

BridgeUS – Apr 2017

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About USAID to Pakistan – Since 2012



In dedication to Daniel Pearl

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USDA Initiative Aims to Bolster Pakistani Agricultural Exports

Islamabad, March 22, 2017: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has invested more than \$4 million in a six-year distance learning project initiative to support the Government of Pakistan’s efforts to increase agricultural trade. This program’s goal is to strengthen Pakistan’s ability to comply with international trade rules to increase gross domestic product through greater commodity exports.

Since 2011, USDA and partners, CABI (Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International) and Texas A&M University, have joined forces to create a distance learning project to bolster Pakistan’s sanitary and phytosanitary (also known as SPS) skills and knowledge. With interactive workshops supplemented by online training modules, the USDA SPS Distance Learning project is advancing Pakistan’s adoption of international plant and animal health standards by training 30 Department of Plant Protection officials and other Pakistani agricultural professionals. The workshops and training modules focus on a range of topics, including pest-risk management, market access, treatments, and inspections.

“Proper regulation of exports and imports is key to meeting the demands of foreign buyers as well as protecting Pakistan’s domestic agriculture and consumers. We are hopeful that these courses will serve as a resource for Pakistan’s phytosanitary regulators,” said Agriculture Counselor David Williams.

The success of these training modules in Pakistan has made SPS Distance Learning Modules a key component of a new USAID initiative called the Food Safety Network, which will expand the curriculum to include animal health and food safety and deploy them globally in several languages. Agriculture is Pakistan’s second largest sector, accounting for more than 21 percent of GDP. It remains by far the largest employer, with 46 percent of the labor force working in the sector. For the nearly 62 percent of the Pakistani population in rural areas, agriculture is a vital part of daily life. The US government supports Pakistani scientists and farmers to improve agricultural productivity in Pakistan, and to meet economic objectives and food security needs, with USAID allocating more than

\$350 million in funding to support Pakistan's agricultural sector from fiscal year 2002 to 2015.

US Embassy Representatives Meet Punjab Agriculture Minister

Islamabad, March 21, 2017: On March 21, 2017, US Embassy representatives, including Agriculture Counselor David Williams, met with Agriculture Minister Punjab, Naeem Akhtar Khan, and Secretary Agriculture Punjab, Mohammad Mahmood, to discuss Government of Punjab agricultural development priorities and opportunities for agricultural cooperation that are consistent with the Government of Punjab's interests and priorities.

During the meeting, Agriculture Counselor David Williams said that "the close partnership between America and Pakistan in the field of agriculture goes back decades, from the beginning of the Green Revolution in the 1960s to our work to boost Pakistan's agricultural productivity and exports today. Pakistan's economy is stronger and its farmers more prosperous due to our cooperation in this field" Agriculture is Pakistan's second largest sector, accounting for more than 21 percent of its GDP. It remains by far the largest employer, with 46 percent of the labor force working in the sector. For the nearly 62 percent of the Pakistani population in rural areas, agriculture is a vital part of daily life. The US government supports Pakistani scientists and farmers to improve agricultural productivity in Pakistan, and to meet economic objectives and food security needs, with USAID allocating more than \$350 million in funding to support Pakistan's agricultural sector from fiscal year 2002 to 2015.

American Consulate Lahore Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens: Threat Against English Language Schools

According to media reports, The Punjab Home Department has warned that international and foreign schools and schools with English language curricula in Lahore may be the target of a terror organization operation already underway. The U.S. Consulate General considers these threats to be credible. U.S. citizens are advised to avoid such schools until the threat is resolved.

U.S. citizens are reminded that there is an active [Travel Warning](#) for Pakistan issued on October 7, 2016. U.S. citizens are urged to defer all non-essential travel to Pakistan. The Mission reminds those U.S. citizens considering travel to or remaining in Pakistan despite this warning to:

keep a trusted friend informed of your movements in country

maintain vigilant situational awareness and keep a low profile

avoid large crowds, locations frequented by Westerners, and hotels that do not apply stringent security measures

vary your times and routes when traveling in Pakistan

verify that travel documents, visas, and residency documents remain valid and accessible at all times

Consular services in Pakistan are available in Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad. The consulate in Peshawar is not providing consular services at this time.

For Further Information:

See the [State Department's travel website](#) for the [Worldwide Caution](#), Worldwide Travel Alert, the active [Travel Warning](#) for Pakistan, and Pakistan Country Specific Information.

Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.

Contact the U.S. Consulate in Lahore, located at 50 Shahrah-E-Abdul Hameed Bin Badees (Old Empress Road), at +92 42 3603 4000. (Calling within Pakistan, dial 042 3603 4000.) This number is available 24 hours a day for emergencies involving U.S. citizens in the province of Punjab south of Gujrat District. See also [Consulate General Lahore's section on the Mission Pakistan webpage](#).

