

Bridge Communications & Research – BCR

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Bridge-Europa - October 2014

Part of Pakistan Awareness Initiative -PAI

Connecting People -Building Bridges –Spreading Harmony-Voicing against injustice

CONTEXT

Countries and Donor agencies are listed in Alphabetical order

Editor's Note	2
Denmark As First Donor To Pledge USD 1 Million Support For UN Women's Country Program (2014-2017) Promoting Women's Role in Peace And Security in Pakistan.	4
France: Mr. Philippe Thiebaud, Ambassador of France to Pakistan, conferred the insignia of Officer of the Legion of Honor upon Asma Jahangir, a prominent lawyer and human rights activist.	6
Ambassador Philippe Thiébaud conferred the Gold Medal of National Defense upon Brigadier Akram Khan (Islamabad, 23 September 2014)	6
Conferment of the French medal of Officer of Arts and Letters to the renowned Pakistani writer, Intizar Hussain	6
France awards Mrs. Tehmina Durrani with the Order of Arts and Letters	7
India/ Pakistan – Flooding: Statement made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesman – excerpts	8
Germany: Federal Cross of Merit awarded to German Honorary Consul	8
A 'well governed' study-tour	8
Germany Supports Flood Victims with Additional 1.4 Million EURO	10
Germany supports "White Ribbon Campaign" to empower women in Pakistan	10
122 MW Keyal Khwar Hydropower Project Construction Contract awarded	11

Mamnoon seeks private sector's support for economic uplift	12
Germany will increase funding for Humanitarian Aid in Pakistan	13
German Ambassador inaugurates Water Supply Schemes in Gilgit-Baltistan	13
Toll Free Call Center established at FATA Health Directorate	13
German-Pakistani business platform GATE Pakistan launched in Berlin	14
KP-TEVTA develops annual work plan	15
Germany provides 1 million Euro for relief of the IDPs in North Waziristan	16
German Culture in Pakistan	16
Now local government information is just a click away	16
HSA students complete their short course on Health Financing with a timely debate on Universal Health Coverage	18
More on Germany's commitment to Universal Health Coverage globally:	
Study trip to Germany	19
Italy: Pakistan Festival at the Embassy of Pakistan in Rome	19
Ambassador Rome Visits Correggio on the Invitation of the Mayor to Attend Community Function	20
68th Independence Day celebrations, the Embassy of Pakistan Rome	21
Flag Hoisting Ceremony at the Embassy of Pakistan, Rome, to Mark the Independence Day	21
Young Pakistani Artists' Work Displayed in Atri, Abruzzo, Italy	22
Exhibition of Pakistani Artefacts Inaugurated in Rome with the Collaboration of the Embassy of Pakistan and the Italian National Museum of Oriental Art	23
Norway pledges USD 700 000 for capacity building of Punjab Police	24
UK: DFID holds discussions on post-2015 development agenda at SZABIST Unive	24
British High Commission hosts international rugby matches	26
UKTI joins hands with Paramount Books (Pvt) Ltd. in the celebration of reading	27
Honorary Awards: Her Majesty The Queen recognises Pakistani UK AID staff	28
British High Commission launches 'Shape the Future' competition	29
British High Commission in Pakistan on social media	31
Resource pack-Shape the Future	32
HMRC to provide technical assistance to Pakistan tax authority	32
Lahore student named Senior Winner of 2014 Commonwealth Essay Compet	33
Floods in Pakistan	35
	Fear and uncertainty haunts Pakistan as Dharna and LoC conflicts turned deadly and seem to be unending and political parties are vulturine for power. There is nothing in no party's agenda about abolition of infamous blasphemy laws and cold blooded murders of minorities. This planet has lost its vastness for the persecuted

Pakistani journalists, minorities and women. The recent stiff policies of some of the countries like Sri Lanka to deal with the ordinary citizens seeking asylum have reminded the era of Immurement, where the person is locked within an enclosed space which cannot be escaped from. A likewise situation of minorities, journalists and women is prevailing in Pakistan and the corrupt politicians who are also directly involved in manslaughters get out of country to find safe havens.

Prof Dr Muhammad Shakeel Auj, dean of the faculty of Islamic Studies, University of Karachi had been marked for death after a lecture that had been interpreted as “blasphemous” by the radicals and a Fatwa issued against him.

The gruesome shooting of a 70 year-old man Muhammad Asghar, by a policeman, convicted of blasphemy in Rawalpindi who suffered from debilitating paranoid schizophrenia is not the only one where blasphemy victims are murdered by the law enforcers.

During the first nine months of this year, 170 Shia have been killed in Karachi alone despite the fact of an ongoing operation by the heavy presence of the law enforcement agencies.

Only in July 2014, for example, did sectarian terrorists kill at least three Shias in Quetta on Eid while later in the month the city of Gujranwala witnessed an atrocious massacre of Ahmadis, including an unborn baby, two girls and a woman, all burned alive by a mob over a picture on Facebook”.

People dance and cheer after attacking Ahmadi people’s colony and brazenly shared on social media but no one prosecute to encourage the killings, protected by the blasphemy law.

In August this year, six people of Zikri community were killed and eight injured in a firing incident in Balochistan's Awaran district.

The capital city Islamabad used to be a comparatively a low violence area. But this highly fortified city has been hit hard by the sectarian violence as the law enforcement agencies quoted that violence has claimed 10 lives last year in comparison with 1998 to 2013 (five years) when only nine religious fatalities reported.

This is just a tiny segment of the ordeal minorities, journalists and women going through in Pakistan.

The government and opposition numbed to abolish blasphemy laws fearing the wrath of the radicals. According to a report published in Dawn, “a collaborative study by South Asia Partnership, coupled with the National Assembly’s own report on its performance, during its first year the house could spare only 15 hours to discuss minorities’ issues as a whole or raised only about 10 times.

A recent US report has quoted US secretary of state John Kerry as saying, "In Pakistan, militants killed more than 500 Shia Muslims in sectarian bloodletting and brutally murdered 80 Christians in a single church bombing last year. The Pakistani government has yet to take adequate steps to bring those responsible to justice," after releasing the annual congressional report on International Religious Freedom for the year 2013.

The incumbents in Pakistan have badly failed to deliver and deal with the issues and Pakistan has turned into "Politicians Only" zone as the main business arteries and commute of the country seized by the politicians "Whenever and wherever" they want.

There are no harder policies for the ignored and egoist politicians who are exposing people to the risks using the ideology of Jihad and have people killed to keep their ego alive and continue to stay in profitable politics. Politicians are ABOVE THE LAW and rampant to organise deadly meetings. Since Imran and Qadri have started blood-spattered conspiracy to derail fragile democracy and keep the military in-charge of the affairs, at least twenty people are dead, economy has been jeopardised, foreign dignitaries have limited mobility, and Pakistan has been ranked as the least travelled destination, LoC fight has turned deadly and the sanctity of the parliament has been desecrated. None of their demands is for the protection of minorities, women/ children rights, curtailing of the parliament expenditures or energy related. Imran-Qadri's direct threats to Democracy, Ransacking federal and public property, manslaughter, aggravated assault, physically and verbally abusing uniformed police and assumptions of the power as mobsters needs to be dealt with the full force of justice. The EU, America, Canada and all of those countries denouncing violence should make Imran-Qadri ineligible to travel to those countries, enlist PTI and PAT as the organizations supporting, propagating and harboring Jihad, Violence and Anarchy and freezing of assets. If common, law abiding citizens can live with every day's abuse, why these politicians are above the law, both in and out of Pakistan?

Sincerely

Syed Naeem Uddin

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Denmark As First Donor To Pledge USD 1 Million Support For UN Women's Country Program (2014-2017) Promoting Women's Role in Peace And Security in Pakistan.

Islamabad, 9th July 2014 - The Government of Denmark is the first donor, providing a grant of USD 1 million to support UN Women's current Country Programme area promoting "Peace and Security, and humanitarian actions shaped by women's leadership and participation".

This was announced by the Ambassador of Denmark, H.E. Jesper Moller Sorensen, during a signing ceremony held today at the UN Women Country Office, in Islamabad.

During the signing ceremony Ambassador Sorensen stated that "Today is an important day to us as Denmark pledges its support to a program, which has a new facet to support vulnerable women in Pakistan. Pakistan is a country, which unfortunately has suffered great losses due to crisis and disasters over past many years, where women suffer disproportionately. Through this partnership, we aim to promote security and protect the rights of women and girls in stabilization, social reconstruction and peace-building processes. The program also aims to ensure that women and girls are engaged as change agents and promote gender equality commitments in disasters and complex emergencies on both policy and institutional level".

