder-To-Shoulder” with Pakistan

From: British High Commission Islamabad

First published: 17 November 2015

Part of: Pakistan

The UK and Pakistan's relationship stands on very strong foundations - British High Commissioner



In a speech at the Institute of Strategic Studies (ISSI) today, the British High Commissioner described the relationship between the UK and Pakistan as getting stronger.

At the invitation of the Director General of ISSI, Ambassador Masood Khan, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. Philip Barton CMG OBE addressed a senior audience on Pakistan-United Kingdom Relations, as part of ISSI's Ambassador's Platform 2015. The British High Commissioner highlighted people-to-people ties, development assistance, economic and trade relations and, particularly in the wake of the recent terrorist attacks, security co-operation.

The British High Commissioner, Philip Barton CMG OBE said:

The UK and Pakistan's relationship stands on very strong foundations. Over 1.1 million UK nationals claim their heritage from Pakistan; a quarter of a million British nationals visit Pakistan every year; some 7,000 Pakistani students have studied in the UK in each of the last few years.

Bilateral relations are in excellent shape across the board and the top of the two governments know each other well. The economic prosperity side of bilateral relations has been my personal priority and bilateral trade in 2014 increased by 15% compared to the previous year.

In response to the terrorist attacks in Paris, the British High Commissioner said:

Terrorists killed and injured hundreds of innocent people in the French capital. As our Prime Minister has made clear, the UK stands with France and with the victims of terrorism everywhere.

I am very conscious that the people of Pakistan have suffered more than most from terrorism and violence. The horrific, unjustifiable attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar a year ago shocked the world. The UK continues to stand shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan as it tackles terrorism and extremism.

We are providing training to build the capacity of the Pakistani police and judiciary. We have trained over 5000 military and civilian personnel to counter improvised explosive devices. We are also supporting the Pakistani authorities' efforts to implement the National Action Plan agreed in the aftermath of the Peshawar attack.

For more information please contact the British High Commission at +92 51 201 2000

All the latest news is available on the British High Commission Pakistan website at

www.gov.uk/world/pakistan

Follow the British High Commissioner on Twitter @PhilipRBarton

You can also follow the British High Commission on twitter@UKinPakistan, on FaceBook

Bridge - Europa is nonpartisan and an effort to share and publish the news of diversity, harmony and mutual understanding to bridge nations and inform people directly about how humanitarian aid is positively changing lives in Pakistan

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