Contact the U.S. Consulate in Karachi, located at Plot No. 3-5, TPX Area, Mai Kolachi Road, Karachi, at +92 21 3527 5000. (Calling within Pakistan, dial 021 3527 5000.) This number is available 24 hours a day for emergencies involving U.S. citizens in the provinces of Sindh and Balochistan. See also [Consulate General Karachi's section on the Mission Pakistan webpage](#).

You may also contact the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, located at Diplomatic Enclave, Ramna 5, +92 51 201 4000. (Calling within Pakistan, dial 051 201 4000.) This number also is available 24 hours a day for emergencies involving U.S. citizens in all other parts of Pakistan. See also the Embassy's [webpage](#). Call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

U.S. CONSULATE ORGANIZES SPORTS DIPLOMACY INITIATIVE:

PARALYMPICS 28 February, 2017



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Karachi — United States Consul General Grace Shelton welcomed approximately 100 differently-abled athletes and their parents and mentors from Para Sports Pakistan for a Paralympics Sports Diplomacy event on February 28. At the official residence of the Consul General, the athletes participated in hearing impaired football, wheelchairs races, blind cricket, wheelchair basketball, and softball alongside volunteers from the U.S. Consulate General in Karachi. This is the first time Consulate General – Karachi has held a sports diplomacy event with Paralympics athletes in Pakistan. This event is part of Consulate’s series of sports diplomacy events, targeting traditionally disadvantaged groups who face discrimination in Pakistani society.



Consul General Shelton said, “It is no secret that Paralympic athletes around the world inspire people in their communities to open their hearts to a wider world of human potential and talent.” She added, “Paralympic sports have an outstanding capacity to transform communities, and even countries.”

Mr. Khalid Rehmani, President of Para Sports Pakistan, said in his remarks that his organization works for the Special Athletes having various types of disabilities. Previously, para-sports were almost exclusively limited to rehabilitation purposes. However, in recent years, para-sports have been steadily expanding to include competitive professional sports at the highest levels.

U.S. Consul General Welcomes Newest Participants to Sukkur's "EnglishWorks" Program 24 February, 2017



Sukkur: U.S. Consul General Grace Shelton welcomed 50 new students to the six months' long "English Works" Program at the Lincoln Corner in Khairpur. The program, funded through Mission Pakistan's Regional English Language Programs Office, focuses on enhancing business communication skills – including professional-level English – to improve students' employment and educational prospects, and in many cases, their ability to support their families. At the same time the program introduces youth to U.S. values such as volunteerism, and cultural and religious pluralism.



In her address to the students, Consul General Shelton said, “Whether you are doing academic research, participating in an international conference or making a business deal, English will be key to your success, and that is why the English Works program is so important.”

The ceremony was held at the Lincoln Corner in Khairpur, one of 18 Lincoln Corners across Pakistan run by the American Embassy. A Lincoln Corner is a resource center and event space hosted in partnership with Pakistani institutions – public libraries, universities, and cultural centers – which provides a platform for open dialogue between Pakistanis and Americans, promotes mutual understanding, and strengthens people-to-people ties through programs.

To learn more about Lincoln Corners, visit <https://pk.usembassy.gov/education-culture/lincoln-corners/>. For more information on U.S. assistance in Pakistan please visit pk.usembassy.gov.

Elite Pakistani cadets compete for admission to prestigious U.S. military academies

Islamabad, February 24, 2017 – The Pakistan military, in partnership with the U.S. Embassy, is screening nominees for the Service Academy Foreign Student Program. Under this program, partner nations nominate outstanding young men and women for the opportunity to compete for admission to the United States’ elite military academies.

“As a proud member of the USAF Academy Class of 1991, I can attest to how much of an impact the service academy attendance had on my military career, and my life, “ said Brigadier General Kenneth Ekman, who graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1991. “I fondly remember attending and graduating with some exceptional partner-nation classmates, many of whom went on to become leaders in their services and defense establishments. One of them, Cadet Mukarram Q. Khan, a fellow Aeronautical Engineering major, served with distinction in the Pakistan Air Force for over 10 years.” Pakistan’s military has nominated 12 students to compete for admission to the United States Military Academy and United States Air Force Academy graduating classes of 2021. Selected students attend

four years of academic, military, and physical fitness instruction to become the next generation of military leaders.

On February 23, the nominees completed the Candidate Fitness Assessment (CFA) and in-person interview portions of their application process at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad. The CFA is a test of strength, agility, speed, and endurance used to predict the candidate's aptitude for the physical program at the military academies. In the interviews, the applicants demonstrated their strength of character and commitment to service in Pakistan's Armed Forces.

Due to the critical military relationship between Pakistan and the United States, Pakistan is one of only 12 countries designated by the United States Secretary Defense as a priority appointment country.

Pakistan currently has one student enrolled in the United States Naval Academy, three in the United States Air Force Academy, and four in the United States Military Academy.

