

Bridge Communications & Research – BCR

604-280 Morningside Ave, Toronto, Canada, Phone 647 975 7611, email:
naemasiatrade@hotmail.com Web <http://bridgecommunicationsandresearch.com/index.html>

Bridge-Europa - July 2015

Part of Pakistan Awareness Initiative -PAI

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

CONTEXT

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Editor's Note

We offer an apology to our readers for not publishing BridgeUS on time for the past few months. As we and our readers know that we face many risks and resources issues to move on with our mission to seed harmony and love between Pakistan and the West. We are working without proper supplies, means and budget. During past few months, our site was locked up; relocation and safety were among many things to pass. We are still dicing with death but encouraged by the impact factor of both BridgeUS and BridgeEuropa and also by our readers whose morale support keeps us going.

As we speak, Pakistan is going through acute shortages of electricity and drinking water. Dejectedly, the problem is here for a long time and successor governments have absolutely failed to deliver the basics of lives to people. Evil and sweltering heat wave claimed more than 2500 reported lives in Karachi alone, cemeteries and morgues squeezed to the capacity and people were frantically running to find spaces for burial and keep the dead ones cool. People's cries were shrugged off by both the provincial and federal authorities. The Prime Minister bothered to visit the city after the departure of heat wave and to chair a high ranking meeting with no avail. Hundreds of deaths could have been avoided if the power supplies would not be disrupted and if the authorities were sincere to serve the public. Who is responsible of these deaths like thousands of others during past few years? Both the Federal and the provincial governments are equally guilty for this criminal negligence. The government added insult to the dying people by not questioning or firing the incapable corrupt ministers, official or the office bearers of the concern departments. The Prime Minister of Pakistan and the so called chief minister of Sindh are as helpless as a mouse in front of a big cat to deal with K-Electric or the responsible of this national tragedy. They need to come out of the burrows and face public! The Prime Minister along with his henchmen busy to negotiate and have his name cleared from the soi-disant National Accountability Bureau – NAB as the incumbents still under investigation in many corruption cases.

Sincerely

Syed Naeem Uddin

Editor/ Publisher

Belgium: Local Newsletter of the Embassy of Belgium in Islamabad

Helicopter crash in northeastern Pakistan date: 08 May 2015

It was with great sadness that Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Didier Reynders learned of the tragic helicopter crash in the region of Gilgit Baltistan, in northeastern Pakistan. The helicopter transported diplomats to the opening ceremony of a tourism project. Didier Reynders expresses his condolences to the families and relatives of the Pakistani pilots and crew, the ambassadors of Norway and the Philippines, as well as the wives of the ambassadors of Malaysia and Indonesia which unfortunately didn't survive this tragedy. Minister Reynders is also concerned about the people that were injured during the crash and wishes them a quick recovery.

France: Iftar at the Quai d'Orsay (Paris, July 9th 2015)



Excerpts from the daily press briefing by Romain Nadal, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development' spokesman

This evening the Quai d'Orsay is holding an Iftar dinner for the ambassadors of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation member states and leading Islamic officials in France. (Iftar is the meal that breaks the daily Ramadan fast.) Held each year, the event will be hosted, exceptionally, by European Affairs

minister Harlem Désir as its usual host, Foreign Minister Fabius, has been detained in Vienna by the nuclear talks with Iran.

Mr. Fabius wanted this Iftar meal to place a special focus on the 2015 Paris Climate Conference. Several members of the climate negotiating team will be present and will brief the ambassadors on preparations for COP21.

COP 21 featured on Radio Pakistan in 2015



Pr. Khalid Malik Riaz and Mr. Muhammad Uzair Khan interviewed in Urdu by Ms Anjum Shamim

In collaboration with the Embassy of France in Pakistan and the United Nations Information Centre in Pakistan, Radio Pakistan PBC (Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation), the Pakistan's National Radio, has launched a cycle of twelve radio programs on climate and the COP 21 in English and Urdu. These

shows will take place twice a month until December 2015, when the United Nations Climate Change Conference will be held in Paris.

The first show was held on June 8, on the occasion of the World Environment Day. It was attended, besides the Embassy of France and the United Nations Information Centre, by Prof. Dr. Khalid Riaz, Researcher at the Centre for Climate Research and Development of COMSATS University, and Mr. Malik Muhammad Uzair Khan, a young Member National Assembly (MNA) of Pakistan.



Mr. Vittorio Camarotta, Director of UNIC and Mr. Olivier Van Huynh, Cooperation Attaché at the Embassy of France, interviewed by Mr. Javed Khan Jadoon, Vice President of PBC.

“Open Doors Program”: French researcher Stephane Dudoignon in

Pakistan (18-27 May)



In the framework of the “Open Doors” program jointly led by the Embassy of France and the Alliances françaises of Lahore and Karachi, French researcher Stéphane Dudoignon tours Pakistan and gives several lectures in Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore.

Stéphane Dudoignon is a Senior Research Fellow in the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) of France and a Lecturer at the School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences (EHESS) of Paris.

His major theme of interest is the history of modern-day Islam in the former Russian Empire and in the Middle East, with special interest in the connections and exchanges between the Iranian and Turkic worlds and South Asia.

He has recently edited *Allah’s Kolkhozes: Mass-Migration, Destalinisation, Privatisation and the Muslim Congregations in the Soviet Realms (1950s-2000s)* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2014) and written *Marginal Hegemons: The Baluch, Sunnism and the State in Iran, from Riza Shah to Khaminayi (1928-2013)*, forthcoming.

To know more about “Open Doors” program: [click here](#)

Participation of Pakistan to the World Wide Views debate on climate and energy (6 June 2015)



Group photo of the participants of global debate

A global “World Wide Views” debate on climate and energy took place on 6 June, 2015 involving 10,400 citizens from 83 countries, 5 continents and 15 islands on the same day. In Pakistan, one hundred citizens participated to this day of information and deliberation allowing them to give their views on five key-subjects of the negotiations of the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) to be held in Paris in December 2015.