The Ambassador stated that promoting gender equality is a consistent feature in all Denmark's development and humanitarian assistance programs. Denmark has been actively supporting gender equality programs in Pakistan since 2010. "Our support to work on gender equality is based on a rights-based approach that focuses on improving women's access to rights, resources and influence", said Ambassador Sorensen.

Ms. Joana Merlin, Senior Country Advisor, UN Women, shared that 'Women, Peace and Security' is a central area in crisis situations, irrespective of whether it relates to human-made or natural disaster. Recent crises affecting the country have highlighted gaps in emergency preparedness, early warning systems, and other disaster risk reduction and management capacities required for a comprehensive, swift and gender sensitive response towards stabilization and social reconstruction.

The funding from the Danish Government will give continuity to UN Women's work to ensure that peace and security, and humanitarian actions are shaped by the leadership and participation of women, including grass root women. These funds will be utilized to support UN Women's program to work with the Government of Pakistan and key partners in enhancing synergies so as to facilitate regional networking and partnerships; support advocacy for in-country and cross regional programming on integrating gender concerns in peace initiatives; undertake Training for Trainers on Gender and Peacekeeping with civil armed forces, as well as strengthen capacity for gender responsive policy frameworks and action plans.

The Danish grant will support the components within the Development Results Framework of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) Country Program (2014-2017) in Pakistan and covers the period till December 2015.

France: Mr. Philippe Thiebaud, Ambassador of France to Pakistan, conferred the insignia of Officer of the Legion of Honor upon Asma Jahangir, a prominent lawyer and human rights activist.

(Islamabad, 30 September 2014)

Mr. Philippe Thiebaud, Ambassador of France to Pakistan, conferred the insignia of Officer of the Legion of Honor upon Mrs. Asma Jahangir on behalf of the President of the French Republic, on September 30, 2014 at the French Residence in Islamabad.

Renowned lawyer and founding member of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), Mrs. Asma Jahangir has dedicated her life to defending the rights of religious minorities, women and children, in Pakistan and abroad. A committed lawyer, she has always advocated respect for the constitutional law in her country and promoted interreligious and intercultural dialogue in a spirit of tolerance and mutual understanding.

With this award, France pays tribute to her courageous commitment to the defense of human rights, to her continued support to the abolition of death penalty and to her exceptional contribution to the development of a universal culture of human rights, in particular as a UN Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights Council.

Ambassador Philippe Thiébaud conferred the Gold Medal of National Defense upon Brigadier Akram Khan (Islamabad, 23 September 2014)

H.E. Mr. Philippe Thiébaud, Ambassador of France to Pakistan, hosted a reception at the French Residence in Islamabad on 23 September 2014 to confer the Gold Medal of National Defense upon Brigadier Akram Khan in recognition of his services to the community in general and particularly for having helped to find the body of a French mountaineer disappeared in February 2013 in his bid to ascend Nanga Parbat.

The reception was attended by the friends of Brigadier Akram Khan, many ambassadors, members of the French Embassy Islamabad and representatives of media.

Conferment of the French medal of Officer of Arts and Letters to the renowned Pakistani writer, Intizar Hussain

H.E. Mr. Philippe Thiebaud, Ambassador of France to Pakistan, conferred the medal of Officer of Arts and Letters to Mr. Intizar Hussain, a prominent Urdu-speaking Pakistani writer, on 20 September 2014 in Lahore.

A friend of France and its culture, an essential reference in literature of South Asia, Intizar Hussain has been praised for the richness and variety of his work, being critic, journalist, biographer, chronicler, poet, novelist and historian of the present time.

Experienced translator of famous French writers Sartre, Camus and Gide, he continues to be a fervent advocate of dialogue between modern literature in Pakistan and that of contemporary France and a promoter of the dialogue between cultures

France awards Mrs. Tehmina Durrani with the Order of Arts and Letters

<http://www.ambafrance-pk.org/France-awards-Mrs-Tehmina-Durrani>

(Islamabad, 24 July 2014)

H.E. Mr. Philippe Thiébaud, Ambassador of France to Pakistan, conferred the prestigious French Award of the “Order of Arts and Letters” (Ordre des Arts et des Lettres) on Mrs. Tehmina Durrani on 24th July at the French Residence in Islamabad.

This award was established by President Charles de Gaulle. Its purpose is the recognition of significant meritorious contributions to the arts, literature, or the propagation of these fields. The recipients of this award are French nationals as well as prestigious foreign writers, artists, musicians...

Mrs. Tehmina Durrani’s first book “My Feudal Lord” has been translated into 39 languages and received many awards and recognition in the country and abroad. Her second book “A Mirror to the Blind”, a biography of Abdul Sattar Edhi, narrates Pakistan’s renowned and highly decorated social worker. Her third book “Blasphemy” was another success. This book also made it into Pakistan’s bestseller. She has been engaged in highlighting gender-based violence in Pakistan’s rural and urban society. The 2012 book launch of “Happy Things in Sorrow Times” is a novel with 35 water color illustrations done in Kandahar at Afghan refugee camp.

Before conferring the Award, Ambassador Philippe Thiébaud highlighted the literary and social work done by Mrs. Durrani, a famous writer, an activist and an artist and said that this award was a recognition of her achievements. The Ambassador quoted the famous French writer, André Malraux: “Culture is the soul of democracy and freedom”.

Mrs. Durrani thanked the French Government for bestowing this award upon her. She also thanked Ambassador Thiébaud for hosting the award-conferring ceremony. Mrs. Durrani highlighted her passion for social work particularly relating to women empowerment. At the end she signed her book “Happy Things in Sorrow Times” for her friends and well-wishers present on this occasion.

The reception was attended by diplomats, representatives of media and particularly by many friends

of Mrs. Tehmina Durrani.

India/ Pakistan – Flooding: Statement made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesman – excerpts

<http://www.ambafrance-pk.org/India-Pakistan-Flooding-Statement>

(Paris, 8 September 214)

We were extremely saddened to learn of the terrible toll exacted by the flooding in India and Pakistan. France extends its condolences to the victims' families.

In these painful circumstances, it stands alongside India and Pakistan./.

Germany: Federal Cross of Merit awarded to German Honorary Consul

On the evening of 27 September 2014, Mr Anees ur Rehman, German Honorary Consul in Lahore, was awarded the Federal Cross of Merit on ribbon by Ambassador Dr Cyrill Nunn.

The award was presented at a dinner held at the residence of the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in Islamabad.

During the ceremony, Mr Anees ur Rehman was acknowledged with great applause for the many years of performance as German Honorary Consul and his singular efforts to foster German-Pakistani relations.

The Order of Merit was instituted by the German government in 1951 and is the only honour awarded in all fields of endeavour and the highest tribute the Federal Republic of Germany can pay to individuals for services to the nation.

A 'well governed' study-tour

Germany and Pakistan are countries which not only differ on cultural, religious and economic grounds, but also occupy very different positions in their respective regions and the wider international setting. Whereas Germany today is surrounded by „friends“ in Europe, Pakistan's recent history has been marked by its troubled relations with its South Asian neighbors. The bottom line is that Germany and Pakistan face very different governance challenges, both at the national and international level.

In early July 2014, a delegation of twelve Pakistani political science students from the National Institute of Pakistan Studies (NIPS), Quaid-i-Azam University, came together with a group of German political science students from Philipps-University Marburg.

The aim was to discuss how the academic concepts of 'governance', 'good governance' and 'political participation' play out differently in their respective countries and regions. This trip has been one of several study trips which are supported and sponsored by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). The study trips are organized by the DAAD Long Term Guest Professor at NIPS, Dr. Andrea Fleschenberg dos Ramos Pinéu, and her colleague at Phillips-Marburg University Professor Dr. Ursula Birsl.

This is only one pillar of the DAAD Public policy and Good Governance (PPGG) program which offers annual scholarships for Pakistani students to conduct postgraduate studies at leading universities in Germany, funded by the German Federal Foreign Office program fund on Good Governance in Pakistan. [...]