“There can be no more rewarding experience in one's life than to attend the USAF Academy,” said Mukarram Q. Khan, who graduated with Brigadier General Ekman in 1991. “It refines a human being academically, physically and emotionally, and exudes excellence unprejudiced by race, color, religion or national origin. The inculcation at USAFA has always remained to be a source of strength and acumen for me — as a fighter pilot, as a family man and as a proud citizen of Pakistan.”

Additional Information on the United States Military Academy can be found at www.usma.edu and on the United States Air Force Academy at www.usafa.af.mil.

Photo will be available at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/usembpak/albums/72157673964409343>

Deputy Chief of Mission & Consul General Visit Mohenjo Daro



Karachi: 23 February, 2017: Earlier today U.S. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Jonathan Pratt visited Mohenjo Daro, a World Heritage site of outstanding value to humanity. He was accompanied by Karachi Consul General Grace Shelton and site curator Mr. Zaheeruddin Shar.



“For me, the most interesting part of our visit was seeing Mohenjo Daro’s 5000 year-old college. The people of Mohenjo Daro clearly believed in education, and access to education is still key to any society’s advancement. Today Sindh is host to a number of excellent colleges and universities which are educating the next generation of Pakistani leaders,” Mr. Pratt noted, adding, “Pakistan’s sense of history and culture as a unifying force becomes all the more important in the wake of last week’s cruel attacks.”

During his visit to the region, DCM Pratt and CG Shelton also met with Dr. Fattah Chandio, Director, Quest University and students; Mrs. Shazia Manzar, Secretary General, Gomibai Jawharmal Ladies Club and club members; members of the Sukkur business community, and Mr. Arsalan Shaikh, Mayor

of Sukkur.

For more information on U.S. assistance in Pakistan please visit pk.usembassy.gov.

Small Grants Support Innovative Community-led Initiatives in Pakistan

23 February, 2017



Karachi – An event in Karachi today showcased the impact and achievements of the Small Grants and Ambassador’s Fund Program (SGAFP). Beneficiaries, government officials and community leaders participated. Since 2010, The SGAFP, which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has supported more than 50 grants in Sindh province worth US \$6.5 million. The program supports many development needs in Pakistan by supporting innovative, community-based projects that can be quickly implemented.

“From building the capacity of fishermen of the coastal areas of the Arabian Sea to undertaking integrated measures for the protection of nearly endangered species, and from inculcating reading skills among students to empowering women with disabilities through skills development, SGAFP has touched and transformed the lives of over 280,000 people in Sindh by awarding grants in multiple sectors,” said USAID Provincial Director Denise Herbol.

Since its inception in 2010, the USAID Small Grants and Ambassador's Fund Program has provided a total of US \$37 million to over 300 projects across Pakistan, improving the quality of life for more than two million people. While the Small Grants component of the program supports education and civic participation initiatives, the Ambassador's Fund supports projects relating to empowering vulnerable populations, encouraging social entrepreneurship, developing small-scale energy solutions, promoting culture and the arts, and improving disaster preparedness.

For more information on USAID's Small Grants and Ambassador's Fund Program, please visit: <http://www.sgafp.org.pk> . For more information on U.S. assistance in Pakistan please visit pk.usembassy.gov.

USAID and UNDP Partner Up to Provide Employment Training to Karachi's Vulnerable Youth 21 February, 2017



Karachi — The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) held an awards ceremony today for 200 young women and men trained under the joint Youth Employment Project. The project provides training and job

opportunities in the garment industry to young women and men from conflict-ridden and marginalized areas of Karachi. To date, the project has trained over 7,000 people in garment-manufacturing skills and provided job opportunities to more than 4,000 youth.

USAID Provincial Director Denise Herbol and UNDP Country Director Ignacio Artaza attended the ceremony. USAID Provincial Director Denise Herbol said, “This initiative has provided training and employment opportunities to youth from some of the most marginalized areas of the city. It has opened doors of opportunities, potentially securing the future of hundreds of individuals who previously had limited education and no vocational skills.”

UNDP Country Director Ignacio Artaza noted that “UNDP is working with various provincial governments, including the Government of Sindh, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.” Trainees who received their completion certificates today were trained under this program at Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority’s (STEVTA) institutes as well as other private institutes.

For more information on U.S. assistance in Pakistan please visit pk.usembassy.gov.

Ambassador Hale Dedicates General Electric Locomotives at Karachi Cantonment Railway Station 17 February, 2017



Karachi: On Friday, February 17, American Ambassador to Pakistan David Hale dedicated the General Electric locomotives at the Karachi Cantonment railway station. The Ambassador, alongside Grace Shelton, U.S. Consul General for Karachi; Sarim Sheikh, CEO, GE Pakistan & Central Asia; Parveen

Agha, Chairperson, Pakistan Railways; and Nisar Ahmed Memon, Divisional Superintendent, Pakistan Railways, highlighted how U.S. technology and equipment will play a key role in the long-term infrastructure upgrades that will fuel Pakistan's sustainable economic development.