The website of “World Wide Views” enabled citizens to grasp the issues of international negotiations and to be part of public decisions. The same protocol was applied from one country to another, so that the results are consolidated and respect the same criteria of quality. The overall results will be available from 7 June on their website.

This ambitious project was organized in Pakistan by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, SDPI, with support from the Technological University COMSATS Islamabad and with support from the Embassy of France in Islamabad. It was co-initiated worldwide by the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the National Commission for public debate, the Danish Board of Technology Foundation and the Public Missions offices. The initiative was labeled COP21 and the Secretariat of the UNFCCC recognized it as part of the negotiation process.

The recommendations made by the citizens on the occasion of the World Wide Views on Climate and Energy in June 2015 will also be presented to negotiators during the inter-sessional period from 15

June 2015, during a big event in Paris, at J- 60 of the COP21.



Inauguration of the event by Mr. Mushahid Ullah Khan, Minister for Climate Change (at the centre), with the participation of Mrs. Rumina Khursheed Alam, MNA, Mr. Abid Suleri, Director SDPI, Mr. Tariq Buner, Scientist, member of the IPCC and two representatives of the French Embassy in Pakistan



Round Table: Participants of global debate look into the questions



Round Table: Participants of global debate look into the questions



Cloture of global debate: final clapping



WORLD WIDE VIEWS ON CLIMATE AND ENERGY - JUNE 6, 2015



Participating countries around the globe

For more information, click here: <http://climateandenergy.wvviews.org/>

Open Doors 2015: Interactions with Pakistani Civil Society



INTERACTIONS WITH PAKISTANI CIVIL SOCIETY

OPEN DOORS

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The Embassy of France in Pakistan and Alliances Françaises Karachi & Lahore have jointly launched an "Open Doors in Pakistan" program. A series of lectures and workshops in different partner institutions as well as Alliances Françaises will take place in 2015. This program will give the opportunity to share with Pakistani intellectuals, academics, students and journalists the works of French anthropologists, economists and opinion-makers on different topics related to Pakistan and its region and to develop links between French academics and intellectuals and their Pakistani counterparts. The overall aim of this program is to initiate a perennial dialogue with the Pakistani civil society.

last conferences:

- ▶ [LAURENT GAYER \(March, 2015\)](#)
- ▶ [FARZANA SHAIKH \(March , 2015\)](#)
- ▶ [JEAN-PIERRE PERRIN \(March , 2015\)](#)
- ▶ [JEAN-JOSEPH BOILLOT \(April , 2015\)](#)
- ▶ [MICHEL BOIVIN \(April , 2015\)](#)
- ▶ [STEPHANE DUDOIGNON \(May , 2015\)](#)
- ▶ [NAUSHEEN H ANWAR \(May , 2015\)](#)

Ambassador's visit to University of Agriculture of Faisalabad – May 18-19 2015



Awarding of the Palmes

Academiques at the rank of Officer to Dr. Iqrar Ahmed Khan, Vice Chancellor of the University of Agriculture Faisalabad, during the annual professors' dinner.



Opening of the “International Conference on Climate Change Issues and COP 21,” organized on May 19th by the University of Agriculture Faisalabad. Alain Gioda, researcher at the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement and specialist on climate change and energy transition, contributed to the conference.

The Ambassador spoke about the engagements of France in the preparation for the COP21 as well as



about the “Solutions Agenda.”



Visit to the Food Technology Transfer Center and the inauguration of the bakery

Established in October 2013, the Center is a concrete proof of the support of France to the University of Agriculture Faisalabad. The project was carried out in close cooperation with the French teams from AgroCampus in Rennes. The materials were selected under the advice of French researchers and purchases were made in France by mobilizing French enterprises. Three sectors are concerned: milk processing, cereal processing, and oil seeds processing. This pilot project aims to prove that it is possible to bridge the development gap between the countryside and the urban areas by installing limited size processing factories that are capable of producing processed goods of more or less the same quality as those from large factories. This is an important issue for the rural communities. The last component to put in place was the bakery, which started its activities in May 2015.

Dernière modification : 11/06/2015

Economic Diplomacy in Faisalabad- Punjab (18-19 May 2015)



H.E. Mrs. Martine Dorance, Ambassador of France to Pakistan, was received at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Faisalabad on 18th May 2015.

She met with the President of the FCCI, Mr. Rizwan Ashraf, and attended a meeting in which the members of the consular institution were invited. On this occasion, the Ambassador spoke about the excellent ties between France and Pakistan and the desire of France to strengthen her economic relations with Pakistan and with the city of Faisalabad in particular. The granting of the EU GSP + status to Pakistan, an opportunity for Faisalabad companies, had to be availed particularly in the textile and agro-industrial sectors in order to increase their exports to Europe. The Ambassador highlighted the importance of the compliance by Pakistan of its obligations regarding the implementation of 27 international conventions related to the GSP +.

The Ambassador visited Faisalabad Water Treatment Plant on 19th May, financed through a loan from the French Treasury for an amount of € 33 million. Launched by Vinci, this station (under construction, its start is scheduled by end of 2015) is expected to meet the drinking water needs of one third of the population of Faisalabad. 80% of available water will be used for domestic purposes and 20% will be intended for industrial use.

Alliance Française de Karachi is hosting the Label FFL.PAK awarding ceremony Friday 10 April 2015, Conference Hall, 6.00 pm



For the first time, Alliance Française de Karachi organizes the LABEL FFL.PAK AWARDING CEREMONY (French as a Foreign Language certified teacher label)

Alliance Française de Karachi – Friday 10 April 2015, Conference Hall, 6.00 pm



Mrs Martine Herlem-Hamidi, Counsellor for Cooperation and Cultural Affairs at the Embassy of France, is coming especially from Islamabad to award 7 French teachers, only in Karachi.

All Alliance's partners as well as non-partner schools, universities and institutes are invited through their representatives (teachers, rectors, heads of languages departments, course coordinators, etc.)



to attend this ceremony.

