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## Bridge-Europa – July 2016

**Part of Pakistan Awareness Initiative –PAI**

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

### CONTEXT

*Countries and Donor agencies are listed in Alphabetical order*

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**From Editor:**

## **Zeenat Shahzadi – Kidnapped Female Journalist of Pakistan**

Zeenat is not home to celebrate Eid with her family and the family yet to know her whereabouts and don't know when they will see Zeenat again?

Zeenat Shahzadi, kidnapped on 19 August 2015 while on her way to work. Armed gunmen grabbed her off Rickshaw and threw her in the waiting car. She was working as a freelance reporter for the

**local newspaper Daily Nai Khabar and Metro News Lahore.**

**Brazen day-light kidnapping of a 24-year-old female journalist on a busy street of Lahore metropolis is the first of its kind in perilous Pakistan. She is the victim of two nuclear armed traditionally hostile countries, India and Pakistan's spy agencies unfounded blame game.**

**Zeenat's family suffered another tragedy in March 2016 when her teenaged brother succumbed to the tragedy and hanged himself to death.**

**Security agencies denying their part in the kidnapping but Zeenat's family, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, the story she was on and the mystery shrouding her kidnapping hold the country's security agencies responsible of her kidnapping.**

**Commission on Enforced Disappearances is now investigating Zeenat's kidnapping is not independent and works under the jurisdictions of the Federal Government. Ridiculously, the Commission has no authority over the rampant security agencies; however, also investigating 1,300 missing people's cases out of 3,000.**

**International Federation of Journalists - IFJ and the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists - PFUJ were not aware of Zeenat's kidnapping until October 2015 and didn't let the case go public as requested by the family because there are many cases where missing and kidnapped people were found dead with bullet riddled mutilated bodies after media and public attention.**

**Zeenat was working to find Hamid Ansari, an Indian citizen disappeared in Pakistan in 2012. He was supposedly in love with a Pakistani girl from Kohat, whom he had met on Face Book. He was in a rush to get in to Pakistan after the girl had told him that her parents pushing her to marry with someone else.**

**The 28-year-old engineer Ansari failed to obtain visa and entered Pakistan illegally via Kabul – Afghanistan. He was picked up from a hotel in Kohat and the authorities refused to register a case of his arrest.**

**Zeenat had approached the Supreme Court of Pakistan, Peshawar High Court and the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances for Ansari on behalf of Ansari's mother Fauzia, who granted special Power of Attorney to Zeenat from Mumbai, India. The Commission of Inquiry ordered the registration of the First Information Report, known as FIR for missing Ansari in 2014.**

**In January 2016, ensuing the efforts of Zeenat, the Peshawar High Court was informed by the Deputy Attorney General of Pakistan that Ministry of Defense has confessed the custody of Ansari and his impending trial in the military courts. It was later reported that a military court sentenced Ansari for three years on the charges of espionage and illegally entering Pakistan.**

According to Zeenat's brother Latif, Zeenat was repeatedly interrogated and threatened to withdraw from Hamid Ansari's case but remained steadfast to help Ansari on human grounds. Zeenat was due to appear in the court on 24 August, 2015 for testimony in missing people. There is no warrant or FIR filed for her kidnapping.

On the intervention of the court, kidnapping of Zeenat had been officially included in the missing people's case and the Joint Investigation Team – JIT set to probe the case. The JIT is now meeting with Zeenat's family. Such meetings may be the new tactics to intimidate the family as the traditional method of investigation in Pakistan. Still, there is no warrant or FIR filed for her kidnapping.

Pakistani security forces are equipped with enormous and unchecked powers. There are more than five thousand missing people in the country who believed to be picked up largely by the security agencies and remotely by the terrorist groups, local insurgents or armed wings of the political parties.

Law enforcement agencies exercise unrestricted powers under Pakistan Protection Act of 2014. Those powers further strengthen in 2015 by the Pakistan Protection Ordinance (PPO) which offers greater impunity to the police, intelligence, law enforcement authorities and military for heinous acts like forced kidnapping, torture and extrajudicial killings.

The government and the judiciary are aware of forced abductions and disappearances. On number of occasions, The Supreme Court of Pakistan has found security, intelligence agencies and paramilitary forces directly involved in forced abductions. Despite repeated orders from the courts, tainted incumbents and inefficient establishment are impotent to enforce the rule of law. The arrest orders of the Supreme Court of Pakistan for an Army Brigadier who was directly involved in disappearances were never executed.

Mother of Zeenat, Kaneez Bibi frequently visits the grave of her son as the only way to find solace and keeps the belongings of Zeenat in order; hoping her return.

Zeenat's family has appealed to the Chief of Army staff, Chief Justice, Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Chief Minister of Punjab for her safe recovery. They haven't heard anything back from them.

Pakistan ranks 6th in the list of the 20 Deadliest Countries for journalists in the world.

Sincerely

Syed Naeem Uddin

Editor/ Publisher

## Denmark

### Novo Nordisk seeks to expand collaboration with Government of

## **Pakistan on diabetes care** June 24, 2016

The Danish pharma company, **Novo Nordisk** is actively engaged in national and institutional initiatives to improve the quality of life for diabetic patients in Pakistan.

To further discuss expanding Novo Nordisk's contribution in Pakistan, a Danish delegation consisting of Mr. Jakob Jakobsen, Charge d'Affaires, Mr. Assar Qureshi, Commercial Counselor of the Embassy, Mr. Peter Soelberg, Corporate Vice President Novo Nordisk and Mr. Rana Azfar Zafar, Country Manager, Novo Nordisk Pakistan called on Mr. Syed Moazzam Ali, Joint Secretary and Mr. Asad Hafeez, Director General at the **Ministry of National Health Services Regulations & Coordination, Islamabad (NHSRC)**.

During the meeting, Mr. Soelberg said that Novo Nordisk's collaboration with NHSRC is not only focused on providing the treatment options but also long term goals to change diabetes and ensure a close to normal life for people with diabetes.

Mr. Asad Hafeez proposed that Novo Nordisk explored the possibility of providing **#free #insulin** to the underprivileged individual under the **Prime Minister National Health Program** and also to consider provision of free medicines, establishing of concessional health centers and new methodologies for better outreach.