Ambassador Hale, while visiting the cantonment station, said, "I am glad to hear that many of these locomotives will support power plants and will improve Pakistan Railways' capacity to carry even more cargo to the industrial heartland. The delivery of these locomotives is also great news for U.S. private sector engagement with Pakistan, enhancing the ties between our countries."

"We are proud to support the Government's goals to strengthen and modernize Pakistan's transportation infrastructure with the early delivery and commissioning of GE's Evolution Series locomotives," said Sarim Sheikh, President and CEO of GE Pakistan and Central Asia region. "The Evo locomotives provide better fuel efficiency and longer overhaul cycles than any other locomotives in their class, substantially reducing both the costs and environmental impact of transporting essential freight."

A representative from Pakistan Railways noted that Pakistan is the first country in South Asia to import and use the GE Evolution Series locomotives, which will help with the modernization and connectivity of Pakistan Railways.

In June 2015, GE signed a deal with Pakistan Railways for 55 state-of-the-art diesel locomotives. The 4,500 horsepower locomotives are fully built and assembled in the USA. They will be shipped to Pakistan's Karachi Port in several tranches throughout 2017. The Government of Pakistan commemorated the arrival of the first seven locomotives, which were delivered two months ahead of the contractually scheduled date, at Karachi Port on January 23, 2017.

For more information on U.S. assistance in Pakistan, please visit pk.usembassy.gov.

Consul General McGrath Welcomes Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for

Local Government and Mayors to the Consulate 17 February, 2017



Peshawar, February 16, 2017 – U.S. Consul General Raymond McGrath hosted the Minister for Local Government, Inayatullah Khan, nazims and naib nazims from across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to a reception at the Consulate on Thursday evening. The event drew elected representatives from as far away as Torghar and Dera Ismail Khan.

Mr. McGrath congratulated the group on their achievements during their first two years in office and for introducing positive changes at the community level. He highlighted the support of the U.S. Agency for International Development to local governments through the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governance Project and the Citizens' Voice Project. Through these projects, USAID has provided skill development training to over 13,500 local officials and community leaders from district, town, village, and neighborhood councils across the province.

In particular, the Consul General noted that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governance Project has just finished workshops for local government officials in Peshawar district and is now expanding the Project's coverage to Kohat, Mardan, Swabi, and Bannu districts. In addition, the Project is developing a public facilitation center in Kohat to offer 15 different public services at one location,

and supporting the provincial government in developing Tanda Dam as a public park and recreational center.

Finally, Mr. McGrath announced three new workshops through the Governance Project on strategic planning, resource mobilization, and public-private partnerships for mayors and deputy mayors province-wide.

The event gave guests the opportunity to interact with Consulate officials and with their counterparts from across the region. They exchanged ideas on local government initiatives and shared best practices for strengthening governance at the local level.

Ambassador Hale Opens “English Works” Program for At-Risk Youth 16 February, 2017



Karachi: On Thursday, February 16, American Ambassador to Pakistan David Hale presided over the opening ceremony of a six-month English training program for fifty youth aged 17 – 25. The program, funded through Mission Pakistan’s Regional English Language Programs Office, focuses on enhancing business communication skills – including professional-level English – to improve students’ employment and educational prospects, and in many cases, their ability to support their families. At

the same time the program introduces youth to U.S. values such as volunteerism, and cultural and religious pluralism. As part of the program, two English Works students interviewed Ambassador Hale on leadership, his experience in Pakistan, and his career.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Hale told the students, “I hope that English Works will enhance your confidence, expand your ideas about democracy and volunteerism, and help you reach your full potential as future leaders of Pakistan. You are already setting a good example through the hard work you are putting into this program.”

The ceremony was held at the Lincoln Corner at the Pakistan-American Culture Center, one of 18 Lincoln Corners across Pakistan run by the American Embassy. A Lincoln Corner is a resource center and event space hosted in partnership with Pakistani institutions – public libraries, universities, and cultural centers – which provides a platform for open dialogue between Pakistanis and Americans, promotes mutual understanding, and strengthens people-to-people ties through programs. To learn more about Lincoln Corners, visit <https://pk.usembassy.gov/education-culture/lincoln-corners/>. For more information on U.S. assistance in Pakistan please visit pk.usembassy.gov.



U.S. Naval Forces Participate in Exercise AMAN 17 14 February, 2017



Karachi — U.S. Naval and Coast Guard forces joined military counterparts from Pakistan and more than 35 other countries in the AMAN 17 exercises in Karachi, from February 10 to 14. AMAN 17 is a Pakistani-led, multilateral exercise held biennially in Karachi and in the North Arabian Sea.

The USS Comstock, an amphibious dock landing ship, was part of the International Fleet Review during the exercise.