The FFL.PAK Label is the result of a quality-assurance approach initiated and conducted by the Cooperation and *Cultural Affairs Section* of the Embassy of France, in collaboration with the Alliance Française network in Pakistan. By this process, the Embassy of France aims at the identification, recognition and promotion of the teachers who present the required guarantees of quality for the teaching of French as a Foreign Language (FFL). The FFL.PAK Label is set up to provide sustainable quality-oriented solutions to the ever-increasing demand for FFL (French as a Foreign Language) teachers in Pakistan

Its objective is twofold:

First, the Embassy of France will support the FFL teachers in developing a personalized approach to their professional development. To this end, an annual training programme has been established at national level.

Second, by offering this quality benchmark, the Embassy of France also intends to help educational institutions in Pakistan to recruit FFL teachers qualified to provide modern and reliable FFL courses based on demand, context and students' profile.



In the context of academic and professional mobility, the Embassy of France intends to make this label a major instrument for supporting the quality of FFL teachings in Pakistan. Therefore, it promotes the label-awarded teachers through the network of its partner educational institutions and Alliances Françaises.

Context: According to the *World Population Prospects* of the United Nations (2013 study), the global French speaking population might reach 1 billion people in 2060, making French the second or third most spoken language in the world. More and more Pakistani educational institutions come to the conclusion that speaking French is a strong asset in today's global world. Formerly reserved to the most prestigious schools and universities, French courses are now offered in an everincreasing number of institutions all across the country. In 2014, there are more than 10 000 French learners in Pakistan and this number keeps increasing. Moreover, four Alliances Françaises (French language and cultural centres) are present in Pakistan: in Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi and, since this year, Faisalabad.

More information : <http://www.afkarachi.com/spip.php?r...>

marion.rolland@afkarachi.com

French participation in Lahore Literature Festival: Laurent Gayer presents his book "The orderly disorder: the violent Karachi Factory" (21

February 2015)



Like every year, the month of February has been synonymous with literary and exchange encounters in Lahore. This year the French presence was asserted thanks to the participation of Mr. Laurent Gayer, In-charge of research at CNRS/CERI-Sciences Po, Specialist of the subcontinent and particularly of urban dynamics and violent mobilizations in India and Pakistan.

His latest book, *Karachi. Ordered Disorder and the Struggle for the City*, published by Hurst (London), HarperCollins (Delhi) and Oxford University Press (New York and Karachi) has attracted many comments and enthusiastic speeches.

As the result of a long investigation on armed conflicts and the "ordered disorders" specific to the unique metropolis of Pakistan, this book defends the idea that a form of order has emerged in Karachi during recent decades, despite - and sometimes under - its chronic violence. Characterized by the logic of domination, the rituals of political interaction and relatively stable forms of arbitration, despite their consubstantial violence, this "ordered disorder" has made the violence manageable by the people of Karachi - which does not exclude a feeling of throbbing insecurity, resulting from continuous transformations of these conflicts throughout their updating.

Two well attended interventions of the researcher animated debates last Friday 20th February and Saturday 21st February with ambitious topics "Writing and living the globalized cities" and "Metropolises and Violence".

Karachi has been thus a subject of study in Lahore and the city of light "Roshni Ka Shehr" in Urdu language, and which never sleeps, has once again mobilized passions.

This event contributes to the debates of ideas initiated by the Department for Cooperation and Cultural Action of the French Embassy in Islamabad and the French Alliances in Pakistan during the year 2015. It echoes the "Open Doors" program. (<http://www.ambafrance-pk.org/Open-D...>)

French Development Agency- Proparco invests USD 20 million to support wind energy in Pakistan



PROPARCO, the private sector arm of the French Development Agency, is investing USD 20 million to support a new wind farm in Sindh province, part of efforts to support renewable power generation and drive economic development across Pakistan.

PROPARCO's investment in Gul Ahmed Wind Power, an independent power producer, will help the company build and operate the 50-megawatt facility northeast of Karachi.

The project is expected to bolster electricity supplies in Pakistan, where frequent power cuts hamper social and economic development, and cost the country the equivalent of 2 percent of gross domestic product. An approximate 130 GWh per year is expected to be added to the national grid.

The new plant will create jobs (more than 500 during the construction phase and 50 on a long term basis) and help spur growth. The plant will make its greatest contributions during the high-demand summer months, when wind farms generate most of their electricity. It will provide an environmentally-friendly source of power, helping Pakistan cut back on the use of polluting and expensive fossil fuels by reducing the carbon footprint of the country by an approximate 60,000 tons of CO₂-equivalent per year.

Chief Executive Officer of PROPARCO, Claude Périou welcomed "this joint operation with the Infracore Asia, IFC and local Pakistani banks, which is fully in line with AFD Group's strategy against climate

change. This project will contribute not only to reducing pressure on the country's power grid, but also to encouraging the development of strong, reliable and clean energy in the region. It is the third investment of PROPARCO in the energy sector in Pakistan."

ABOUT PROPARCO is a Development Finance Institution jointly held by **Agence Française de Développement (AFD)** and public and private shareholders from the North and South. Its mission is to catalyze private investment in emerging and developing countries with the aim of supporting growth, sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). PROPARCO is one of the main bilateral development finance institutions in the world. It invests on four continents encompassing the major emerging countries and the poorest countries, particularly in Africa, and has a high level of requirements in terms of social and environmental responsibility. For more information, visit: www.proparco.fr

Dernière modification : 16/04/2015

The talented French violinist, Vadim Tchijik, performs in Islamabad (Islamabad, 8 April 2015)



At the invitation of the Ambassador of France in Pakistan Mrs. Martine Dorance, the talented French violinist Vadim Tchijik gave a violin recital at the Serena Hotel, sponsors of the event, in Islamabad on Tuesday, April 7, 2015.

The guests had a chance to hear wonderful interpretation of Bach, Kreisler, Paganini, and Ysaye.

Prodigy and virtuoso, Vadim gave his first concert at the age of 8. He studied music at the

Tchaikovsky Central Music School in Moscow as well as at the National Superior Conservatory of Music in Lyon.

Presently, he teaches violin at the Regional Conservatory of Toulouse and gives master-classes in Europe and Asia. He is also an artistic director at the International Music Festival of Hyères.