Author: Maximilian Lohnert, BA student at School of Oriental and African Studies, London/UK

Reflections on a Pakistan-Germany Student Exchange on „Good Governance“

Mateullah Tareen is impressed by how the „German people have not forgotten their history.“

Reflecting on the group's museum tours in Berlin, he remarks that in Germany historical museums are rather about

„lessons for future precautions than past hatred. Walking through them was like walking in the streets of old Germany but with a humanist and precautionary touch.“

Laura Jäkel, one of the Master students from Marburg, recalls how being confronted with „other attitudes, perspectives and hopes, as well as a different way of argumentation itself, has pushed [her] to overcome [her] own Eurocentric attitude.“

Kanwal Shauzab describes how seeing Germans facing „the bitter realities of their history“ by „showing it openly to everyone“ has made her think about the heroic way national history is portrayed and taught in educational institutions in Pakistan.

For Hasina, the study tour was not only about acquiring knowledge but also about the „long lasting friendship with members of the German student groups as well as fellow Nipsonian.“

This indicates that the study tour was both fun and educational and that the two cannot and should not be separated most times.

Germany Supports Flood Victims with Additional 1.4 Million EURO

For emergency relief measures in flood affected areas in Pakistan, Germany will provide around 1.4 M EUR (approximately 182.000.000 PKR) in addition to the ongoing long-term humanitarian aid projects.

Due to heavy monsoon rains in the previous months, around 1200 villages of the provinces Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu Kashmir and Punjab have been hurt by massive floodings.

Through the German organizations Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e.V., Kindernothilfe e.V., humedica e.V., and HelpAge Deutschland e.V., four different emergency response projects will be implemented in the coming months.

The focus of these immediate aid programmes will be provision of Non-Food-Items such as sanitary products, equipment and material for reconstruction of housings.

Germany supports “White Ribbon Campaign” to empower women in Pakistan

The German Ambassador, Dr. Cyril Nunn, and the CEO of “White Ribbon Campaign Pakistan” Omer Aftab, signed a contract for a project addressing the issue of violence against women here on 22 September 2014.

The project makes a contribution to end violence against women by launching a nationwide campaign through traditional and social media, training programs and outreach to parliamentarians and other stakeholders. The overall aim is to empower women by providing them with the necessary knowledge and skills to exercise their legal rights as only then will existing laws make a real difference for all citizens. At the same time the project works towards behavioural and social change.

The project is financed by Germany and implemented by White Ribbon Campaign throughout Pakistan, with a special focus on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. At the signing ceremony in the German Embassy Ambassador Nunn said:

“Empowering women is one of the most crucial factors for progress as they represent 50% of the potential expertise of a country. It can make a huge contribution to the economy and benefit all citizens. Preventing violence against women and providing them with the means to uphold their legal rights is a first step towards these goals. We are pleased to support White Ribbon Campaign’s work for a violence free and prosperous society.”

CEO of White Ribbon Omer Aftab said:

I am thankful to German Embassy for supporting the campaign. The project addresses the issue of violence against women through legal literacy. Government has passed many pro-women laws in last few years but the issue is that public at large is not aware about these laws and ways through which they can get remedy. Through campaigning, advocacy and massive media outreach, our goal is to aware women of provincial and national laws, so they can exercise their legal rights with complete knowledge and also access referral services.

The White Ribbon Campaign is the men's movement for ending violence against women. 25th November is marked each year as the international “White Ribbon Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women”, when people across the globe show their support and solidarity with women suffering from violence. That day will also be a major focus for activities of the project.

122 MW Keyal Khwar Hydropower Project Construction Contract awarded

For reducing electricity shortage in Pakistan, WAPDA awarded a contract on September 19, 2014 to Sinohydro Group for constructing the 122MW Keyal Khwar Hydropower Project. The Keyal Khwar Hydropower Project is designed to maximize the utilization of Pakistan’s hydropower resources.

This Project makes use of the power of water falling from some 700 meter height in the Keyal Khwar River which is the right tributary of River Indus in District Kohistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This water will be carried through a 7 kilometer long tunnel large enough for a truck to pass through, and dropped on two large turbines housed in an underground powerhouse located close to the town of Pattan along the Karakorum Highway. From there the water will be released into the river Indus.

This is a run-of-river project designed to generating more power for meeting the electricity demand at peak load time. It will add over 400 million units of electricity into the National Grid system for alleviating the electricity shortage.

For designing this Project, all field investigations were financed by a Euro 2.6 million Grant in Aid provided by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development through KfW Development Bank. The same ministry also provided a soft loan through KfW Development Bank of over Euro 97 million for the project construction. The European Investment Bank co-finances the project by providing an additional Euro 100 million loan.

As a hallmark of German Development Cooperation, the Keyal Khwar Hydropower Project is designed to maximize the utilization of Pakistan’s hydropower resources, with negligible relocation of local communities, adequate compensations to the project affected families, and extreme respect for the environment of the project area. In addition, some measures are in place for appropriate community development work.

Over the past half century, the German financing has made possible the installation of over half of Pakistan’s power generation capacity.

Mamnoon seeks private sector's support for economic uplift

KARACHI, Sept 08, 2014: The President of Pakistan, Mr. Mamnoon Hussain, on Monday urged the private sector to join hands with the government and contribute to the national economic growth by making their products competitive in the global market.

He said this while addressing the 2nd Achievement Awards ceremony organised by the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI). The FPCCI's Achievement Awards are the highest awards of the private sector which are conferred to those leading organisations and individuals who have made outstanding achievements in the socio-economic sector as well as corporate social responsibilities (CSR) activities.

Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) A number of leading companies received awards in different sectors including trade, industry, investments, CSR, education, research and development, infrastructure, energy, agriculture, information technology, medical and health-care and social welfare services.

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Reform Support Programme, which is co-funded by the European Union, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, was also given an award for its outstanding contribution in the TVET sector reforms, focusing on the private sector engagement.

President Mamnoon Hussain said the government is moving in the right direction on social and economic fronts. He, however, sought suggestions from the business community on how to effectively maintain law and order as the government realized the value of peace and security for the economic prosperity of the country. He recounted the achievements of the government and said he was confident that through better policies and hard work it would succeed in overcoming all major challenges including the energy crisis, and the law and order situation in the country. Pakistan, in his view, has a very bright future and by 2050 will be 18th largest economy in the world, he said with optimism.

While handing over awards, Mr. Hussain said that FPCCI's Achievement Awards have been very much recognized and encourages more companies to deliver their best in their fields/ sectors.

Germany will increase funding for Humanitarian Aid in Pakistan

http://www.pakistan.diplo.de/Vertretung/pakistan/en/08Development/2_FFO_Projects/HuHi.html

The German Government is going to provide additional funds for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and victims of the flood disasters and draught in the provinces of Punjab and Sindh.

Different humanitarian aid projects will be implemented through German organizations such as Deutscher Caritasverband e.V., German Red Cross, humedica e.V., Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe e.V. and Malteser International, with a total funding amount of approximately 3 million EURO (about 390.000.000 Pakistani Rupees). These projects are intended to start in 2014 with duration of 1-3 years. The German government will in this context support IDPs in KP, who have been affected by the ongoing military operations, with projects aiming to improve the basic health situation in refugee camps and host families in the north-west of Pakistan.

Humanitarian Aid will also be provided for victims of flooding in terms of recovery efforts, reconstruction works of housings, improvement of hygiene and livelihood measures in Punjab and Sindh provinces.

Furthermore, relief and prevention interventions will be conducted in the Tharparkar region in Sindh, including sustainable development of villages and general safe-guarding activities in communities.

German Ambassador inaugurates Water Supply Schemes in Gilgit-Baltistan

http://www.pakistan.diplo.de/Vertretung/pakistan/en/08Development/2_FFO_Projects/WASEP2014.html

In August 2014, Ambassador Dr. Cyrill Nunn inaugurated two Water Schemes in Faizabad and Aliabad for improving access to quality water & sanitation in Gilgit and Hunza Valley.

Germany is supporting the project called WASEP (Water & Sanitation Extension Program) already since the mid-1990s with grants exceeding Euro 10 million which are extended through the KfW Development Bank. It is being implemented by the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). WASEP has so far covered over half of the population of the Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral areas.

Toll Free Call Center established at FATA Health Directorate

http://www.pakistan.diplo.de/Vertretung/pakistan/en/08Development/0_Development_Projects/Health/CallCenter.html

A formal inauguration of a toll free call center at Directorate of Health Services FATA, funded by the German Government through KfW Development Bank, was held on August 18th, 2014. Mr Abid Majeed, Secretary Social Sector, FATA appreciated the German support towards the establishment of this network in FATA.