The Pakistan-hosted biennial exercise enhanced maritime cooperation with multilateral partners. Skills gained during the exercise will enhance U.S. Navy and Pakistan Navy capabilities to combat global threats such as piracy and narcotics trafficking in the Arabian Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Gulf of Oman.

“AMAN 17 was an opportunity for the U.S. and Pakistan to continue our ongoing maritime cooperation and to work with other partners to strengthen global security,” said U.S. Ambassador David Hale. “The U.S. has provided military support to Pakistan for many years including training and exchanges.”

U.S. security assistance to Pakistan focuses on strengthening counterterrorism and counterinsurgency capabilities of the Pakistan military. Security assistance has improved Pakistan’s ability to participate in maritime security operations to counter piracy and narcotics. Assistance has also concretely aided Pakistan in its fight against militants, including those that directly threaten the United States.

In one example of security assistance, the U.S. is providing the Pakistan Maritime Security Forces with two Island-class patrol boats to assist in securing the maritime domain. This equipment grant and associated training reflects the strong bilateral relationship between the U.S. and Pakistan navies. Furthermore, in August 2010, the U.S. transferred PNS Alamgir, formerly USS McInerney, to the Pakistan Navy. PNS Alamgir has supported coalition operations in the US Central Command area of responsibility, including participation in the Indian Ocean counter piracy task force, CTF-151.

Former Chief Justice Jillani Addresses Law School Students at International Law Moot Court Competition



A law student argues before the chief judges at the International Law Moot Court Competition.

Islamabad, February 12, 2017: Ten teams from top law schools throughout Pakistan competed in the Jessup law moot court competition-Pakistan, held at Serena Hotel in Islamabad. The three day event was sponsored by the U.S Embassy's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) and the Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training (OPDAT). His Honor, former chief justice of Pakistan Justice Tassaduq Hussain Jillani was the chief judge for the finals held on Sunday. Both the winner and runner up of the national competition will travel to Washington, D.C. USA to compete in the international rounds April 9th – 15th, 2017.

Addressing the participants, former chief justice Jillani said that “We must do our part to make the world into a global village, to connect the people, to empathize, to reach out.” In closing he reminded the students, “Some of you may want to become lawyers, some may become judges, and some may join politics. You may pursue your goals differently, but there is one thing you share with each other and that is your calling as a citizen.”

Won by the students of Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) with the runners up from the University College, Lahore; the competition's law students hailed from Indus College of Law, Hyderabad; International Islamic University Islamabad; University of Karachi-School of Law; Lahore; Quaid-e-Azam Law College, Lahore; Institute of Law and Criminology, Islamabad; University of

Malakand; Institute of Law, University of Sindh Jamshoro and Pakistan college of Law, Lahore. The 2016-2017 season marks the 58th year of the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition. Jessup is the world's largest moot court competition, with participants from over 550 law schools in more than 87 countries. The Competition is a simulation of a fictional dispute between countries before the International Court of Justice, the judicial organ of the United Nations. Last year was the first time that a team from Pakistan participated in the competition. They were awarded "Best New Team" in the international round.

In addition to support from INL and OPDAT, members of the Pakistan-U.S. Alumni Network (PUAN) helped to plan and organize the competition. Pakistan has one of the largest U.S.-alumni communities in the world, with more than 22,000 students and professionals who have participated in U.S. government-sponsored exchange programs. Find out more about PUAN at <http://www.facebook.com/pakalumni>.

U.S. CONSULATE HOSTS COUNTRY MUSIC CONCERT 8 February, 2017



Karachi – Consul General Grace Shelton, along with Greenwich University officials, welcomed approximately 200 students and faculty members to a special concert at Greenwich University by American country-music band Dallas Brown Band.

“Country music is popular not only in the United States but also around the world,” said CG Shelton.

“I am so happy that the U.S. Consulate is able to share this exciting performance with all the students and faculty tonight.”

Dallas Brown Band, led by singer Dallas Brown, has performed in numerous countries around the world, including Brazil, Cambodia, Thailand, etc. The band recently performed at Lahooti Melo in Hyderabad. Hailing from Portland, Oregon, this is their first trip to Pakistan.



U.S. CONSUL GENERAL VISITS PORT QASIM 1 February, 2017



Port Qasim – Upon the gracious invitation of Port Qasim Authority Chairman Agha Jan Akhthar, U.S. Consul General Grace Shelton visited Port Qasim on Friday and saw the impressive port operation first hand. During this trip she also met with country representative for American company Excelerate, Mohammed Rajpar, and the Engro elengyTerminal Manager, Amir Mahmud, to learn about the operation of Pakistan’s first LNG terminal – a U.S.-Pakistani partnership.

“Excelerate’s and Engro’s state-of-the-art LNG terminal, supplying 15% of Pakistan’s gas requirement, is impressive,” said U.S. Consul General Grace Shelton. “These amazing contributions demonstrate the United States’ continued support to Pakistan’s energy sector and economic development.”