Novo Nordisk responded positively and informed that Novo Nordisk Pakistan is in close liaison with the insurance team of the Health Ministry and is already working on formulating an action plan for implementation.

In February earlier this year, Novo Nordisk signed a LoU with the Ministry of Health for the development of **#National #Diabetes #Action #Plan (DAP)** and for increasing awareness and education of diabetes. Under the DAP, it was also proposed that Novo Nordisk in collaboration with NHSRC will work on preparing a curriculum on the awareness, prevention and management of diabetes to be disseminated in universities and schools across Pakistan.

The delegation also called on the **Minister for Commerce, Government of Pakistan** Engr. Khurram Dastgir to appraise his support on the formulation of the task force for the Diabetes Action Plan. Minister Dastgir emphasized on the need for designing intelligent grass-root level prevention campaigns against diabetes and discussed the challenge in designing the intervention program to help eliminate diabetes in Pakistan.

## **Wall of Kindness: Promoting the spirit of kindness and humanity for the less privileged** June 22, 2016

Today, Mr. Jakob Rogild Jakobsen, Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy visited the ‘Wall of Kindness’ in Islamabad with other colleagues to donate clothes and food items for less privileged people. The donation was given on behalf of the Embassy staff to mark the spirit of humanity and kindness, especially in the month of Ramadan.

The ‘Wall of Kindness’ is an initiative taken by individuals to give less privileged people the opportunity to get things which are required in their daily lives. It is open for all.

You can visit the ‘Wall of Kindness’ which is located in front of the Madni Mosque near Madina Market in F8/2 in Islamabad.

## Danish company contributes to IT growth in Pakistan June 18, 2016

Did you know that Pakistan produces more than 10,000 IT graduates a year?

There are more than 1800 IT companies in Pakistan, generating revenues of around 2.85 Billion US Dollars. They contribute to 1.6% of Pakistan’s total GDP.

One such company is the Danish company [Ciklum Pakistan \(Pvt.\) Ltd.](#) which is a global software development and technology partner for clients across the globe, including fortune 500 companies. It has development offices in Islamabad and Lahore.

Mr. Jakob Jakobsen, Charge d’Affaires and Mr. Assar Qureshi, Commercial Counsellor visited [Ciklum Pakistan \(Pvt.\) Ltd.](#) And met with Mr. Arif Beg, Managing Director and his team, who briefed the visitors on Ciklum’s operations, plans and challenges in Pakistan.

Ciklum lauded the assistance they had received for business visitors using the Embassy’s Red Carpet Program. This has had a very positive impact on Ciklum’s performance, especially where Danish clients invite Pakistani IT experts for assistance at short notice.

Mr. Jakob praised [Ciklum Pakistan \(Pvt.\) Ltd.](#) Team for the positive contribution they are making to developing the IT sector in Pakistan and strengthening trade relations between Denmark and Pakistan.

Mr. Assar expressed the hope that the improving business and security environment in [#Pakistan](#) would lead to further [#trade](#) enhancement. There is substantial potential to further increasing trade ties with [#Denmark](#) in multiple sectors. In continuation of momentum and efforts generated so far in increasing bilateral trade, he offered the full support of the trade section and brainstormed ideas on how to jointly cooperate on achieving mutual goals.

## Denmark supports UNHCR to empower Afghan refugees in Pakistan

June 8, 2016

Mr. Jakob Rogild Jakobsen, Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy held a meeting today with Mr. Indrika Ratwatte, [UNHCR Pakistan](#) Country Representative to discuss the current situation of Afghan refugees and internally displaced person in Pakistan.

The Government of Denmark has contributed around USD three million to UNHCR for 2016. The Danish funds \_her support the implementation of Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, UNHCR’s activities towards voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and efforts to empower refugee youth in Pakistan through provision of vocational training and technical skills.

Mr. Jakobsen said that empowering the [#Afghan #refugee](#) youth in Pakistan is an important initiative to bolster the human capital of Afghan refugees and allow them to contribute to the reconstruction and development processes upon return to Afghanistan

Mr. Ratwatte highlighted that Pakistan constitutes one of largest protracted refugee situation worldwide and continues to generously host over 1.5 million Afghan refugee Proof of Registration (PoR) cardholders. He thanked Denmark and other donors for their generous support, which has also enabled UNHCR to implement a five-year Health transition strategy (2014-2018) that aims at implementing the progressive disengagement of UNHCR from the existing parallel system of Basic Health Unit (BHUs) exiting in the Rural Villages (RVs).

Denmark is among the biggest contributors to [UNHCR](#), the [UN Refugee Agency](#) regional program in South West Asia and has contributed a total of USD 13.2 million since 2013 to date towards UNHCR programme in Pakistan.

## Meeting Commercial and Development Partners in Punjab

Mr. Jakob Jakobsen, Charge d’Affaires of the Embassy and his team conclude a productive two day visit to Lahore.

Mr. Jakob met with Mr. Bilal Mustafa, Managing Director of [Lahore Waste Management Company](#) and exchanged ideas over matters of mutual interest particularly in waste-to-energy projects of LWMC. In connection with [Vestas](#) 1000 MW project in Rohjan, Mr. Jakob along with Vestas’ team from Australia met the Home Secretary, Captain ® Azam Suleiman Khan and Deputy Inspector General of Police, Mr. Agha Yousaf to evaluate the on-ground security management for the project.

To explore additional areas of mutual trade in Punjab, Mr. Jakobsen also had a brainstorming session

with the newly appointed CEO of Punjab Board of Investment and Trade, Ms. Amena Cheema and discussed sector specific projects with her team.

Concluding his visit, Mr. Jakob also met with some of the local partners working with the [Danish Centre for Culture and Development](#), supported by the Embassy. He paid a visit to [Community World Service Asia](#), where he was briefed about the program activities and later joined [The Little Art](#) who were conducting a visual arts workshop on the theme of 'Environment and Climate' at a low-income and marginalized school. Mr. Jakob joined the enthusiastic children in painting and encouraged the need for developing critical thinking and analytical skills among children.

Mr. Jakob also visited the Minhaj University Lahore, where he delivered a presentation on Denmark's engagement in Pakistan and had a very productive Q&A session with the students.