Second meeting in Paris of the Pakistan-France Administrative Commission on Economic and Commercial matters



The second session of the Administrative Commission Pakistan-France on economic and commercial matters (COMIX ECO) was held on 16 March, 2015 at Bercy at The General Directorate of the Treasury (Dgtresor).

It materializes the commitment made after the first meeting on the 24th September, 2013, held in Islamabad, to organize this commission annually alternately in the two countries. The Pakistani delegation, headed by the Secretary of EAD (Economic Affairs Division), also included three other representatives (CEO of Alternative Development Board, Director General of the Board of Investment, Director Planning of the Ministry of Railways) and the Ambassador of Pakistan to France.

The French delegation, led by the Deputy Director at Dgtresor, comprised, besides the Ambassador of France to Pakistan and the Head of the Economic Department of the French Embassy in Islamabad, representatives of several sub-directorates of Dgtresor, AFD (French Agency for Development), France Expertise, Railways France and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development.

The two sides acknowledged the excellent bilateral relations in economic and commercial fields while recognizing that commercial exchanges and investments were far from reflecting the potential of

both countries.

Having reviewed the economic situation of France and Europe on one hand and that of Pakistan on the other hand, the two delegations reviewed the commitments made at the first session of the COMIX ECO. They decided to continue to expand the fields of intervention of the technical assistance provided by France Expertise to Pakistani agencies and institutions.

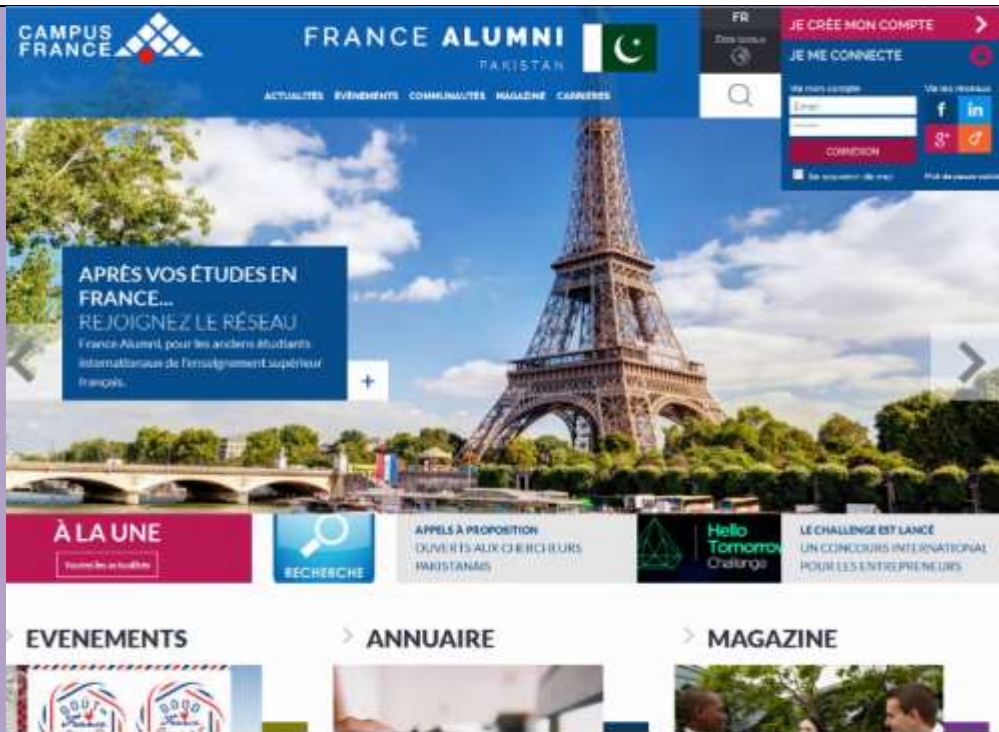
The use of French financial vehicles (RPE and AFD) for the realization of new projects in Pakistan in the areas of water, sanitation, renewable energy and more widely relating to the protection of environment has been confirmed. The opening of these funds to the railway sector will be appraised by the Dgtresor given the importance of the projects that the Pakistani authorities wish to realize in this field and the interest shown by concerned French operators.

The will of both sides to strengthen economic relations between the two countries was discussed and should materialize during this year by the organization of a mission of French businessmen to Pakistan headed by MEDEF as well as a road show in France led by the Pakistan Board of Investment to attract French investors to Pakistan.

The next COMIX ECO will be held in Islamabad in 2016.

Dernière modification : 11/05/2015

Launching of the website “France Alumni Pakistan” (Islamabad, March 3, 2015)



On 3rd March 2015, the Embassy of France in Islamabad presented the Pakistani version of the social network France Alumni to the members of the Pakistani French Alumni Network, a network of former Pakistani scholars who studied in France.

The international version of the digital platform of France Alumni was launched on 26th November 2014 by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Laurent Fabius. This social network allows hundreds of thousands of foreign students who study each year in France to stay in touch with the French culture, schools, universities and companies, once their stay in France is completed.

This international website is complemented by local websites, animated by the Embassies. In Pakistan, this website will inform members about the possibilities of scholarships, collaborations with French universities and cultural events in Pakistan. It also offers an opportunity to tie new economic and academic partnerships, between French companies and universities and the alumni.

<http://www.francealumni.fr/fr/poste>

Germany

Federal Foreign Minister Steinmeier congratulates Muslims on the beginning of the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan



[Enlarge image](#) (© colourbox) At the start of the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, Federal Foreign Minister Steinmeier addresses Muslims throughout the world:

"I would like to congratulate all Muslims in Germany and throughout the world on the start of Ramadan! I hope that all of you will be able to celebrate this special month with your families in peace.

Unfortunately that is not something we can take for granted. I know from my conversations that many Muslims are deeply concerned about the almost daily reports of violence, war and terrorism in many parts of the world.

My wish for all of us is that Ramadan, a time of reconciliation and compassion, may this year also be a month of hope."