Excelerate’s operations in this area house the country’s first Floating Storage and Regasification Unit (FSRU) and as of Friday, increased its capacity to play an even greater role in Pakistan’s energy sector.

American Artists Complete New Mural at PACC 31 January, 2017



Karachi: Approximately 150 artists, students, and arts community members gathered at Pakistan American Cultural Center (PACC) today for the dedication of a mural designed and painted by American artists. During their two-week stay in Karachi, the 15-year old American group Words Beats and Life (WBL) led a series of hands-on graffiti and mural art workshops at the Commune Artists’ Colony, Arts Council of Pakistan, Indus Valley School of Arts, and PACC Karachi. WBL uses “Paint Jams” and trainings to facilitate community dialogue sessions around the power of art – especially public art – to inspire social change.

“The creative energy of these artists, the bonds of friendships established here in Pakistan, and the new works inspired by these artistic collaborations will endure,” Consul General Grace Shelton said at the mural dedication reception.

The U.S. Government awarded a grant to WBL to develop the artistic skills of young Pakistani artists

in graffiti, mural and public art. Before arriving in Karachi, WBL completed projects in Islamabad and Lahore.

For more information about the U.S. Consulate Karachi's activities in Sindh and Balochistan, visit <http://pk.usembassy.gov>.

USAID supports Women's Participation in Formulation of Pakistan's Trade Policy 24 January, 2017



Karachi – United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) project Pakistan Regional Economic Integration Activity (PREIA) hosted a roundtable discussion on women's participation and gender inclusion in Pakistan's trade policy.

Women from public and corporate sectors, academia and think tanks participated in the discussion and covered various topics related to gender inclusion in Pakistan's trade policy.



USAID Provincial Director for Sindh and Balochistan Denise A. Herbol was also present and emphasized, “Women require access to market intelligence and must be given the ability to organize resources effectively to meet market demand, scale-up and respond to trade opportunities. We recognize the need for women to have managerial and organizational resources and skills to develop business and export readiness and to manage and expand their businesses efficiently.”

Members of the roundtable shared views on trade policy formulation and advocacy specifically aimed at promoting the participation of women. Over the course of the event, multiple sessions were facilitated by experts including Roubina Taufiq, former Director General of Pakistan’s Trade Dispute Resolution Office. Similar roundtable discussions were recently held in other cities where participants from Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Kashmir, and Peshawar, were in attendance.

The USAID PREIA is a five-year initiative furthering the development of Pakistan’s trade sector. Under this project this series of roundtable discussions is being conducted as part of the Women Leadership Development Program (WLDP) in collaboration with the USAID Training for Pakistan Project. The WLDP seeks to support women from various trade sectors, such as the government, corporate, business and academia, and equip them with the necessary training to further their inclusion in the economic sector.

Newly Elected Pakistani Alumni Leaders Gather in Islamabad



Islamabad, January 23, 2017 – Newly elected leaders of the Pakistan-U.S. Alumni Network (PUAN) gathered in Islamabad and engaged in a 2-day conference to generate plans for their organization and to elect a new country president. The 54 leaders, who arrived from across Pakistan, were congratulated by American officials for their volunteer spirit, and for winning leadership positions in PUAN’s hotly contested December 2016 elections.

American Ambassador David Hale congratulated and thanked the new leadership. “Everyone here today is doing an extraordinary job to advance shared U.S.-Pakistan interests across the country,” he said. “I appreciate the time, work, and thought that you put into your work for PUAN, and our shared efforts continue to strengthen the relationship between the Pakistani and American people,” he continued.

PUAN, with 22,000 eligible alumni, is the largest network of U.S. exchange alumni in the world. The five-person leadership team elected by their peers in each of PUAN’s 12 regional chapters takes responsibility for organizing the implementing community service projects during their two-year terms, often using knowledge gained from their previous American exchange program. The December 2016 elections were contested by a record number of alumni and the voter turnout was more than double that of previous elections. Forty-two percent of the elected leaders are women.

The U.S. government invests more than \$40 million annually on exchange programs for Pakistani citizens. More than 1,200 Pakistanis participate each year in high school, undergraduate, graduate, and professional U.S.-sponsored exchange programs. Learn more about PUAN at <http://www.facebook.com/pakalumni>. For more information about the U.S. Embassy's activities in Pakistan, please visit <https://pk.usembassy.gov/>. Photos are available at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/usembpak/albums/72157673964409343>. Contact: U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section
051-201-5427, 051-201-4596

US Consul General Inaugurates Lahooti Melo in Hyderabad

21 January, 2017



Hyderabad – U.S. Consul General Grace Shelton and Sindh Culture Minister Syed Sardar Shah inaugurated the second annual two-day music festival Lahooti Melo in Hyderabad, organized by musician Saif Samejo. Other attendees included Deputy Commissioner Hyderabad and other notable leaders from the area.