The call center was initially established in 2005 as a primary source of answering customer queries and customer questions. The call center is currently working as a 24/7 service point. It receives numerous calls daily on issues related to reproductive health, newborn and infants health, Emergency contraception, family planning and related medical issues. This intervention enormously turned out to be quite successful throughout Pakistan and with the same perception pioneered in introducing e-health in FATA as well. Furthermore, this call center can also be utilized for monitoring the quality of

the agency based services.

As a continuation, a Pashto language toll free call center was established at Health Services Reform Unit (HSRU), FATA in Peshawar in January 2013. It now has been shifted to Health directorate of FATA, which provided required space as per directives of the Secretary Admin and coordination, FATA. At present, the call center is being handed over to FATA secretariat for onward utilization and sustainability after the project closeout.

The call center is well equipped with all the essential furniture and IT equipment required for the system. Two doctors (male and female) and one system maintenance engineer have been placed in the center to cater to the calls from the community and to maintain quality.

The main outcome of this call center is the following:

- To enhance the access of the community to quality health care, provide online counseling and information about family planning and other reproductive health issues.
- To strengthen referral mechanism of the government health network by referring the clients for further consultation to the nearby facilities.
- Maximize the utilization of health outlets in FATA by providing info to the clients about the nearby facility and service providers.
- Establish the link between various vertical programs like population, EPI, National Program of LHWs and other health programs by incorporation of the toll free info.

Since inception, more than 2000 calls have been received and to ensure the quality of the calls, all calls are recorded at the call center. In order to sustain the center, operational costs, including staff costs of the toll free center, are incorporated in the Governors new initiative of Roghsehat.

German-Pakistani business platform GATE Pakistan launched in Berlin

<http://www.pakistan.diplo.de/Vertretung/pakistan/en/07Economy/GATE.html>

The Special Representative of the German Government for Pakistan and Afghanistan and former Ambassador in Islamabad, Michael Koch, has launched the German-Pakistani business platform GATE Pakistan (German Association Trade and Economy) during a founding ceremony at the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin on 26. August 2014. The ceremony brought together business representatives from Pakistan and Germany as well as diplomats from both countries.

GATE Pakistan will be an organization for the further development of trade and investment projects between Germany and Pakistan. It is based on an initiative by the Pakistani Honorary Consul in Munich, Mr. Poetis, and companies from both countries. The Pakistani Embassy in Berlin and the German Embassy in Islamabad will serve as patrons, through the respective Ambassadors, Syed Hasan Javed and Cyrill Nunn. They expressed their support for GATE Pakistan during the founding ceremony, together with Germany's Consul General in Karachi, Tilo Kliner.

The German Ambassador to Pakistan, Cyrill Nunn, said:

“GATE Pakistan will serve as a port of call for all companies and organizations interested in investment and trade between Germany and Pakistan. It will pool and share information on business opportunities, establish business contacts and organize business exchange programs. It is a concrete step to unlock the huge potential for dynamic growth in the economic relations between Germany and Pakistan. It can thereby make a contribution to the modernization of Pakistan and benefit people from all parts of society.”

Background Information:

GATE Pakistan will be a non-profit organization with the objective to further the common German and Pakistani economic interests. The Pakistani Honorary Consul in Munich will serve as GATE Pakistan’s focal point. Its central task will be the organization of business exchange programs and the establishment of business contacts between German and Pakistani companies. GATE Pakistan will act as a counterpart of the two existing business organizations in Pakistan; German Pakistan Trade and Invest (GPTI) and Pakistan German Business Forum (PGBF). It will form a network with both organizations and will be open to all German and Pakistani companies that can contribute to achieving its objectives.

KP-TEVTA develops annual work plan

http://www.pakistan.diplo.de/Vertretung/pakistan/en/08Development/0_Development_Projects/Education/TVET.html

The newly established Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Technical Education and Vocational Training Agency (KP-TEVTA) has formulated its first-ever annual work plan, envisaging a number of activities to be undertaken to make technical and vocational education and training (TVET) relevant to the job market.

The annual work plan was developed in a three-day workshop concluded on 10 August. Directors of the KP TEVTA, key officials and principals of the TVET institutes contributed to the work plan development. The plan was also presented to the Chief Minister Pervez Khattak on Monday. Technical experts from the TVET Reform Support Programme, which is co-funded by the European Union, the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, facilitated the process.

The annual work plan is a planning document, which combines the organisation’s business strategy with an operational plan. KP-TEVTA has become the second organisation after AJK TEVTA of having such a plan, which covers almost all the areas of the TVET sector’s ongoing reform.

Chairman TEVTA Mr. Nauman Wazir chaired the proceedings of the workshop, which also involved group work on the key thematic areas such as governance, organisational development, public private partnership, competency based training etc.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Wazir highlighted that the incumbent provincial government consider

TVET as one of its priority sector and that is why it has taken a number of initiatives to streamline the TVET system of the province with an active participation from the private sector. He hoped that the implementation of the annual work plan will help improve the quality and relevance of TVET in the province.

On Monday, the Chief Minister Pervez Khattak was given a briefing on the outcomes of the three days proceedings in the presence of media, where he reiterated that the provincial government will leave no stone unturned to make the TVET system of the province according to the job market. He said for the first time TEVTA has been established and its leadership has been given to the private sector. He assured that the provincial government will allocate adequate financial resources for the sector so that the skilled workforce can be produced.

Germany provides 1 million Euro for relief of the IDPs in North Waziristan

http://www.pakistan.diplo.de/Vertretung/pakistan/en/08Development/0_Development_Projects/Other/IDPs_WFP_Grant.html

The German government supports the relief activities of WFP in the north-west of Pakistan through a project 'Enhancing Food and Nutrition Security and Rebuilding Social Cohesion.'

The ongoing military operations have displaced significant parts of the population in that area; a fact which is exhibited in the recent exodus from FATA's North Waziristan Agency.

The goals of the project are to enhance food security and nutrition among vulnerable populations, support the PAK Government in building social cohesion in FATA and halt the decline in nutritional status in food-insecure districts.

This grant will enable WFP to provide timely and sustained relief food assistance to the IDPs who are in dire need of support.

German Culture in Pakistan

http://www.pakistan.diplo.de/Vertretung/pakistan/en/11Culture/1_Cultural_Projects_ISLA/PTV.html

This week, the second part of PTV's "Classic Show" episode on Germany was aired. Dr Dan Tidten, Head of Press and Cultural Section of the German Embassy in Pakistan, and TV journalist Hasan Ali discussed Heinrich Heine's poem "Loreley", as well as Johann Sebastian Bach's St. Matthew Passion and Johannes Brahms' third symphony. Finally, Dr. Tidten and Mr Hasan talk about the well known movie "Goodbye Lenin".

First Episode: http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1zpfic_the-classics-show-germany-part-01-ep-11_news

Second Episode: http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x20mhjd_tcs-germany-part-02-ep-12_news

Now local government information is just a click away

http://www.pakistan.diplo.de/Vertretung/pakistan/en/08Development/0_Development_Projects/Governance/website.html

The Elections and Rural Development Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa established its website www.lgkp.gov.pk with support of the German Government. The page aims at informing and engaging stakeholders and citizens. During the opening ceremony at the Local Governance School in Peshawar on 25th June 2014, Secretary Hifz ur Rehman stated that “with the launch of this website, we have gone a step ahead to engage with our stakeholders through information sharing as well as public participation. The website has also made us more accountable to improve the outreach and delivery of our services by interacting more actively with the citizens of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, who are our clients as well as paymasters.”

The German “Support to Good Governance Programme” - implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) – together with a department internal committee explored who would be the target group, what information would citizens be looking for, which department unit would later manage the website and how could a two-way communication be ensured. Once this foundation was laid, content had to be developed accordingly, a website structure was designed, and material on latest reform initiatives and success stories were collected. On the technical side, a new computer system, which German Cooperation provided together with a multi-function printer and backup power supply, ensures that website updates can frequently be made from within the office. However, the finalization of a website is not where the approach of German development cooperation ends. A website user manual - currently being developed - will provide a step-by-step guide on how to work with its content management system and follow-up sessions have already been agreed with the responsible IT-Cell. Furthermore, the responsible Secretary and involved officers will be attending an international training on ‘E-Government.

The overall support to the website development is not a stand-alone measure but an integral part of one jointly agreed area of support on strengthening the department’s public relations. All measures are designed in a way to foster a better relation between state and society.