Change Agents for a better tax culture



[Enlarge image](#) Dr. Ashfaque H. Khan, Dean S3H signs the declaration of being a change agent for a better Pakistan. (© GIZ GmbH)

The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) in cooperation with the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST) carried out an event to create change agents amongst students for a better tax culture in Pakistan. The taxpayer education event consisted of a half-day session with presentations by FBR officials on taxation as well as a theatre play and speeches by students about tax compliance. In the afternoon, a tax fair gave students the opportunity to collect information about the taxation system in Pakistan and enter into dialogues with tax officials. The event is part of a campaign called "Banaey Naujawan Behter Pakistan" (The youth will make a better Pakistan).

The morning session of the event was opened by Mr. Tariq Bajwa, Chairman FBR, as well as the Dean of the NUST Business School and leading economist Dr. Ashfaque Hasan Khan.



[Enlarge image](#) Students signing the declaration of being change agents for a better Pakistan (© Giz GmbH)

The Chairman encouraged the students to become change agents and “expand social media discussion on taxes to a critical mass that prompts an actual change in society.”

Dr. Ashfaque Hasan Khan stressed the importance of a well-functioning taxation system to make Pakistan become a financially self-sustained country and voiced the fact “that our youth at 100 million less than 22 years of age, can be the catalyst to bring such change”.

The whole morning session was moderated by Mr. Talat Hussain, a renowned Pakistani journalist who encouraged the students to use their social media platforms and outreach to support the campaign and advocate for tax compliance. The proceedings of the sessions were followed on Twitter: #agentsofchange

In the afternoon, the students signed a declaration that they, as change agents, will educate fellow citizens on the importance of taxation to improve the tax culture in Pakistan and play their part in making Pakistan a prosperous country.

The event is one measure in the campaign “Banaey Naujawan Behter Pakistan” (The youth will make a better Pakistan) supported by the Support to Good Governance Programme, implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of BMZ.

The objective of the campaign is to make young people act as change agents to advocate for an improved tax culture for the tax system of Pakistan amongst their peers and families. NUST University was included in designing and carrying out the event and act as the first change agents. Their role in the future will be to advocate for a better tax culture and tax compliance in social media and amongst their peers with the support of FBR.

Facebook Page of the Campaign: <https://www.facebook.com/bnbpak>

Twitter: #agentsofchange



[Enlarge image](#) Mr. Talat Hussain - a renowned journalist of Pakistan led through the event (© GIZ GmbH)

The Netherlands

Strengthening Labour Inspection Systems In Pakistan

Media Briefing: News article | July 7, 2015

The Netherlands has signed a 3-year agreement with the International Labour Organisation to support the Government of Pakistan in strengthening the country's labour inspections.

This unique partnership aims to support the Government of Pakistan, workers and employers organizations in developing measures to revitalise the country's Labour Inspection machinery. Such improvements are imperative to keep Pakistan's textile sector attractive internationally, especially given the advantageous trade conditions offered to Pakistan under GSP+.



Executive Certificate in Agribusiness Management (ECAM)

Collaboration in Agribusiness

News article | June 24, 2015

Acting ambassador Karel Hartogh signed a contract providing for Dutch sponsorship of participants and guest speakers for the Executive Certificate in Agribusiness Management (ECAM) programme at the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS).

ECAM is a year-long modular programme offered at LUMS that is designed to provide participants with leading-edge managerial know-how and skills considered essential to operate successfully in the high-stakes agribusiness environment where opportunities are expanding rapidly along with the growing population.

Speaking at the ceremony held at LUMS, Mr Hartogh said that “We’re very happy to continue our collaboration with LUMS, which is truly a world-class university. This agribusiness programme will help in developing Pakistan’s corporate agriculture, a sector in which there are so many opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation between our two countries.”



Online Appointment System

News article | June 19, 2015

To improve our service to the public, the Netherlands Embassy and Gerry's have implemented a visa appointment system. This means long waiting hours at the Gerry's facility are history.

You can now very conveniently make an online appointment through the Gerry's website or Gerry's

Help Line: 0900-07860 (from landlines) and 9999 (from mobiles). see [link](#)

If you have any questions about visas to the Netherlands, please visit our [consular page](#)

Dance4Life - A Pakistan experience

News article | June 18, 2015

A celebratory event was held yesterday in Islamabad to mark the milestone of reaching out to 50,000 adolescents to inspire and empower them to make healthy choices.

Dance4life, funded by the Government of the Netherlands and implemented in Pakistan by RutgersWPF, focuses primarily on high schools reaching out to young people between the ages of 12 and 18.

The programme empowers, educates and provides basic knowledge, skills and confidence the youth need to protect their health and promote safe sex choices. Thus we hope to bring about an end to AIDS.

In 2014 only, its programs and activities reached 250.000 youngsters in more than 20 countries including Pakistan. In total Dance4life has mobilized almost 1.9 million young people over the last ten years.



Dance4life Ambassadors relating their journey with the programme.

Minister Koenders condoles

News article | May 27, 2015

Mr Bert Koenders, Netherlands Minister of Foreign Affairs, sent a condolence letter to Mr Sartaj Aziz, advisor to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs, expressing his sympathy for

the tragic helicopter accident on May 8th.

“My thoughts are with the family and friends of the pilots and crew member, may they find the strength to come to terms with their loss”. see [here](#) for full text.

Ambassador De Vink is in the Netherlands undergoing treatment for the injuries he sustained. He thanks everyone for the many messages of support and prayers he has received.

International Energy Charter

News article | May 26, 2015

Congratulations to Pakistan, which has joined the group of countries that are part of the International Energy Charter. Pakistan's Charge d'Affaires, Mr Shoaib Sarwar, officially signed the charter during the Energy Charter Conference hosted by the Netherlands last week.

The Energy Charter is an effort to improve international cooperation and investment in energy. For more information see <http://www.encharter.org>.

Update on Ambassador

News article | May 12, 2015

Ambassador Marcel de Vink safely arrived in the Netherlands, where he will be receiving further treatment. We thank everyone for the continued support and warm wishes.

King's Day Celebrations in Islamabad

Marking a Good Year in Pakistan-Dutch Relations.