## The Embassy wishes all our Muslim friends around the world a very Happy Ramadan. June 6, 2016

Denmark's Foreign Minister, Mr. Kristian Jensen also tweeted a special message today to mark the beginning of Ramadan in Denmark:

"On this first day of Ramadan, I wish all Muslims a month of peace, prosperity and reflection – Ramadan Mubarak."

@Kristian\_Jensen

## Farewell and thank you Pakistan! June 4, 2016

Dear Friends,

Today I depart for Denmark. I would like to express my sincere gratitude and thanks to my friends and acquaintances all over Pakistan.

A heartfelt Thank You to my amazing colleagues at the Royal Danish Embassy in Islamabad – you are truly an all-star team.

Even though, I am genuinely sad to leave, I am also very happy to see that the relations between Denmark and Pakistan have enhanced in areas such as stabilization, culture, media, business and public diplomacy. I hope that Denmark and Pakistan continue to strengthen ties even more in the future.

Thank you Pakistan all for your generous gestures and thank you to all those who made this place so special for me and will stay in my heart forever *PKDK*

Helle Nielsen

## Commemoration Ceremony for June 2

Today, the Embassy held the annual commemoration ceremony to remember and honour all those

who laid down their lives on 2<sup>nd</sup> June in 2008, while serving Denmark in Islamabad. Ms. Helle Nielsen, Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy expressed on behalf of the Government of Denmark, gratitude to their families for the sacrifice of their loved ones.

Flowers were laid down and the official flag of Denmark was set at half-mast. Ms. Nielsen announced “one minute silence” in the memory of the victims of the June 2 bomb blast at the Embassy in Islamabad, where eight people were killed.

## Denmark supports 8<sup>th</sup> batch of Youth Parliament Pakistan June 1, 2016

Today the 8<sup>th</sup> batch of the YouthParliamentPakistan (YPP) was inaugurated under the presence of Honorable Senator Mian Raza Rabbani, Chairman Senate of Pakistan and Mr. Jakob Jakobsen, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy along with members from the political sphere and media.

The YPP program is an initiative by PILDAT and has been supported by the Government of Denmark since 2010. The program aims to give young members a fast-paced comprehensive orientation and training on democratic and political affairs of Pakistan, legislative processes and leadership skills. Addressing the inaugural ceremony, Mr. Jakob Jakobsen said that although the future was always uncertain, what was certain was that it will be the young people of Pakistan who determine what the future of Pakistan will be. Speaking to the young members, Mr. Jakobsen said “The Youth Parliament program is a great opportunity for you to learn about civic responsibility, team work, tolerance and respect for other people’s opinion. This is where democracy starts from.”

The 8<sup>th</sup> Youth Parliament Pakistan comprises of 240 young Members, who have been selected from across the country.

Today, the program is the longest running nationally representative Youth Parliament.

## Launch of Status Report on Women’s Economic Participation & Empowerment

Today, Ms. Helle Nielsen, Chargé d’Affaires participated in the launch ceremony of the Status Report on women’s economic participation and empowerment in Pakistan, which was organized by UN Women in collaboration with the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW). The ‘Status Report’, produced with support from the Governments of Norway and Denmark, presented the social and economic vulnerabilities that keep the Pakistani woman underpaid and overworked, even when she has overcome structural and social barriers to seek employment.

Speaking as one of the key speakers, Ms. Nielsen said that investing in girls and women was not only the right thing to do but also a smart thing to do, as research shows that investing in girls and women



is the most effective investment in development, reaching far beyond the individual women. Ms. Nielsen gave the example about how women spend 90 percent of their salary on their children and the health, education and well-being of their family, while men only spend 30 to 40 percent. She also highlighted that by removing the barriers that prevent women from entering the labour market, a country's productivity can increase significantly.

Key experts, who participated in a panel discussion, applauded the report for being imperative to establish the reality on the ground and for giving direction for appropriate policies and action. They specially appreciated the report for developing the Women Economic Empowerment (WEE) Index for the first time in Pakistan, which would help in ranking the WEE status by districts and provide a mechanism to measure progress and pinpoint areas that require more concerted attention. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2015, Pakistan ranks 143 out of 145 countries in economic participation and opportunities and 135 in educational attainment.

## Celebrating Europe Day

Today is Europe Day, which is held every year on May 9 to celebrate peace and unity in Europe. To celebrate Europe Day this year, Ms. Helle Nielsen, Chargé d'Affaires, Colonel Thor Aron Hilton, Defence Attache and Mr. Assar Qureshi, Commercial Counsellor of the Embassy attended the EU Day's special ceremony which was organized by the [European Union in Pakistan](#). Together with colleagues from other EU countries and friends in Pakistan, they celebrated the day in the true spirit of Europe Day, which is promoting peace and sustainable development based on balanced economic growth and social justice for its citizens.

9<sup>th</sup> May marks the anniversary of the historical 'Schuman declaration'. At a speech in Paris in 1950, Robert Schuman, the then French foreign minister, set out his idea for a new form of political cooperation in Europe, which would make war between Europe's nations unthinkable. His vision was to create a European institution that would pool and manage coal and steel production. A treaty creating such a body was signed just under a year later. Schuman's proposal is considered to be the beginning of what is now the European Union.

## EDUCATION – The Right of Every Child May 4, 2016

Did you know that it is estimated that if all children in developing countries could read, global poverty would drop by 12%?

In addition to other social and economic challenges in Pakistan, education is widely regarded as a major area for investment given the damage that has been done to educational infrastructure in areas affected by conflict. It has led to a low level of education attainment and increasing gender disparities.

We are therefore proud to share with you that through Denmark's support, **Unicef Pakistan** has successfully concluded its education programme (2010–2015) in KPK and FATA, which ensures access to quality education for the most vulnerable children affected by conflict. Through this program, we have rehabilitated more than 600 schools and supported more than 160,000 students in KPK and FATA, including IDP camps, where children were displaced from Bara and North Waziristan agencies.

The project focused on strengthening and enhancing primary and middle schools' service delivery through improved and child friendly schools, to increase enrollment and attendance and reaching marginalized and vulnerable children, especially to girls.