In order to improve the outreach of public services as well as to provide access to information, the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa laid down an ‘E-governance Framework’ in line with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Information Act 2013. According to this framework, all line departments must ensure active and functional online presence through their websites. The department has become one of the foremost which have turned that policy vision into an institutional reality; the priority recommendation is to strengthen relationship and trust between state, communities and civil society starting with a public information and citizen dialogue mechanism. The website provides amongst others key documents like the Local Government Act 2013, an e-citizen corner with a feedback format, latest news, public relations material like Communication Change - also supported by German

Government - and much more.

HSA students complete their short course on Health Financing with a timely debate on Universal Health Coverage

http://www.pakistan.diplo.de/Vertretung/pakistan/en/08Development/0_Development_Projects/Health/HSA.html

A week after Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif approved the National Health Insurance Scheme, the Health Sector Support Programme commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) took the discussion on how to design a scheme that aims to cover 100 million Pakistanis to the class room of the Health Services Academy (HSA) Islamabad.

Initially established as a department within the Ministry of Health, the HSA has transformed into an autonomous academic institution and gained a reputation as a centre of excellence for postgraduate and short courses in Public Health. The Health Financing postgraduate short course is one element of the German engagement in Pakistan through Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH's long standing technical cooperation to strengthen teaching and research at the HSA.

The session on Universal Health Coverage, the last of the twelve lectures of the course, started with a screening of the film "Sick around the World" . The film features how Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, Taiwan and Switzerland deliver health care and discusses what could be learned from their successes and failures.

The students, who came from all across Pakistan, were then asked to imagine that they were a group of consultants and the next day would have to brief the Prime Minister on different health insurance models and options for implementation in Pakistan. Whilst each country has its own set of arrangements to provide quality healthcare, some general patterns are observed across health systems globally: the Bismarck Model, the Beveridge Model, the National Health Insurance Model and the Out-of-Pocket Model. The latter being the most unequal way of Health Care Financing is the predominant form in Pakistan where about 70% of health care expenditure is paid for by households out-of-pocket.

A transition to a universal health coverage may take several years, even decades. Among the critical factors that determine the speed of transition, the following points were identified in an analysis discussion by the participants: the ability of governments to mobilize tax revenues or insurance contributions, the important role of technology and public-private partnerships, the relative acceptance and value of the concept of solidarity in society, the effectiveness of governments stewardship and the populations trust in government and its institutions.

Prof. Assad Hafeez (Director of HSA) assisted by Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan (Course Coordinator), Mr. Shahid Adil (Vice Commissioner, Punjab Employees Social Security Insurance), Dr. Imran Durrani (GIZ) and Jasmin Dirinpur (GIZ) who both taught a module of the course, handed over the certificates for the course the next day. The participants were happy with their overall learning outcomes and expressed their commitment to take the UHC agenda forward.

More on Germany's commitment to Universal Health Coverage globally:

Leading the way to Universal Health Coverage, a leadership programme jointly run by GIZ and the World Bank Institute: [http://health.bmz.de/topics/Universal-Health-Coverage/Leading the way to Universal Health Coverage/index.html](http://health.bmz.de/topics/Universal-Health-Coverage/Leading%20the%20way%20to%20Universal%20Health%20Coverage/index.html)

Information Technology for Universal Health Coverage (IT4UHC) conference: <http://health.bmz.de/events/past-events/IT4UHC/index.jsp>

German International Cooperation Forum on Health and Social Protection, Universal Health Coverage - From Promise to Practice: <http://health.bmz.de/events/past-events/GIC-Forum-UHC/index.jsp>

The Joint Learning Network on Universal Health Coverage: <http://jointlearningnetwork.org/about>

Study trip to Germany

http://www.pakistan.diplo.de/Vertretung/pakistan/en/11Culture/1_Cultural_Projects_ISLA/QAUtrip.html

A Pakistani student group from Quaid-e-Azam-University was seen off on 27 June by Dr. Dan Tidten, head of the press and cultural section of the German Embassy. The group is leaving for a ten day study trip to Germany to work and study on good governance and political participation in Europe and South Asia. After Dr. Tidten gave a short lecture on mechanisms of political participation, the students engaged in a vivid discussion. The study trip is funded by the Federal Republic of Germany through the DAAD "good governance" programme.

Italy

Pakistan Festival at the Embassy of Pakistan in Rome

<http://www.mofa.gov.pk/Italy/pr-details.php?prID=2269>

(2014-09-28)

The Annual Pakistan Festival at the Embassy of Pakistan in Rome was held on 28th September, 2014. It received an even greater number of visitors than the previous years including members of the Rome's diplomatic community, members of the Parliament, officials from government organizations, private companies, journalists and the general public. A large number of Pakistani community members from all over Italy also participated in the festival. The annual event has been instrumental in promoting

Pakistani arts, crafts and culture in Italy.

The Guests of Honour included Mr Giovanni Pinto, Central Director for Immigration of the Italian Ministry of Interior, Ms Concettina Ciminiello, Lazio Region's Councillor for Equal Opportunity, Mr Stefano Dominella, President of Maison Gattinoni which is a leading fashion house in Italy and the Vice President of Unindustria (National Federation of Employers), for the fashion and textile sector and Mr Guillermo Mariotto, Creative Director of Maison Gattinoni. They were welcomed with the beat of drums. Children in Pakistani dress presented them with bouquets of flowers.

While speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Tehmina Janjua also encouraged the visitors and the Pakistani community to make generous contributions to the flood relief efforts in Pakistan.

Stalls offering Pakistani handcrafts, traditional dresses, bangles, henna and Paksitan food and sweets were set up. Kite-flying also attracted a great deal of interested from the visitors especially children. A famous group of Qawwals from Pakistan, Shahbaz Hussain & Fayyaz Hussain Baddomalhi Walay also performed in the Embassy lawn to enthusiastic applause from the audience.

An exhibition of dresses by some of the leading Pakistani fashion designers as well as traditional handicrafts and paintings was put together in the Embassy hall by Mr Adnan Ansari and Mr Chris East of Rwayat, a London based company which has organized the Pakistan Fashion Week in London. The exhibition evoked strong interest among the visitors, especially from the fashion industry.

The occasion was also used to give away the first Khurshid and Jamshed Kharas Award for Academic excellence which has been instituted by Mr Jamshed Kharas, a former Ambassador of Pakistan presently settled in Rome. The award consists of a cash prize for a student from the Pakistani community with the highest marks in the high school examination. Ms Foqia Amjad was the first recipient of this award.

The festival continued throughout the day as families spent a day full of fun and entertainment.

Ambassador Rome Visits Correggio on the Invitation of the Mayor to Attend Community Function

<http://www.mofa.gov.pk/italy/pr-details.php?prID=2267>

(2014-09-20)

Ambassador Tehmina Janjua visited Correggio, an industrial city in Northern Italy, on 20 September, 2014, at the invitation of the Mayor of the city, Ms Ilenia Malavasi, and the Pakistani women's association in Correggio .

The Ambassador and the Mayor had detailed interaction on addressing the concerns of the Pakistani community. The Mayor appreciated the Pakistani community for being peaceful and hardworking and for its effort to integrate with the Italian society.

The Mayor and the Ambassador also attended a function organized by Pakistani women at a local park to celebrate Pakistan's independence. Pakistani children made speeches and presented tableaux and national songs. The Ambassador congratulated the Pakistani women of Correggio on organizing the event and encouraged Pakistani community in other cities to follow their example in taking part in public life and projecting a positive image of Pakistan.

68th Independence Day celebrations, the Embassy of Pakistan Rome

<http://www.mofa.gov.pk/italy/pr-details.php?prID=2190>

(2014-08-24)

In connection with the 68th Independence Day celebrations, the Embassy of Pakistan Rome organized a speeches contest, national songs performance and a fashion show by children of the Pakistani community in Italy. The event was attended by notables of the Pakistani community, besides participation by a large number of children. The objective of the event was to promote better understanding of Pakistan's history and culture amongst the children in order to develop a sense ownership of Pakistan.

Children delivered speeches in Italian and Urdu on the topic "What I have learned from the life of Quaid-e-Azam, Muhammad Ali Jinnah". Children also sang popular national songs and participated in the fashion show, displaying Pakistani costumes.

In her remarks, Ambassador Tehmina Janjua stressed the importance of educating children to enable them to build a better future in their adopted country. It was also essential for them to maintain a connection with their country of origin. This was the main purpose of the event.