News article | May 1, 2015

The King's Day Celebrations were used to express the gratitude to the many partners and friends of the Embassy who help strengthen the bond between Pakistan and the Netherlands.



Launching of Rights Expression, Assembly, Association and Thought (REAT) Secretariat.

News article | April 19, 2015

In order to reinforce the capacity of Pakistan's civil society to protect and promote their human rights, Ambassador De Vink, Chairman of the REAT Network Mr. Krishan Sharma, and DG of the Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights Mr Muhammad Arshad jointly launched the REAT secretariat earlier this week.(See speaking points attached)

Norway



Photo: Picture: regjeringen.no

Malala meets Prime Minister Solberg of Norway

Last updated: 08.07.2015 //

Malala Yousafzai from Pakistan participated in the Education for Development summit in Oslo 6-7 July. This was the first time Malala was back in Oslo after being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in December last year as the youngest laureate in history.

Malala met with Prime Minister Erna Solberg of Norway during the summit. PM Solberg emphasized the importance of Malala's work for giving education to girls in the world.

Leaders from all over the world met in Oslo on 6–7 July to garner support for a joint effort to promote education in countries affected by conflict, crisis and poverty. Prime Minister Erna Solberg and Minister of Foreign Affairs Børge Brende opened the Oslo Summit on Education for Development, together with Malala and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Crown Prince Haakon attended the opening of the summit.

For the first time, heads of state and government, ministers, the leaders of a number of UN organisations and representatives of civil society, international organisations and the private sector gathered together to make a concerted effort to promote global education. Over 120 million children and young people are currently out of school. They risk becoming a lost generation if we don't secure increased funding for education and teachers' salaries, and if we fail to protect children in areas affected by war and conflict, to include children with disabilities, and to increase the number of girls who complete an education' said Norway's Foreign Minister Brende.

Norwegian company to build 150 MW solar power plant in Sindh

Last updated: 08.07.2015 //

The Norwegian company Scatec Solar and the Pakistani company Nizam Energy have entered into a joint venture to build three 50 MW solar power plants in Sindh. On 7 July the two companies signed an agreement worth USD 300 million in Oslo under the auspices of Prime Minister Erna Solberg and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

The construction of these power plants is very rapid. The goal is to begin delivering electricity to the grid in July 2016. If the first three plants are commercially successful, there is the possibility of building another 150 MW in a second stage, totalling capacity built at 300 MW.

Scatec Solar ASA is listed on the Oslo Stock Exchange and has developed several large solar power

plants in Africa and Central America.

Prime Minister Sharif visits Norway

Last updated: 08.07.2015 //

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited Oslo, Norway 6-8 July. He participated in the Education for Development summit and discussed the importance of education for girls.

In a meeting with Prime Minister Erna Solberg of Norway the prime ministers highlighted the importance of education in fighting intolerance and radicalisation. PM Sharif participated as speaker in one of the panel discussions at the international summit. The summit was attended also by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala and other high level delegates.

The prime ministers also discussed the good bilateral relations between the countries and regional issues, including the improving relationship to Afghanistan and the fight against terrorism. Norway is contributing NOK 100 million annually in development assistance to Pakistan.

Prime Minister Sharif also met with Crown Prince Haakon of Norway.

Norway's Ambassador to Pakistan has died in a helicopter crash

Last updated: 08.05.2015 // The Pakistani authorities have confirmed reports that Norway's Ambassador to Pakistan, Leif Holger Larsen, has died in a helicopter crash in the country.

'It is with great sorrow that we received the news today that Ambassador Leif Holger Larsen has died in Pakistan. Our thoughts are with his close family and friends.

'Leif Holger Larsen was one of our best and most experienced diplomats. He was a much loved and respected colleague. Many people in the Ministry and in our missions abroad are grieving the loss of a good friend and colleague,' said Minister of Foreign Affairs Børge Brende

Mr Brende spoke today to Pakistan's National Security and Foreign Affairs Adviser, Sartaj Aziz, who informed him that Ambassador Larsen had been on a trip organised by the Pakistani authorities, together with around 20 other diplomats, in the Gilgit-Baltistan area in the north of the country.

'We understand that several people have been killed or injured in the accident, and we offer our condolences to their families and friends,' said Mr Brende.

Ambassador Larsen had worked for the Foreign Service since 1984, when he joined as a trainee. He

was Norway's Special Envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan before he was appointed Ambassador to Pakistan in September last year.

Leif Holger Larsen was 61, and leaves behind him a wife and a son.

Opening of Shahi Hamam in Lahore

Last updated: 22.06.2015 //

On 14 June, Mr Lars Nordrum, chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Islamabad and Mr Akbar Ali Pesnani, board chairman of Aga Khan Cultural Services Pakistan (AKCSP), opened the newly restored 17th century Shahi Hamam inside the Delhi Gate of the Walled City in Lahore. Representatives from the provincial government of Punjab, AKCSP, the Walled City of Lahore Authority (WCLA) and the Norwegian Honorary Consulate in Lahore were also present at the opening ceremony.

Over the past two years, Norway has co-funded the restoration of this historic hamam together with WCLA. The actual works were completed by AKCSP in close cooperation with WCLA. The total cost of the restoration is around 70 million PKR (4,8 million NOK)

Built in 1635 by Hakim Ilmuddin Wazir Khan, Governor of Lahore at the time it served as a traditional bathhouse for the city's inhabitants and visitors. Constructed in the style of Turkish and Persian hamams from the same period, Shahi Hamam represents a unique cultural heritage in South-Asia due to its size and the wall frescoes inside dating from Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan's era.

Shahi Hamam is now open to Lahore residents and tourists who would like to get a glimpse into how traditional bathhouses were constructed, adorned and operated. The restoration has uncovered the original heating and drainage systems as well as the original entrance to the building.

Sweden 18 May 2015

Two Pakistani students rewarded with the Global Swede award

On 12 May foreign students who excelled in innovation and entrepreneurship were rewarded with the Global Swede award at the Swedish Foreign Ministry. Two Pakistani students, Ahsan Shafiq from the University of Borås and Tazeen Zehra Naqvi from Linnaeus University, were among those who received the Award.