Denmark is continuing its support to UNICEF because we believe that it is the right of every child to have access to good health services, clean water and especially to EDUCATION. We hope that one day all of the children of Pakistan can enjoy their fundamental right for a better life.

## **Today is World Press Freedom Day** May 3, 2016

World Press Freedom Day marks the global commitment to nurture and protect an independent and free media around the world.

Together with our international and local partners, Denmark is supporting a media development program in Pakistan. The program aims to improve the media environment with better regulatory framework and professional codes for journalists as well as build the capacity of media workers to improve reporting on complex socio-economic and political issues. It also includes training on safety for journalists reporting from conflict affected areas.

Our overall support is aimed at developing a platform for democratic debate, to reduce poverty, and to promote peace and security in Pakistan.

You can read more about our media support program for Pakistan by clicking this link:<https://www.mediasupport.org/areas/asia/pakistan/>  
[#WFFD2016](#)

## **Novo Nordisk holds awareness seminar on new treatment options to fight diabetes in Pakistan** April 9, 2016

The Danish pharma company **Novo Nordisk** held an awareness seminar on the rising burden and upcoming challenges in diabetes therapy in Pakistan.

Speaking at the inaugural press conference, Ms. Helle Nielsen, Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy congratulated Novo Nordisk for its success in launching innovative diabetes solutions for diabetic patients in Pakistan. She acknowledged the special efforts of Novo Nordisk for developing a national diabetes control action plan in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan that aimed to strengthen the diabetes health care system in Pakistan through awareness and quality care.

Mr. Rana Azfar Zafar, GM Novo Nordisk Pakistan stated that Novo Nordisk has been an active player in the fight against diabetes both globally and also in Pakistan for decades, and was extremely proud to finally launch new and effective treatment options for the first time ever in Pakistan, which would provide diabetic patients much better treatment and quality of life.

In Pakistan, almost 7 million people are diagnosed with diabetes, while in 2015 alone 86,000 deaths were related to diabetes. This means that almost 10 people die from diabetes every hour in Pakistan.

April 23, 2016

**Ms. Helle Nielsen, Chargé d’Affaires participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> National Child Art Competition** ceremony (Art Beat 2016), which was organized by **The Little Art** and co-funded by **Danish Centre for Culture and Development(CKU)**.

This year’s theme was dedicated to teachers of Pakistan with the title of “My Teacher – My Hero”. Almost 5000 artworks were submitted by children and youth from all over Pakistan to serve as a small tribute to the teachers, who had inspired them the most.

Winners were selected by a jury consisting of some of the most esteemed artists, curators and experienced art educators in Pakistan. The winning children were awarded with cash prizes, certificates and shields.

Speaking at the ceremony, Ms. Nielsen emphasized that Art and culture are fundamental needs for the survival of societies and symbolized some of the fundamental qualities of being human – such as creativity, freedom of expression, and innovation. Ms. Nielsen said she was deeply impressed by the art work displayed by the students and saw great potential among the youth of Pakistan.

Prior to the award ceremony, Ms. Nielsen also spent time with many of the participating students painting and sharing her experiences as a child and her passion for Art.

The Government of Denmark in collaboration with The Little Art are implementing a two year program aimed promoting education and positive social values through use of innovative learning

opportunities among children and youth, such as media and art.

## April 10 To support UN's International Day of Sports for Development and

**Peace**, Ms. Helle Nielsen, Charge d'Affaires participated in an exclusive football match today to show how football is a powerful vehicle for social inclusion, gender equality and youth empowerment.

The football tournament was between four teams, consisting of a blend of players from the diplomatic core and the women and girls from Pakistan's National Football Team and Rawalpindi's Young Rising Stars.

The event gave a chance to young females and participating players to get together in a spirit of commemoration and hope. The event gave the uplifting message that football is no longer a game dominated by boys and men.

The event was co-organised by [UN Women](#) and Serena Hotels.

## April 9 Outreach in Lahore

Mr. Jakob Jakobsen, Deputy Head of Mission and Mr. Jan Riemer, Development Counselor visited Lahore to reach out to key stakeholders, politicians, development partners and Danish commercial companies.

They both visited LUMS, where they held a meeting with the Faculty and also gave a presentation to students on Denmark's engagement in Pakistan. The program concluded with a very interactive Q&A session.

To further boost trade relations between Denmark and Pakistan, Mr. Jakob visited the office of VESTAS Pakistan to discuss and support them in their 1,000 MW wind energy project in South-west Punjab.

He also visited the Chen-One outlet, which stores the Danish clothing line 'Pre End' and had a dinner meeting with Mr. Mian Khashif Ashfaq to discuss future opportunities for collaborations.

Concluding his visit, Mr. Jakob also met with key members of Punjab Union of Journalists to discuss the Danish interventions in Pakistan and how Denmark can assist in other ways.

## April 8 Denmark supports nationwide 'Journalist Safety' training program

More than 1500 journalists from across the country will be trained on how to adopt safety measures while reporting from difficult areas. The nationwide journalist safety program is being funded by the Government of Denmark and was launched today by Mr. Jakob Jakobsen, Deputy Head of Mission at the inaugural session of the 'Training of Trainers' held in Islamabad.

While addressing the participants, Mr. Jakobsen applauded the media in Pakistan for playing a crucial role in the evolving socioeconomic and political discourse in Pakistan. Mr. Jakobsen however also raised the challenges being faced by many journalists, especially those reporting from conflict-affected areas, and expressed hope that through such safety trainings, many journalists would be better equipped to manage situations, where there would be underlying risk factors.

The training program is being implemented by the International Media Support (IMS) in collaboration with Center for Peace and Development Initiative (CPDI). It is part of a two year project which aims to improve the skills and safety of journalists in Pakistan's provinces and enable media stakeholders to produce a consensus code of conduct for the entire sector.

### **April 7 Memorial Service held for the world's victims of terrorism**

The Copenhagen Cathedral held a memorial service for all the victims, who lost their lives in the recent terror attacks around the world.

The memorial service was attended by many prominent people, including Denmark's Minister for Justice Mr. Søren Pind, the Ambassador of Pakistan in Denmark, Mr. Masroor Ahmed Junejo, the Ambassador of the USA in Denmark, Mr. Rufus Gifford and also the ambassadors from Belgium, Turkey, Israel and the Ivory Coast in Denmark.