This initiative of the Embassy was highly appreciated by the Pakistani community. Addressing the audience, the President of Pakistan Federation Italy, Mr. Bashir Ahmad praised the Embassy for its efforts to provide better consular services to the Pakistani community as well as to involve them and their children in such cultural activities.

Flag Hoisting Ceremony at the Embassy of Pakistan, Rome, to Mark the Independence Day

<http://www.mofa.gov.pk/italy/pr-details.php?prID=2170>

(2014-08-14)

On the occasion of Pakistan's Independence Day, a flag hoisting ceremony was held at the Embassy of Pakistan in Rome on 14th August 2014. A large gathering of the Pakistani community attended the event.

National anthem was played and the messages of the President and the Prime Minister were read out. A prayer was also held for Pakistan's peace, progress and prosperity.

Ambassador Tehmina Janjua also addressed the gathering. She paid tributes to the nation's forefathers and the ongoing sacrifices being made by the people and armed forces of Pakistan in the struggle against terrorism. She said that the Pakistani nation, with its characteristic courage, determination and fortitude, will overcome all challenges in its path to a future of peace and prosperity. She urged the Pakistani community in Italy to inculcate a strong sense of national pride and devotion to homeland in their children.

Chaudhary Bashir Ahmed, a leader of the Pakistani community in Italy, also spoke on the occasion.

A special event was also held on the occasion to allow Pakistani children to express their patriotic fervour, their understanding of the struggle for independence and their vision about Pakistan's future as a progressive, democratic and forward-looking nation. The children who participated in the event paid homage to the nation's forefathers as well as the armed forces of Pakistan for their sacrifices in the struggle against terrorism. They also expressed their determination to contribute to Pakistan's progress and prosperity.

Young Pakistani Artists' Work Displayed in Atri, Abruzzo, Italy

<http://www.mofa.gov.pk/italy/pr-details.php?prID=2093>

(2014-07-10)

The work of ten young Pakistani artists and some Italian artists forms part of an exhibition titled "Stills of Peace and Everyday Life" which opened on 10th July in Atri, an ancient art city in centre-east of Italy. The sub-theme of the exhibition is "Italy and Pakistan – A Search for the Meaning of the Contemporary". It has been organized by the Aria Foundation in collaboration with the commune of Atri and the support of the Embassy. The exhibits will be on display for two months.

2. Ambassador Tehmina Janjua spoke at the inauguration which was held in the Teatro d'Atri. The other speakers at the event were the Mayor of Atri, Representative of the President of the Abruzzo, the Vice President of the Aria Foundation and the Curators of the Exhibition.

3. Ambassador Janjua said that the selection of Pakistani artists' work for exhibition in Italy augurs well for Pakistan's art scene as well as for cultural collaboration between Italy and Pakistan. She added that several young Pakistani artists have won international acclaim which testifies to their great creative potential. She stressed the need for greater cultural collaboration between Pakistan and Italy as a way of promoting people to people contacts and intercultural understanding.

4. Pakistani and Italian artists whose work is on display include Iffat Almas, Mobeen Ansari, Sajjad Ahmed, Emanuela Barbi, Farida Batool, Massimo Camplone, Sergio Camplone, Mandra Cerrone, Paul Dell 'Elce, Barbara Edwards, Attilio Gavin, Shalalae Jamil, Lali Khalid Khawaja Nadia, Naiza Khan, Aroosa Nat, James Pasqui, John Sacchetti and Risham Syed.

Exhibition of Pakistani Artefacts Inaugurated in Rome with the Collaboration of the Embassy of Pakistan and the Italian National Museum of Oriental Art

<http://www.mofa.gov.pk/italy/pr-details.php?prID=2058>

(2014-06-24)

A three-month exhibition of ancient Pakistani artefacts was inaugurated in Rome today (June 24, 2014) at the Italian National Museum of Oriental Art. Titled "Living Symbols", the exhibition has been organized through the collaboration of Pakistan's Embassy in Rome and the Italian National Museum of Oriental Art.

The artefacts on exhibition consist of items of clay pottery and figurines from the prehistoric Sohr Damb/Nal and Kulli cultures that flourished in the south of Pakistan's Baluchistan province between 3500 to 2400 BCE. They were recovered by the Italian authorities from antiquities smugglers and handed over to the Embassy of Pakistan in Rome.

While speaking at the inauguration, Ambassador Tehmina Janjua thanked the Italian Carabinieri for the recovery of these priceless artefacts and their restitution to the Government of Pakistan. She also thanked the Italian National Museum of Oriental Art for its close collaboration in holding the exhibition. She said that Pakistan, like Italy, was heir to glorious ancient civilizations of which the Nal and Kulli culture was but a part. She expressed the hope that the exhibition would be instrumental in introducing the Italian public to Pakistan's rich cultural heritage. She also called for the need to strengthen international cooperation to curb illegal trade of antiques and archaeological finds.

Professor Francesco di Gennaro, Director of the Museum, Dr. Giovanna Lombardo, Captain F. Provenza, Commander of the Carabinieri's Culture Heritage Protection Wing, and Professor Massimo

Vidale of Padua University also spoke on the occasion. Dr Fazaldad Kakar, former Director General, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan, also attended the event.

Pakistani refreshments were served following the inauguration.

The Museum has also published a detailed catalogue of all the artefacts with the assistance of Professor Massimo Vidale of the University of Padua who is an expert on the Nal and Kulli culture. Italian archaeologist have been active in various parts of Pakistan and have helped in discovering and preserving Pakistan's cultural past.

Norway pledges USD 700 000 for capacity building of Punjab Police

09.07.2014

Thursday 3 July, Ambassador Cecilie Landsverk and the UNODC Country Representative, Cesar Guedes signed an agreement to cooperate on a program to enhance the capacity of the Punjab Police. The three-year programme is amide to provide training and enhance the capabilities for Punjab Police to identify, collect and preserve physical evidences at crime scenes and improve investigation, starting in Gujrat, Gujranwala and Sialkot. A Crime Scene Investigation and Training Unit has been inaugurated in Gujrat.

Since the first phase of this cooperation programme started in 2012, Norway has contributed with more than 1 million USD to the Punjab Police. This programme has also represented a solid basis for improved contact and cooperation between the Norwegian and Pakistani police. Exchange of skills and experiences in the law-and-order sector benefits both countries and we look forward to future cooperation.

UK: DFID holds discussions on post-2015 development agenda at SZABIST University

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/dfid-holds-discussions-on-post-2015-development-agenda-at-szabist-university>

The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) in Pakistan held a discussion with students of SZABIST University on Tuesday on new goals to replace the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) after 2015.



Since their launch in 2000, the MDGs have encouraged countries to work towards meeting the needs of the world's poorest people by 2015. The discussion at SZABIST aimed to involve Pakistan's young people in the international debate that is shaping the new, post-2015 development goals and to foster active engagement on the UK priority goals: economic growth, education and poverty eradication. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pakistan Country Director Marc-Andre Franche was also present at the discussion where students came up with recommendations based on the Post 2015 scenario. These recommendations will form part of a report to be published in December.

The university discussions form part of a wider initiative which includes a competition called "Shape the Future". This invites schoolchildren from across Pakistan to share their recommendations on the post-MDG goals – in the form of paintings and pieces of creative writing – on what they think would help improve people's lives in Pakistan and put the country on the path to sustainable progress. Speaking at the event, Head of DFID Pakistan, Richard Montgomery stated:

These discussions provide a great opportunity to engage with university students in Pakistan and hear their views on sustainable development for Pakistan, and to help them contribute to the international discussion on a new, ambitious and inspiring global framework for sustainable development growth. Such students are future leaders in society, and by involving them in these discussions we hope they will help shape the future of their country for the better.

The UK and Pakistan are working now to eradicate extreme poverty – which underpins the MDGs – through work on education, job creation, entrepreneurship, skill development and promoting sustainable development.

As a long standing partner of Pakistan, the UK is helping Pakistan achieve its MDGs. By 2015, the UK will have helped four million children go to school, will have provided young adults with skills to get jobs, have helped 1.23 million poor people, more than half of them women, access microfinance loans, and have prevented half a million children from becoming under-nourished."

Country Director, UNDP, Marc-André Franche said:

The key priority areas that have emerged from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) consultations in Pakistan include peace, justice and human security, governance, energy, environment and disaster mitigation, inclusive economic growth and social development and gender equality. The MDG experience suggests that the new agenda will be most powerful if it is measurable, clear and concise. Such an agenda will have an impact only if it is inclusive of all sections of the society especially the poor and vulnerable.”