Speaking on the occasion, Consul General Grace Shelton in her inaugural speech said “Events like Lahooti Melo music festival show the power of the arts as a medium for cultural identity and

social harmony – that’s why we’re so glad the U.S. Consulate is one of the sponsors of this year’s festival.”

In addition to sponsoring a booth at the festival where visitors are given information about the U.S. government’s educational and cultural exchange programs, the U.S. Consulate’s diplomats based in Karachi will lead virtual sessions on U.S. music traditions and folk instruments. This year’s edition of Lahooti Melo will feature the American music band The Dallas Brown Band and American guitarists Andrew David Tutmark and Ben Rector.

Earlier in the morning, CG Shelton visited the shrine of Sufi poet Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai in Bhit Shah and listened to a live music performance by the faqees of Shah Bhitai. CG Shelton said “Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai was a gifted poet and musician whose many works showed the world the beauty of the language and culture of Sindh.”

Consul General Engages with Students at Mehran University in Jamshoro and English Works Inauguration in Hyderabad 20 January, 2017



Hyderabad – In her second trip to Jamshoro, U.S. Consul General Grace Shelton met with students at

the Mehran University of Engineering and Technology (MUET) who had recently returned from an exchange at the University of Utah in the United States. As participants of the U.S.-Pakistan Center for Advanced Studies in Water (CAS-W), a U.S.-government funded program, CG Shelton lauded them as leaders in sustainable water development. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Aslam Uqaili, Vice Chancellor MUET, and faculty members were also present during the interactive session. CG Shelton also toured the construction site for the building for the U.S.-Pakistan Center for Advanced Studies in Water.



While in Hyderabad, Consul General Grace Shelton launched the next season of the U.S. government-sponsored English Works Program for 50 students aged 17-25. Speaking to the students CG Shelton said, “The English Works program helps Pakistani youth achieve their tremendous potential and acquire 21st century business communication skills so they can take on leadership roles for their communities and country.”

The English Works Program focuses on improving English-language skills among disadvantaged Pakistani youth, with a particular emphasis on business English and job-oriented vocabulary. The students in this year’s program come from a variety of educational and cultural backgrounds and currently there are 525 students enrolled from all over Pakistan.

In other meetings earlier in the day, CG Shelton met with civil society leaders at the Center for Peace and Civil Society (CPCS) and discussed child labor issues with government officials.

**“Building Bridges” Partnership Yields Balochistan University Program
Entrepreneurship Education Summit 18 January, 2017**



Karachi – Public Affairs Officer John Warner earlier today presided over the opening of a two-day Entrepreneurship Education Summit hosted by the Balochistan University Partnership Program. This program is a two year “Building Bridges” partnership between the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and three universities in Balochistan: the University of Balochistan, Sardar Bahadur Khan Women’s University Quetta and Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences. Dr. Javed Iqbal, Vice Chancellor University of Balochistan, startup business representatives, and representatives of the Balochistan universities were in attendance.

In his opening remarks, Public Affairs Officer John Warner noted how proud he was the United States supports this 86 million rupee program and that “when we bring together energetic and innovative minds from our two countries, the results are powerful.”

Rebecca Howland, program manager at the University of Massachusetts Civic Engagement, said “the summit participants will engage in discussion and interactive presentation aimed at building a practical understanding of entrepreneurship education practices while using an educational framework to create a dialog between various levels of relevant parties.”

The Balochistan Consortium University Partnership is the first academic linkage funded by the U.S. government between Balochistan and the United States and is part of the twenty country-wide university partnerships between Pakistan and the U.S.

For more information on U.S. government educational and cultural programs and support, please go to www.eca.state.gov.

American Embassy Congratulates International Medal of Art Winner Imran Qureshi



Islamabad, January 17, 2017: The American Embassy in Islamabad congratulates Lahore-based artist Imran Qureshi, winner of the 2017 International Medal of Arts. Mr. Qureshi, along with contemporary artists Nick Cave, Jenny Holzer, and Wolf Kahn, Pat Steir, and Rachel Whitehead, was honored at a biennial ceremony in Washington, D.C. on January 12. Mr. Qureshi joins Shahzia Sikander, who was honored in 2013, as medal winners from Pakistan.

The International Medal of Arts is awarded to artists who demonstrate an enduring commitment to the Art in Embassies mission of cultural diplomacy through the visual arts and international cultural exchange. Recipients have helped define America's cultural legacy through their artistic excellence

and diplomatic contributions. Their artwork serves as a bridge with other nations, encourages discussion and expression and highlights the communal experiences of people from countries, cultures, and backgrounds worldwide.

Mr. Qureshi's work is featured at the American Embassy, in the residence of American Ambassador David Hale. His work is part of Art in Embassies (AIE), a Museum of Modern Art-sponsored initiative that began in 1953 and formalized as part of the Department of State by the Kennedy Administration in 1963. For more than 55 years, AIE's global focus of cultural diplomacy through the visual arts has engaged more than 23,000 partnerships with individual and institutional participants in more than 200 venues in 189 countries worldwide.