The organisers said that terrorism was a global threat and they were all gathered to condemn all sorts of terrorism around the world. The ceremony aimed to mark the unity to stand together in mourning the victims and in solidarity with anyone affected by terror anywhere in the world.

Participants wrote down a short prayer or thought and lit candles in the memory of the victims.

### **April 4 'Accountability and Justice' are key to building up corruption free, fair and peaceful societies'**

Today, Mr. Jakob Jakobsen, Deputy Head of Mission paid a visit to Mr. Salman Faruqi, the Honorable Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan. They discussed the various services offered by the Federal Ombudsmen to Pakistanis and how it is easily accessible for individuals who cannot afford to pursue their complaints through courts.

Mr. Jakob praised their commitment to address the grievances and most importantly, provide protection where there is a substantial imbalance of power between the citizen and state. In Denmark, the Ombudsman receives around 4,000 complaints every year from people who believe that authorities have committed errors.

Due to strong and effective accountability mechanisms in Denmark in which the Ombudsman of the

Danish Parliament has an important role to play, Denmark has been ranked the least corrupt country in the world for three consecutive years. This ranking has been based on how the rule of law is experienced by citizens.

Did you know that in Denmark, you can submit your complaint in different languages other than Danish? Urdu is actually one of them

## April 1 'State of Human Rights 2015' Report launched

Today the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) launched the 'State of Human Rights in 2015' report at a ceremony held in Islamabad. Mr. Jakob Jakobsen, Deputy Head of Mission, Mr. Jan Riemer, Development Counsellor and Ms. Juwairia Sultan, Development Officer of the Embassy participated in the event.

Presenting the report, HRCP shared that 2015 was seen as a year where a range of legislative changes took place at the provincial level to strengthen rights of women. For the first time in the history of Pakistan, Balochistan and KP assemblies elected women as their speakers. 2015 was also a year, where violence related deaths decreased by 40% and suicide attacks in Pakistan decreased by 31% compared to the previous year.

However, with more than 25 million children out of school, Pakistan continues to face grave difficulties in education and also in reducing child mortality. The national labor force participation also remains one of the lowest in the world with wide gender disparity. Pakistan is also one of the top 10 countries in the world threatened by climate change and has lost almost six percent of GDP per year due to health costs of environmental degradation.

The aim of Denmark's development cooperation is to reduce poverty through the promotion of human rights and economic growth. In Pakistan, Denmark is collaborating with several civil society organisations, including HRCP to promote human rights for strengthening democracy, peace and prosperity in the country.

You can read the full report here: <http://hrcp-web.org/hrcpweb/>

## France

**Ambassador of France visits the Warsak Dam Hydropower Plant (23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016)**



On April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016, H.E. Mrs. Martine DORANCE, Ambassador of France, along with H.E. Mrs. Ina LEPEL, Ambassador of Germany and H.E. Jean-François CAUTAIN, Ambassador of European Union, visited the Warsak Dam and hydro power plant built on Kabul River in Khyber Agency near Peshawar. The 243MW power house operated by WAPDA will be rehabilitated in 2017 with the financial support of France, Germany, the European Union, the European Investment Bank and WAPDA for a total amount of 162.5 million euros.

For this purpose, the French Agency for Development has arranged a 40 M€ loan and an additional 4.5 M€ grant delegated by the European Union / Asia Investment Facility (EU/AIF).

## France at the 4<sup>th</sup> Islamabad Literature Festival (15-17 April, 2016)



The Embassy of France in Pakistan is proud to have contributed to the 4<sup>th</sup> Islamabad Literature Festival, by inviting one of the leading French scholars on South Asia, Christophe Jaffrelot.

The Ambassador of France, participating to the opening ceremony for the second year, saluted the festival, which showed the lively culture of debate in Pakistan. She notably paid tribute to the great Urdu writer Intizar Hussain, who passed away a few months back and was a great friend of France. The Embassy is a regular contributor to the Festival and Christophe Jaffrelot's presence this year helped offer a solid and critical take on Pakistani politics, both past and present.

As part of a panel discussion with Pakistani authors, Christophe Jaffrelot presented his previous and recently published books, the *Pakistan Paradox. Instability and Resilience* (Hurst, 2015, translation of the French version published in 2013) and *Pakistan at Crossroads – Domestic Dynamics and External Pressures*. He also intervened in the closure keynote on the topic of “*Correlations between the domestic and foreign policies of Pakistan.*”

Christophe Jaffrelot teaches primarily at the Paris Institute of Political Studies, known as “Sciences Po” where is associated with the Centre of International Research as Senior Research Fellow. He is also Global Scholar at Princeton University, New Jersey as well as professor of Indian politics and sociology at the King's India Institute and King's College, London.

Jaffrelot regularly contributes to the press with his analysis on events related to his areas of research and was awarded the 2014 Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism.

## **French Senators visit Pakistan (11-15 April 2016)**

A delegation of the France-Pakistan Friendship group of the French Senate visited Pakistan from 11 to 15 of April. Led by Senator Pascal Allizard, elected from the region of Calvados, it also included Senator Françoise Cartron, Vice-President of the Senate and Senator of Gironde, and Senator Patricia Morhet Richaud, elected from Hautes Alpes, together with the administrator of the friendship group, Mr Pierre-Michel Vauthelin.

French Senators followed a dense program of meetings with their counterparts as well as with the business community and the civil society in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi, aimed at reinforcing bilateral relations between France and Pakistan in all domains, especially economic, cultural and university and scientific exchanges.

Among others, they were received by the President of the Senate of Pakistan, by the convener of the France-Pakistan friendship group in the Pakistani Senate, by the Minister of State, Chairman of BISP, and by the Chief Minister of Punjab.

They also interacted with members from the business community in Lahore and Karachi, particularly with the Pakistan Business Council and the Pakistan France Business Alliance.



They also met the Chairman of the HEC, in order to strengthen university and scientific ties between the two countries

## Public lecture « Study in France » at University of Agriculture Faisalabad

University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) is the second best university of Pakistan according to the ranking of the Higher Education Commission. Approximately 30 professors of UAF have completed their PhD in France.