Media enquiries

The Department for International Development (DFID) leads the UK Government’s work to end extreme poverty. [Find out more here](#)

Notes to editors

In Pakistan, contact DFID-Pakistan media team on + 92 (0) 51 201 2516 / 2580

Access our [free-to-use photos here](#)

And [DFID case studies here](#)

British High Commission hosts international rugby matches

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/british-high-commission-hosts-international-rugby-matches--2>

The British High Commission hosted friendly rugby matches between the Pakistan Rugby Union and an international team of British, Canadian, American and Australian players.



The event marked the start of England’s preparations to host the Rugby World Cup 2015. The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Philip Barton CMG OBE, hosted the event, along with the Canadian High Commissioner Greg Giokas. After an intense round of separate matches for women’s and men’s teams, Philip Barton and the President of the Pakistan Rugby Union Mr Khawaja Mohammad Fawzi presented the men’s Pakistan National Rugby team and the women’s International team with trophies.

Speaking at the concluding ceremony, the British High Commissioner said:

We are delighted to host these friendly matches between the Pakistan Rugby Union and our team of

international players. Just as rugby is a sport that brings together players of all shapes and sizes into a single team, I hope today's event will have strengthened the sporting links between our countries. It has also been a good opportunity to look forward to the Rugby World Cup taking place in England next year. I would like to wish Pakistan's National Rugby Team good luck for the Asian Games particularly the Rugby sevens events. It's great to see Rugby becoming a popular sport in Pakistan.

I would like to thank the respective High Commissioners and representatives from the other missions for their presence this evening. A special thanks to the President of the Pakistan Rugby Union and their players for making the journey all the way from Lahore for today's matches. I am delighted the High Commission has again been able to use sport to bring people together.

UKTI joins hands with Paramount Books (Pvt) Ltd. in the celebration of reading

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/ukti-joins-hands-with-paramount-books-pvt-ltd-in-the-celebration-of-reading>

Paramount Books have exclusive distribution rights of the Ladybird UK to promote reading amongst students in Pakistan through provision of high quality books.



Paramount Books(Pvt.) Ltd. in collaboration with UK Trade and Investment, Pakistan, organised a colourful and enchanting storytelling session of Ladybird books, interactive activities and amusing competitions for children aged between 6-8 years, on 24th – 25th September at the British Deputy High Commission, Karachi.

The stories were narrated by two renowned storytellers narrated along with fun activities for the children to enjoy. The session was attended by more than 80 young students from various schools in Karachi with approximately 40 teachers accompanying the students.

Paramount Books have exclusive distribution rights of the Ladybird UK to promote reading amongst students in Pakistan through provision of high quality books.

Managing Director, Paramount Books(Pvt.) Ltd., Mr. Iqbal Saleh Muhammad said:

Anything being popular is one thing, but also to be respected and loved at the same time is indeed uncommon. The ladybird is one such celebrated name, in the context of reading material for children, which enjoys this rare distinction and prestige, not only in Pakistan, but the world over, wherever English is taught and learned. Paramount's close association with Ladybird, which it has enjoyed for fifty years, can easily be described as both traditional and institutional.

British Deputy High Commissioner and Director UK Trade and Investment, Pakistan, John A. Tucknott MBE said:

English Language as a tool for communication and knowledge is being recognised worldwide. It combines UK and Pakistan's expertise in English language development to encourage young boys and girls to read and to empower them to spread the love of reading in their communities. Reading not only strengthens their ability in the English language, but will open up their minds to a world of creativity, culture, imagination and understanding. We congratulate Paramount Books for bringing this extra-ordinary initiative to the children of Pakistan.

Paramount Books is the exclusive distributor for leading publishers such as Ladybird, UK; Hodder Education, UK; Cambridge University Press, UK, in Pakistan. Their academic books vary from Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary to O & A-Level books.

Honorary Awards: Her Majesty The Queen recognises Pakistani UK AID staff for outstanding service

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/honorary-awards-her-majesty-the-queen-recognises-pakistani-uk-aid-staff-for-outstanding-service>

Honorary Awards: Her Majesty The Queen recognises Pakistani UK AID staff for outstanding service
9 October 2014

Part of:

[Strengthening democracy, security and regional stability in Pakistan and Pakistan](#)

The MBE is a prestigious honour awarded to individuals for significant achievements or exceptional service, which stands out as an example to others.



On 9 October, on behalf of Her Majesty The Queen, the British High Commissioner presented awards to Mr Asghar Ali and Mrs Tahira Roshani in recognition of their work for the UK's Department for International Development in Pakistan.

Both Mr Ali and Mrs Roshani have been made Honorary Members of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE). The MBE is a prestigious honour awarded to individuals for significant achievements or exceptional service, which stands out as an example to others.

Speaking at the event, the British High Commissioner Philip Barton CMG OBE said:

I am delighted to present Honorary MBE awards to Mr Asghar Ali and Mrs Tahira Roshani in recognition of their unflagging and enthusiastic work for the UK's aid programme in Pakistan. They have been tireless in ensuring that support reached those most in need, whether through education initiatives or in response to humanitarian crises. Their commitment is an example to us all.

Head of DFID Pakistan, Richard Montgomery said:

I am pleased to congratulate Mr Asghar Ali and Mrs Tahira Roshani on receiving their well deserved honours. The DFID Pakistan team are delighted that their outstanding contributions to development and humanitarian work have been recognised.

Mrs Tahira Roshani said:

I am really pleased to be part of the team that makes up the UK's Department for International Development in Pakistan. I joined DFID in 2004 and have worked with many different teams. It was particularly important to me to be able to help my country during the 2010 floods and I was a keen volunteer in contributing to our flood response. My work now involves working on a range of education projects to help improve children's access to education. I am deeply honoured to receive this award and am very grateful to those who nominated me.

Mr Asghar Ali said:

I am proud to be part of the UKAid, Department for International Development, which has helped the developing countries including Pakistan to reduce poverty and improve social indicators to achieve millennium development goals. In Pakistan, DFID particularly played a vital role in social development through participatory process and micro-finance initiatives which helped millions of people increase income and improve quality of their lives. DFID also helped the federal and provincial governments, at policy and strategic levels, to improve governance, education, health and access to finance for the poor.

I am grateful to the British Government for recognizing my small contribution to the great cause.

British High Commission launches 'Shape the Future' competition

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/british-high-commission-launches-shape-the-future-competition>

The British High Commission and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) in Pakistan launched a painting and a writing competition titled 'Shape the Future' at the SoS school in Rawalpindi today.



The competition invites students from across Pakistan to share their recommendations – in the form of paintings and pieces of creative writing – on what they think would help improve people's lives in Pakistan and put the country on the path to sustainable progress. Since their launch in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals have encouraged countries to work towards meeting the needs of the world's poorest people by 2015. We want to help Pakistan's young people contribute to the international debate that is shaping the new, post-2015 development goals.

Participating students from schools across the country, aged 12 to 17 years, are invited to submit their ideas either in the form of paintings with brief descriptions or a presentation on the goal they have chosen, or as a 500 word essay. The entries will be judged by a panel of experts.

The deadline for submitting entries is 16th November 2014. Details for submitting entries can be found at the British High Commission [Pakistan Facebook page](#)

Opening the competition at SOS Children's Village at Islamabad, the British Deputy High Commissioner to Pakistan, Alison Blake said:

On behalf of the British High Commission and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), I am delighted to launch this competition, "Shape the Future", which is an unprecedented opportunity to hear the views of Pakistan's young people on how to improve the lives of the people of Pakistan and create a more prosperous, fairer and sustainable future for everyone. The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set targets to improve standards of living for the world's poorest countries by 2015.

Enormous progress has been made and, building on this, the next set of global development goals will play a crucial role in shaping the world for future generations. We hope that the competition to "Shape the Future" will encourage schools to discuss and formulate creative recommendations to influence the debate as the important post-2015 development goals are formulated.

As a long standing partner of Pakistan, the UK is helping Pakistan in achieving its MDGs. By 2015, the

UK will have helped four million children go to school, will have provided young adults with skills to get jobs, have helped 1.23 million poor people, more than half of them women, access microfinance loans, and have prevented half a million children from becoming under-nourished.