Global Swede, which was arranged for the fifth year, is an event in which the Swedish Institute

together with the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs recognizes foreign college students trained in Sweden.

The award was presented by Enterprise and Innovation Minister Mikael Damberg, together with the Swedish Institute Director General Annika Rembe.

U.K.

Did you know?

Last year, Muslims in the UK donated around £100m to charity, much of which was during Ramadan. This year it is likely to be even more.

Click for wonderful details <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z82mtfr#ztyvgk7>

Ref: British High Commission Islamabad FB page "UK in Pakistan"

Did you know?

The longest day of the year (21 June) took place during Ramadan this year. Some Muslims in the UK fasted for more than 19 hours- the longest day of fasting in 30 years.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/life-style/art-and-culture/2015/06/22/As-Ramadan-dawns-London-Muslims-embrace-the-long-fast.html>

Ref: British High Commission Islamabad FB page "UK in Pakistan"

Did you know?

Islam is the second largest religion in the United Kingdom: Muslims currently make up 4.4% of the total UK population.

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/census/2011/index.html>

Ref: British High Commission Islamabad FB page "UK in Pakistan"

Celebrating Connections -

English cricketer Moeen Ali gives an insightful interview to the Daily Mail.

"My upbringing, everything was always about cricket. Wake up, cricket. After school, cricket. Before I go to sleep, cricket. I was trying so hard to be the best I could, obsessing about it all the time and putting everything on it."

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/cricket/article-3151386/Moeen-Ali-Ashes-mission-make-one->

[person-say-Muslims-right-ve-good-job.html](#)

Ref: British High Commission Islamabad FB page "UK in Pakistan"

Are you a future leader?

Interested in a fully/part-funded scholarship to study in the UK?

Get ready and start preparing your application for UK Chevening Scholarships 2016/17. The application window will open from 3rd August 2015.

Ref: British High Commission Islamabad FB page "UK in Pakistan"

British High Commissioner, Mr Philip Barton hosted an Iftar at his home.

'Delighted to host Iftar reception at home. #Ramadan Mubarak to all' - Philip Barton

Ref: British High Commission Islamabad FB page "UK in Pakistan"

Interested in working for the British High Commission?

We're hiring! Please see the link below for latest vacancies at the British High Commission Islamabad, and British Deputy High Commission Karachi.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/british-high-commission-islamabad/about/recruitment>

Ref: British High Commission Islamabad FB page "UK in Pakistan"

Did you know?

Scotland is a diverse and extraordinary country, with a rich and fascinating history. The country has nearly 800 islands, only 300 of which are inhabited, and these islands are home to some of the most beautiful landscape in the world.

A land of contrasts, Scotland boasts vibrant and exciting cities to visit and breath-taking lochs, mountains and coastlines that shouldn't be missed.

Check out the website below to see what Scotland has to offer.

<http://www.visitscotland.com/see-do/>

Ref: British High Commission Islamabad FB page "UK in Pakistan"

Did you know?

One of the four countries that make up the UK is Wales.

Wales has a wealth of natural resources, and a landscape begging to be explored. Woodlands and mountainsides ripe for serious mountain biking, hiking and speedy zip lines.

Dramatic craggy coastlines are perfect for surfing, paddle-boarding and kite surfing and calm rivers ideal for kayaking or chugging along on a canal boat.

Check out the website below to see what Wales is and what it offers.

<http://www.visitwales.com/things-to-do>

Ref: British High Commission Islamabad FB page "UK in Pakistan"

Did you know?

Northern Ireland is the smallest country in Britain, and is situated in the northeast corner of Ireland. Northern Ireland's size makes it easy to travel around. For sheer variety of landscape, the country feels bigger than it is; breath taking mountains and glens, World Heritage sites and an inland sea- everything's packed neatly together.

Have you ever visited Northern Ireland?

Ref: British High Commission Islamabad FB page "UK in Pakistan"

Did you know?

England is divided into 9 distinct regions, each with its own unique personality, history and culture - from the rolling hills of the Cotswolds and charming Cornish villages to the bustling city life of London and the dramatic coastlines of the North East. It is also one of Europe's leading tourist destinations.

Discover what England is and what you can do while visiting,

<https://www.visitengland.com/things-to-do>

Ref: British High Commission Islamabad FB page "UK in Pakistan"

Changes for settlement visa applications submitted in Pakistan

From: [British High Commission Islamabad](#)
First published: 29 June 2015
Last updated: 1 July 2015 , [see all updates](#)
Part of: [Pakistan](#)

From 6 July 2015, there will be a change to the process for submitting documents to support settlement visa applications made in Pakistan.



From this date, passports will be submitted at the Visa Application Centre, but all supporting documentation should be sent to UKVI in Sheffield (UK) by the sponsor/applicant.

The change has been introduced by UK Visas and Immigration as part of its commitment to continually improve performance and maintain excellent customer service. It will benefit sponsors of customers applying from Pakistan to settle in the UK, as it will mean that they will be able to submit supporting documents within the UK, rather than having to ship them to Islamabad.

Visas and decision notices will be returned to the customer via Gerry's as normal along with the passport. Supporting documents will be returned to the sponsor in the UK.

Applications will continue to be decided within UKVI's customer service standard of 60 working days for settlement applications.

Where should I send supporting documents

The address for supporting documentation to be sent to is:

**Settlement applications
International Operations and Visas
6 Millsands Vulcan House
Sheffield
S3 8NH
United Kingdom**

Please ensure that the GWF reference number (generated when the application is completed online) is marked clearly on both the outside of the envelope and at the top right hand corner of enclosed documents.

What will happen to my passport

Your passport will remain at the British High Commission, Islamabad throughout the process.

What does my sponsor need to do?

All the supporting documentation that your sponsor wishes to submit to support your application should be sent direct to Sheffield.

What will happen to my documents?

Supporting documents will be returned directly from the Sheffield visa section to the sponsor in the UK.

My sponsor sent my documents to Islamabad, will I get refused?