These members of the “Pak-France Alumni Network” have contributed to the organization of a public lecture “Study in France” by the Director of “Alliance Française Lahore” and the Higher Education and Scientific Attaché of the Embassy of France. The lecture took place on May 31, 2016, in front of more than 200 students and faculty.

This lecture was followed by a visit of the university.





**Frédéric Dupré, master in floral art, in Pakistan to support the cause of orphans of the NGO SOS Village Peshawar (29 March, 2016)**



**As part of a charity project to raise funds for orphans supported by the NGO SOS Village Peshawar, the French floral artist, Frédéric Dupré, unveiled the secrets of his art during a demonstration organized jointly with the Serena hotel on March 29, 2016.**

**Landscape architect, horticulturist and florist, Frédéric Dupré won in 2011 the prestigious “Meilleur Ouvrier de France” award which honors, according to a long French tradition, the best craftsmen in their respective field. Frédéric Dupré is therefore an artisan and an artist at the same time; his materials are plants and flowers that he sculpts and models, making ephemeral and remarkable pieces of art.**



**Frederic Dupre Floral Fashion Show at Serena Hotel on 29 March 2016**

## **Lahore attack – Statement by the President of the Republic of France (27 March 2016)**

The attack perpetrated today in Lahore, Pakistan, claimed more than 60 lives and injured many, according to a first assessment, unfortunately still temporary.

The Chief of State expresses the full solidarity of France to the authorities and the people of Pakistan in these painful moments and reiterates the inflexible will of our country to continue to fight against terrorism.

## **France Pakistan Joint Security Commission (24 March 2016)**

Joint communiqué

1. Fourth Round of Pakistan – France Joint Security Commission Talks was held in Ministry of Defence, Rawalpindi on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2016. Lt Gen (Retd) Muhammad Alam Khttak, Secretary Defence led Pakistan delegation while French delegation was led by Mr. Louis GAUTIER, Secretary General for Defence and National Security.

2. Prior to the holding of the Plenary Session Mr. Louis GAUTIER called on Lt Gen (Retd) Muhammad Alam Khttak in his office during which issues relating to bilateral security cooperation and counter terrorism were discussed. Both the leaders also share sympathies on tragic terrorist attacks in France and Pakistan.

3. During the Plenary Session, both sides deliberated upon various areas of mutual interest including security matters, counter terrorism and prevailing regional environment. In addition, the delegations took stock of the actions that have been undertaken since last Joint Security Commission meeting held in France in January 2014. Both sides discussed the successes achieved by Government of

Pakistan through Operation Zarb-e-Azb and National Action Plan. The discussion also focused on possible academic exchanges between the institutions of the two countries on security issues and benefit from each others experiences and capabilities to counter the common threat of terrorism and extremism. French side also offered to share its expertise and best practices on crises management procedures such as natural catastrophe or plane crashes etc. Both sides agreed to deliberate the issue further in upcoming months in Paris.

4. One of the salient features of the Session was the signing of Bilateral Agreement between France and Pakistan which stipulates that France will assist Pakistan in strengthening the capabilities of its Police Force in the area of counter terrorism. This will be implemented through a three-year programme aimed at developing specific police skills, such as scientific and technical assistance; expertise in identifying forged documents; in cybercrime; in civil defence etc.

5. Talks of Joint Security Commission were held in a cordial atmosphere. Delegation leaders shared their resolve to work together for enhanced co-operation in the field of defence and capacity building of Law enforcement agencies. They also agreed that the 5th<sup>R</sup> round of Pakistan-France Joint Security Commission Talks will take place in France in early 2017.

## **“Women and Climate Change”: French Embassy holds special event for International Women’s Day**



### **“Women and Climate Change”**

The Ambassador of France to Pakistan, H.E. Mrs. Martine Dorance, hosted an event on the 14th<sup>o</sup>f March, 2016, to mark International Women’s Day, after weeklong celebrations.

The debate, which focused on “Women and Climate Change”, gathered almost a hundred

representatives from the political world, Parliamentarians, government officials, prominent activists and members of the civil society, journalists, diplomats and UN representatives, as well as women representing the voices of the mountain communities.

More than 100 days after the historical achievement of a universal agreement on climate change in Paris, the Ambassador made a call to sustain the momentum terming 2016 as the “year of action and implementation”.

Emphasizing the fact that women were “primary victims of climate change, but also often the main source of solutions”, Ambassador underlined the need to “place women at the core of national and local climate strategies and at the heart of international climate negotiations”.

Apart from raising awareness on this subject, the event, she said, was aiming at presenting an often forgotten face of the Women of Pakistan, women who fought for their ideas, women who were carpenters, women who climbed the Everest at the age of 21, referring to the special participants in the audience.

Among many outstanding Pakistani voices, like Dr. Shoaib Sultan Khan or Mr. Malik Amin Aslam, the keynote speakers shared their comments on these issues :



Senator Sherry Rehman appreciated the “call for action” initiated by the Embassy of France on this fundamental topic which was not a “niche subject” but would impact the lives of all Pakistanis. She underlined the enormous risks climate change was posing in terms of daily security and resilience in Pakistan, “incubat[ing] exclusion, sharpen[ing] gender inequalities and reduc[ing] access to education as well as affecting production”, when the “producers of the country [were] primarily for women”.

**She emphasized the need for a “national conversation” at the political and parliamentary level on climate change, which would need to include women.**



**Major General Asghar Nawaz, Chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), underlined the sheerness of the impacts climate change was having in Pakistan and its high vulnerability, as “75% of disasters were linked to meteorological causes” throughout the country (“floods, droughts, heat waves, glacier’s melting, avalanches and landslides, new tropical cyclonic activities in the Arabian Sea”). He insisted on the need to focus on the most vulnerable groups, particularly women, and on the importance of awareness and education. NDMA was strongly committed in that sense, was now conducting surveys with disaggregated data and had set up a special Gender and Child Cell.**

**Mrs. Aisha Khan, CEO of the Mountain and Glaciers Protection Organization (MGPO), called for the strengthening of a new “civil society platform” aimed at helping the government to tackle climate change in Pakistan, taking forward a broad-based dynamic started last year. She called to expand the outreach, build alliances, consolidate gains and accelerate the momentum to sensitize all stakeholders about climate change. She underlined that “climate risk management can never be successful without social equity, equitable distribution of resources and proportionate representation of women in decision making.”**