This competition is a chance for Pakistan's next generation to develop their understanding of the global Development Goals and to express their vision of how to achieve a better future for Pakistan and the world.

Chairperson of the SOS Children's Village Rawalpindi, Mrs. Nasim Muzaffar said:

It is a great honour to host the "Shape the Future" competition organised by the British High Commission in Pakistan at SOS Children's Village Rawalpindi. It is a unique opportunity where we get together to find ways of how to look after our country, uplift the standard of life and make it a better place.

The competition will greatly help us by giving ideas through the paintings and writings of our children. Through their thoughts we will see how they would like to see the future.

We are always grateful to the British High Commission for their kind and continued support for our country and especially for the children of SOS Children's Village Rawalpindi.

British High Commission in Pakistan on social media

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/british-high-commission-in-pakistan-on-social-media>

Follow the news and activities of the British High Commission in Pakistan on social media



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You can follow us on:

Facebook: Updates on our events, news and activities.

Twitter: We provide information for British Nationals in Pakistan (e.g. Travel Advice) as well as updates on events, news and activities from the British High Commission and Deputy High Commission

in Pakistan.

Flickr: Take a look at photos from our events and visits.

Blogs: Read the latest from our bloggers in Pakistan

Resource pack-Shape the Future

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/resource-pack-shape-the-future>

The British High Commission and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) in Pakistan launched a painting and a writing competition titled 'Shape the Future'

Document



Resource pack-Shape the Future

PDF, 323KB, 16 pages

Detail

Participating students from schools across the country, aged 12 to 17 years, are invited to submit their ideas either in the form of paintings with brief descriptions or a presentation on the goal they have chosen, or as a 500 word essay. The entries will be judged by a panel of experts.

The deadline for submitting entries is 16th November 2014. Details for submitting entries can be found at the [British High Commission Pakistan Facebook page](#)

HMRC to provide technical assistance to Pakistan tax authority

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/hmrc-to-provide-technical-assistance-to-pakistan-tax-authority>

The UK will provide technical assistance to the FBR to help improve tax collection to support economic integration, stability and growth.

Pakistan's Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), UK in the presence of the British High Commissioner Philip Barton and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in Islamabad.

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. Philip Barton CMG OBE said, The Government of Pakistan has committed itself to meeting ambitious targets for increasing the revenue it raises from taxation. The British Government welcomes this commitment. A State's ability to collect taxes and its citizens' willingness to pay them – in return for public services – are hallmarks of democracy. I am delighted that Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs is providing practical assistance to the Federal Board of Revenue to help the Government meet its targets

The UK will provide technical assistance to the FBR over the next three years to help build its capacity and improve tax collection to support economic integration, stability and growth. This technical assistance – supported by the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) – will be provided by HMRC.

The FBR and HMRC will work together to help Pakistan achieve its tax targets by helping to develop skills, knowledge and other resources essential for improving its performance in tax collection. HMRC will also advise the FBR on innovative solutions and measures to improve tax enforcement and reduce opportunities for tax evasion. Specific areas of assistance include off-shore taxation, strategic communications and the use of information technology - particularly forecasting and analysing available information and assessing risk.

The UK is committed to working with the government of Pakistan – at both the federal and provincial levels – to deliver on their ambitious plans to tackle poverty by creating more jobs, transforming education, increasing the tax base, stimulating growth, and providing better services to millions of children, women, and men across Pakistan.

Notes to editors

Across Pakistan, the UK is working closely with federal and provincial governments and partners on ambitious plans which will benefit millions of children and improve the standard of their education. Pakistan is now one of the UK’s largest recipients of development investment.

As well as tackling the education emergency, other priorities for the UK in Pakistan include preventing thousands of women dying in childbirth by funding skilled midwives, nurses, or doctors; providing job skills training to tens of thousands of the poorest people; and giving women in deprived households small monthly cash grants to purchase essentials, such as food and medicine.

UK development investment is dependent on continuing to secure value for money and results.

Lahore student named Senior Winner of 2014 Commonwealth Essay Competition

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/lahore-student-named-senior-winner-of-2014-commonwealth-essay-competition>

Fifteen year old Raniya Hosain has been named the Senior Winner in the Royal Commonwealth Society’s 2014 Commonwealth Essay Competition. Her winning entry was chosen by a panel of Commonwealth judges from more than 3,500 Senior entries.



Writing on the essay topic: 'Describe what your country has to offer other members of the [Commonwealth] team', Raniya's entry to the competition – which is sponsored by Cambridge University Press – is the heart-warming tale of an elderly and impoverished Pakistani fruit seller who inspires generosity and laughter in those he meets. This, Raniya writes, is the embodiment of Pakistan. An excerpt from Raniya's winning entry: "The reason that this man's story stood out was that his life and the people who were a part of it ARE Pakistan. So if anyone ever asked me what Pakistan had to give to the Commonwealth, I would tell them this story: The story of dried up apples, toothless smiles, stupid toys, juvenile stories, raucous laughter and crystal tears. The story of our people, the story of our country."

The judging panel said:

The judges applauded this courageous, sensitive and powerful story which has as its focus the complex spirit of Pakistan.

Raniya said:

When I found out about my success I was numb with shock, and then the elation set in. Currently studying at Lahore College of Arts and Sciences in Pakistan, Raniya attributes her success to the support and encouragement of her family and teachers: >I have a twin sister, a younger brother and countless cousins. My love of writing has been encouraged by every one of them. My parents, my grandparents, my sister, my brother have all helped me learn how to write like I do today. My school, LACAS, and all of my English teachers especially my tenth grade English teacher have given me so many opportunities over the years and have helped me become the person I am. I have been writing since I was six years old, and I want to continue writing until the bitter end."

As the Senior Winner, Raniya will be invited to attend a special award ceremony at Buckingham Palace, London in November. The ceremony will form part of a week of cultural and educational activities for both the Junior and Senior Winners.

Mike Lake CBE, Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society said:

The Commonwealth Essay Competition is an annual opportunity for young people to have their voices

heard. Year after year I continue to be amazed by the creativity and talent of the entrants and this year is no exception. The winning entries, although diverse in subject-matter, are alike in their ability to grab the reader's attention. At times witty, at times thought-provoking, the winning entries are original throughout and a true joy to read.

Notes to Editors

Senior Winner: Team Commonwealth! How would you describe what your country has to offer other members of the team? Raniya Hosain, Pakistan, age 15. [Click here for the essay](#)

Senior Runner-up: [What part does competition play in people's daily lives? Selina Xu, Singapore, age 16] (<https://www.thercs.org/assets/Essay-Competition/2014-Senior-Runner-up-Selina-Xu.pdf>)

Junior Winner: [Being a Team Player](#), Max de Bourcier, Jersey UK, age 10

Junior Runner up: [United We Stand](#), Leah Annia Plante-Wiener, age 13

The Commonwealth Essay Competition was founded in 1883 and is the world's oldest and largest international schools' writing contest. For 2014 the competition was sponsored by Cambridge University Press and received more than 9,500 entries from over 500 schools in 44 Commonwealth countries and territories.

The Junior category is open to entrants aged 13 years and under, and the Senior category is open to entrants aged 14 – 18 years.

The theme of the 2014 competition was, 'Team Commonwealth', which is also this year's Commonwealth theme. It touches upon the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games and the spirit of friendship between Commonwealth nations.

The Royal Commonwealth Society is a network of individuals and organisations committed to improving the lives and prospects of Commonwealth citizens across the world. Founded in 1868, the Society is constituted by Royal Charter (amended 2013) and is a charity in England and Wales (226748). The Society engages with its youth, civil society, business and governmental networks to address issues that matter to the citizens of the Commonwealth. Its primary focus is the promotion of young people throughout the Commonwealth.

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Floods in Pakistan

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/floods-in-pakistan>

Message of condolence by British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. Philip Barton CMG OBE



The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. Philip Barton CMG OBE, issued a message of condolence to those affected by the heavy flooding throughout the country

Speaking in Islamabad, Mr. Barton said:

I want to extend my deepest sympathies to the hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis who have been affected by the continuing heavy rains and the flooding resulting throughout Pakistan. In particular, my thoughts are with the families of those who have tragically lost their lives during the past few days. I pay tribute to all those who are either responding to or preparing for the floods, often in very difficult circumstances.

Notes to the editor:

Contact: Press Attaché, British High Commission, Islamabad; tel. 9251 2012000

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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Special thanks to Amy Ballantine, Julian Dickens and Shagufta Naeem