There will be a small transition period after the change, so if your sponsor sends the documents to Islamabad during this time they will be forward on to Sheffield.

Will it take longer for my visa to be processed?

No, we will continue to process visa applications in line with our customer service standard, which is 60 working days for a settlement application. Where we are unable to resolve an application within our service standards, we will continue to write to applicants to explain why.

British High Commissioner wishes Ramadan Mubarak to all muslims

From: **British High Commission Islamabad**

First published: **18 June 2015**

Part of: **Pakistan**

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan Philip Barton CMG OBE sends his warmest wishes to Muslims in Pakistan and across the world at the start of the holy month of Ramadan.



Philip Barton said:

I would like to send my sincere greetings to everyone observing the Holy month of Ramadan. Muslims in Pakistan, the UK and around the world will sacrifice the day-to-day luxuries that we take for granted, pray for people in need and fast to show devotion to God.

Ramadan is a time for reflection and contemplation, for charity and compassion and for friends and families to turn their thoughts to those less fortunate. In particular, we must not forget all those who have suffered from acts of terrorism across the country, the bravery of those engaged in operations to tackle terrorism and the people who have been displaced from Pakistan's tribal areas over the last few years.

I am proud that the United Kingdom is playing its part in helping Pakistan through assistance to displaced people and support for its efforts to tackle terrorism

Ramadan is a shining example of how humanity can come together in a positive way for a common good, and I pay tribute to all those who take part.

I wish all those Muslims in Pakistan: Ramzaan Kareem Mubarak!

British High Commission hosts university debate on the Magna Carta

From: [British High Commission Islamabad](#)

First published: 16 June 2015

Part of: [Pakistan](#)

The British High Commission hosted a university debate on the Magna Carta and its modern day relevance. The event was held to mark the 800th anniversary of the sealing of the Magna Carta, a document that has paved the way for modern day democracy.



The event was attended by figures from government, media, the diplomatic community and civil society as well as Chevening alumni, academics and students from six universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The British High Commission used the Magna Carta anniversary as an opportunity to engage with young Pakistanis on the issues that matter to them.

The students debated the top priorities raised in an online campaign. This asked people to use the hashtag #IWouldVoteIf to say what mattered most to them; what would make them go out and vote. A pledge wall at the event also provided participants with an opportunity to express their views. The students also engaged in a question and answer session with a distinguished panel comprising the British High Commissioner, Philip Barton CMG OBE, Senator Aitzaz Ahsan, Head of UNDP, Marc-Andre Franche, Head of the UN Women Pakistan, Jamshed Kazi, TV anchor and host, Fereeha Idrees and Daniyal Hasan, Law Graduate from the University of London and Youth Group Director at the Pakistan-U.S. Alumni Network.

Speaking at the event, the British High Commissioner, Philip Barton CMG OBE said: Today marks 800 years since the sealing of the Magna Carta, paving the way for the development of parliamentary democracy as we know it. The significance and enduring legacy of the Magna Carta lie in the principles it embodies: equality before the law, accountability and due process. These are absolutely vital in building the strong institutions necessary for political and economic stability. In other words, the State must be answerable to its citizens. Rule of law, good governance and freedom of speech provide the foundations for nations to innovate, prosper and thrive.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to debate these principles today with university students from Islamabad and Rawalpindi and to hear about the issues that matter to them. Young people in Pakistan account for around two thirds of the total population and almost half of registered voters in the 2013 Pakistan elections were aged between 18 and 35. That is a tremendously powerful collective voice. I have been deeply impressed by the sheer energy and enthusiasm of those participating in our debates today. It is clear how important and relevant the themes of freedom of expression and rule of law are to young democracies like Pakistan.

The UK has made an 800 year journey to embed in our society the principles symbolised by the Magna Carta. We strongly support Pakistan as it continues on its own democratic journey.

Philip Barton statement on Pakistan helicopter crash

From: [British High Commission Islamabad](#)

First published: 8 May 2015

Part of: [Pakistan](#)

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Philip Barton, offers his condolences to those affected by

the helicopter crash in Pakistan.



Philip Barton said:

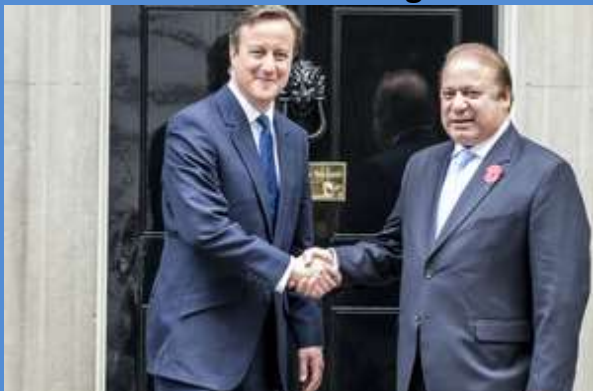
I was deeply shocked by the terrible news of the helicopter crash in Gilgit-Baltistan earlier today. On behalf of the British High Commission, I would like to offer my deepest condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of all those who lost their lives. I hope and pray that all those injured make a speedy recovery.

PM meeting with Prime Minister Sharif of Pakistan, 25 April 2015

From: [Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street and The Rt Hon David Cameron MP](#)
First published: [25 April 2015](#)
Part of: [Afghanistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Yemen](#)

This news article was published under the 2010 to 2015 Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government

Prime Minister David Cameron met with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan and discussed the situation in Yemen and Afghanistan.



A Downing Street spokesperson said:

The Prime Minister welcomed Prime Minister Sharif of Pakistan to Downing Street following their

attendance at the Gallipoli commemorations at the Cenotaph earlier this morning. The leaders took the opportunity to discuss a number of regional issues, including the situation in Yemen and Afghanistan. The leaders set out their support for finding a diplomatic solution to the crisis in Yemen and working with Saudi Arabia to help bring about this transition. Prime Minister Sharif also updated the Prime Minister on Pakistan's work with Afghanistan towards a peace process. The Prime Minister said that it was in Britain and the wider region's interest to see stability and a close working relationship between both countries.

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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