**Mrs. Aqeela Bano and Farman Ali, two young women who have been trained in a skill development project of carpentry, masonry and electrification, developed in Hunza and Chitral by the Aga Khan Cultural Service (AKCS) with the support of the Embassy of France in Pakistan, also talked of their experience during COP21 as they represented Pakistani feminine voices in the Paris Conference. Ms. Aqeela Bano, Surveyor of the project spoke about the challenges and success of young entrepreneurs from her area and how their participation to the COP21 Climate Conference had given them new ideas of wooden house construction. She said “women can achieve anything they want”.**

**Mrs. Samina Baig, famous alpinist, first Pakistani woman to climb all seven summits in the world, climbing the Everest at the age of 21, made a strong and inspiring speech. She termed climate change “a bigger threat than terrorism”. She gave her fist hand testimony of glacier melting all over the world and in the summits of Pakistan, saying she got surprised last year while climbing the K2, seeing that “snow had barely frozen at 6000m”. She called for action in face of this alarming situation. Mr. Ali Tauqeer Sheikh, CEO of LEAD Pakistan, termed the COP21 “another French Revolution” and “regret[ted] this debate was not happening in the national and provincial Parliaments”. He insisted on the importance of tackling climate change, one of the three most important challenges for Pakistan and the world, and underlined the need to include gender approaches to the policies. He called the Parliaments to give budgets to mitigate and adapt to climate change and asked media to engage in raising awareness on the subject.**



**OPENING SPEECH OF H.E. MARTINE DORANCE, AMBASSADOR OF FRANCE TO PAKISTAN  
DEBATE ON “WOMEN AND CLIMATE CHANGE”**

**14TH<sup>M</sup> ARCH 2016, RESIDENCE OF FRANCE**

**Honorable Members of Parliament,  
Dear Chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority,  
Excellencies,**

**Dear Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**We are today gathered on the occasion of Women’s International Day, whose celebration, given the importance of the topic, extends now to several days, or even weeks.**

**When talking about gender, we often think of women’s empowerment and opportunities, be it through education, in the economy, in the political or media world. More and more also, and this is something new, new in Pakistan but also in most countries in the world including mine, when talking about gender, we need to talk about the links between women and climate change and environment. In the past few months, I am very pleased to have seen a raising awareness and action regarding climate change in Pakistan. Your presence here today confirms it and honours us. Through the actions of many of you gathered today, and, I want to underline, especially women, things are moving: an exceptional civil society mobilization during and after the COP 21; Parliamentarian debates and initiatives such as the complete solarisation of the Parliament in Islamabad, the first in the world; the recent tree planting campaign launched by the government; the raising awareness within the media which now reports on climate change on a very constant basis.**



**Who else but you can better talk about this topic? I also think of the women on the ground, the women who live in the mountains and are here today, in direct contact with nature and the impacts of climate change.**

**Women and gender held a crucial role during the COP21, the Conference on Climate Change which was held in Paris in December last. As you know, the event was inaugurated by a great number of heads of state and government, among them the Prime minister of Pakistan, Mr. Nawaz Sharif. During this 10 days Conference, there was even a day dedicated only to Gender.**

**The Paris agreement itself in its recitals underlines that, “when taking action to address climate change, [countries will commit] to respect, promote and consider gender equality and empowerment of women”.**

**Why is this so important? Firstly, women are the primary victims of climate change, for it is poor communities that are the most vulnerable and suffer the worst of its impacts, and women make up 70% of those in poverty throughout the world.**

**According to the UN, when a natural disaster strikes a region, the risk of death is 14 times higher for women, mainly because they are not targeted as a priority by disaster warning and prevention programmes.**

**Climate change also increases the number of constraints on women, who are responsible, in many regions, for providing food, water and fuel for their families. Another worrying fact is that these constraints result in too much household work, which often leads to girls dropping out of school. It also entails consequences on health, and reproductive health especially.**

**As the primary victims of climate change, women are also often the main source of solutions. As development experts duly highlight, a climate change programme designed without taking women into account is less effective than the same programme planned with them.**

**In light of these facts, one thing is certain: women must be placed at the core of national and local climate strategies and at the heart of international climate negotiations.**

**As France is currently holding the presidency of COP21, it will ensure that.**

**Since the historical achievement of a universal agreement on climate change, in Paris, about a 100 days ago, we now need to sustain the momentum.**

**While 2015 was the year of negotiation and mobilization, this 2016 should be that of action and implementation.**

**In Pakistan, France will stay committed and expand its actions of cooperation and will continue to organize a series of events to raise awareness:**

- ▶ the French Agency for Development, AFD, which currently focuses mainly on green energy, especially on hydroelectricity, will expand the scope of its projects particularly in climate change mitigation and adaptation throughout the year;**
- ▶ France is supporting the creation of a civil society platform, "a "climate change coalition", "to gather forces and expertise in the subject, and I am happy to see many of its members present today;**
- ▶ France is also helping to build scientific bridges, between, for example, the Pakistan Meteorological Department and Meteo France, and is in the process of helping to create a "Pakistani IPCC" (Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change), a scientists platform working exclusively on Climate change.**
- ▶ Several events will be organized during the course of the year to raise awareness:**
- ▶ Among others, a second big moot on climate change will be organized as a follow up to the Climate Change Lahore Forum, before the COP22, which will take stock of the Paris conclusions and look at the new commitments of Pakistan, which has promised a new INDC (intended nationally determined contribution);**
- ▶ Awareness in schools will be continued, especially through the painting competitions organized by the government in the whole of Pakistan;**
- ▶ Trainings sessions on climate change for a diverse public will be prolonged.**

**I am sure the debate today will be of high quality. Its aim is to raise awareness on the subject, be it from a more political and institutional perspective, in the first part of this event, as eminent speakers, Senator Sherry Rehman and the Chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority, General Asghar Nawaz, will share their expertise and ideas with us.**

**Or be it from a civil society perspective, starting with the CEO of Mountain and Glaciers Protection Organisation, Mrs. Aisha Khan, who was in Paris during the COP21, or Mrs. Aqeela Bano and Farman Ali, both from Hunza, who lead the carpentry program supported by France together with the Aga Khan Foundation, and also went to Paris to represent the feminine voices of Pakistan. I am glad also to have among us Mr. Ali Tauqeer Sheikh, CEO of LEAD Pakistan, who will conclude the session today, as a follow up to a first workshop held on the same topic three weeks back at LEAD.**

**Finally, let me conclude by saying this event is also aimed at presenting another face of the Women of Pakistan: women who fight for their ideas, women who are carpenters, women who climb the**

Everest at the age of 21 and the seven summits in the world. Let me here give a special thank you to Mrs Samina Baig for her presence and voice among us.