Knowing how the arts engage, educate, and inspire, the American Embassy spends more than 100 million rupees annually to fund arts programming in Pakistan, introducing Pakistanis and Americans to each other's artistic traditions. For more information about the U.S. Embassy's activities in Pakistan, please visit <https://pk.usembassy.gov/>. For more information on Art in Embassies or the International Medal of Arts, visit <http://art.state.gov/>.

Photos are available at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/usembpak/albums/72157673964409343>.

Contact: U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section

051-201-5427, 051-201-4596

NAPA & UT Austin Bridge Cultures through Music Concert 10 January, 2017



Karachi – Acting U.S. Consul General John Warner welcomed scores of music lovers to a concert featuring Sangat — an ensemble of musicians from the University of Texas (UT) Austin and National Academy of Performing Arts (NAPA). The concert showcased the success of a three-year university partnership between the two schools, supported by a Rs. 100 million U.S. government grant. Kamran Ali, Director of the South Asia Institute at UT and Arshad Mehmood, NAPA’s Director of Programs, also attended.

Acting CG John Warner said in his remarks: “Tonight’s concert is a rare opportunity for the people of Karachi to hear talented Pakistani and American musicians performing together. It’s also a chance to hear the unique blend of South Asian and Western musical styles and rhythms that Sangat incorporates in their performances. And I think that’s a really special achievement.” The university partnership between the University of Texas (Austin) and NAPA is one of 20 such partnerships in Pakistan sponsored by the U.S. government, of which four are in Sindh. This particular partnership is meant to promote ties and exchanges between music instructors and students at the two schools and build skills and capacity in musical theory, composition and performance.



For more information about U.S. government funded cultural and educational programs, please visit www.eca.state.gov.

U.S. Supports Implementation of Trade Facilitation Agreement in Pakistan



Islamabad, January 04, 2017: The U.S. is supporting the Ministry of Commerce with a training workshop on the Trade Facilitation Agreement in Islamabad. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), through its Pakistan Regional Economic Integration Activity and Training for Pakistan Project, organized the workshop to raise awareness among public and private stakeholders on the Trade Facilitation Agreement and its impact on Pakistan's trade competitiveness.

The three-day workshop was opened Jan. 4 by Minister for Commerce, Engr. Khurram Dastgir Khan and USAID Mission Director John Groarke and facilitated by trainers from the International Trade Center, the World Customs Organization, and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Participants include 70 representatives from government agencies, private sector associations, and private business and logistic operators.

The World Trade Organization member countries approved the Trade Facilitation Agreement in December 2013 at the 9th Ministerial Conference. This agreement has established a global framework for member countries to reduce the time and cost of cross-border transactions. USAID is helping the participants identify trade regulations to which Pakistan is not yet compliant, and assisting in designing plans to meet the Trade Facilitation Agreement's requirements. The training will ultimately help to improve Pakistan trade in international markets.

“Pakistan stands to benefit from the provisions of a newly adopted WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation that could reduce the cost of trade and make Pakistani goods more competitive in a greater number of markets,” Groarke said in the opening session.

The Commerce Minister said continued support from international organizations will help Pakistan fulfill its obligations to the World Trade Organization. He said the agreement can benefit small and medium-sized enterprises in Pakistan by reducing trade costs and unnecessary border formalities. The US-funded Pakistan Regional Economic Integration Activity is a five-year initiative to further development of Pakistan’s trade sector. This workshop supports USAID’s objective in improving Pakistan’s trade environment by building institutional and human capacity.

The United States is the largest trading partner for Pakistan, with total bilateral trade volumes approximating USD 5 billion annually. It is also the leading export market where more than 14% of Pakistan’s annual exports now find a market, and it is my belief that there is potential to further enhance these trade volumes

Photos are available at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/usembpak/albums/72157673964409343>.

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U.S. Consulate Organizes Sports Diplomacy Initiative: American Flag Football 3 January, 2017



Karachi — Acting Consul General John Warner welcomed approximately 20 male students aged 13 through 18 from “The Al-Qadir School”, a lower-middle-class private school in Liyari, to learn the rules of American Flag Football alongside volunteers from US Consulate Karachi. This is the first time Consulate Karachi held a sports diplomacy event featuring American Football for local students. Acting CG Warner, and Principal of Al-Qadir School Mr. Dost Muhammad Danish, presided over the event and appreciated the enthusiasm of the students to give the new sport a try.

Acting CG Warner, while speaking at the event said: “American football has long been one of the most popular sports in the US and we are so happy to be sharing this American tradition with young Pakistani athletes today. Here at the U.S. Consulate we continue to believe that sports diplomacy is one of the best ways to bring people together and promote a healthy and active lifestyle.” American Football was invented in the United States way back in the 1860s, and since then the sport has carved out a very special place in American culture.



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Dedicated to



Daniel Pearl

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