To all, I wish a fruitful debate! *Dernière modification : 24/04/2016*

## Germany

### German Grant worth 6 Mio Euros for establishing Pakistan Glacial Monitoring Network

Germany through the KfW Development Bank has provided a grant of 6 Mio EUR to monitor over 5 000 melting glaciers in the northern parts of Pakistan which contribute about 80 per cent of river flow. The grant will be provided to the Water & Power Development Authority (WAPDA) for the Project "Glacial Monitoring for Energy and Water Security in Pakistan" for telemetric equipment in the lower stretches of the glaciated areas. Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to vagaries of climate change, experiencing recurring floods.

Secretary Economic Affairs Division, Mr. Tariq Bajwa, Member Water WAPDA Mr. Shoeib Iqbal and KfW Country Director Mr. Wolfgang Moellers signed the Grant Financing Agreement today, in the presence of First Secretary Sebastian Ernst from the German Embassy and WAPDA.

Speaking on the occasion, both EAD and WAPDA appreciated the long term development partnership with KfW. Mr. Moellers said that "being the custodian of the largest number of glaciers outside the arctic, Pakistan can surely assume global leadership in addressing a critical aspect of Climate Change through this Project."

The Solar power equipment will transmit glacial melt data for processing in Lahore. The data will be used to regulate hydropower generation, dam protection, and other reservoir management operations. The Federal Flood Commission, the Flood Forecasting Division of the Pakistan

Meteorological Department and the Indus River Systems Authority will benefit from this information. Two state-of-the-art energy efficient buildings will be constructed in Lahore and Skardu for housing the staff and the sophisticated equipment.

**Germany supports girls' education: 900 female students of the Daag Behsud Government Girls Primary School in Nowshera, among them 120 refugee girls from Afghanistan, benefit from largely improved conditions for their school education. The project was funded by Germany within the framework of the UNHCR-led Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas Project (RAHA).**

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi handed over the extensively rehabilitated and reconstructed school building to Muhammad Atif, Minister for Education of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. On the inauguration ceremony, German Chargé d’Affaires a.i. Peter Felten stated:

“This project is a fine example of cooperation between the authorities of Pakistan, the United

Nations and international partners. I can assure you that neither the plight of Afghan refugees nor the immense generosity of the Pakistani people in welcoming and hosting the refugees over three decades, has been forgotten by the international community.

We will continue to support the Pakistani federal and provincial Governments in their efforts to provide Afghan refugees with services like education and health that they so urgently need. Our common goal is that the refugees can return to their homeland as soon as possible. Therefore, all national, regional and international partners who have the possibility to do so must make their contribution to bring the bloodshed and terror in Afghanistan to an end immediately, to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan and to create an environment in which the refugees can return voluntarily and in dignity, and find livelihood opportunities that enable them to restore their lives at home in a sustainable manner.”

<https://www.facebook.com/UnitedNationsPakistan/photos/...>

June 21

**COAS visiting Germany:** Raheel Sharif is in Germany for a three day visit at the invitation of this German counterpart, Inspector of the Army Lt Gen Jörg Vollmer. Raheel Sharif, who spent more than a year in Germany for military training in the mid 1980s, discussed with LtGen Vollmer how to further deepen the good military cooperation between Germany and Pakistan. They were greeted by the "Ehrenformation", the guard of honour, at Bendlerblock - here Germans honour Col.

Stauffenberg, who was executed in 1944 for having tried to overthrow the brutal Nazi dictatorship and to bring back democracy to Germany.

June 20

**Today is World Refugee Day** which commemorates the strength, courage, and resilience of millions of refugees in the world. On this important occasion, our Deputy Head of Mission, Mr Felten, attended an event organized by the UN Refugee Agency and chaired by H.E. Lt. Gen (Rdevelopment) Abdul Qadir Baloch, Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions. The event highlighted Pakistan’s role as a host to the largest protracted refugee population for over 35 years with around 1.5 million registered Afghan refugees. Germany has been one of the major contributors to the UN Refugee Agency’s global budget and to the Government of Pakistan’s efforts to support Afghan refugees and their hosting areas in Pakistan.

June 20

**Young Pakistani-German Muhammad Taha Tariq** got selected to become a German parliamentary member for four days on MP Achim Barchmann's invitation. Taha shared his experiences and said it was a wonderful opportunity to get to know transparent democratic processes

June 9

**Germany has been a long-standing partner of Pakistan in the energy sector** and is currently contributing to the Government of Pakistan's efforts to end load shedding. KfW, the German Development Bank, for example, has financed a number of power plants and grid stations. This includes the grid station Nokhar in Gujranwala near Lahore that improves the supply of electricity to the dynamic economic area of Gujranwala. We encourage the Government of Pakistan to continue its energy sector reform agenda with the ultimate objective to end load shedding for the benefit of commercial and private consumers.

June 7

**One of our colleagues visited a German-funded humanitarian project** in Biagalay village in Shangla, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The project which is jointly implemented by the German Red Cross and the Pakistan Red Crescent Society helps communities in Shangla and Kohistan to better prepare for natural disasters. Meeting with the Deputy Commissioner Shangla and representatives of the local community was incredibly rewarding. We wish the Red Cross and the Red Crescent a successful project implementation and hope they can make a lasting impact for the benefit of the local communities.

June 6

**Ambassador Lepel inaugurated the first out of ten regional blood banks** that have been built with German support throughout Pakistan. Gilgit-Baltistan was the first to complete the work.

The Chief Minister of GB graced the occasion on Friday in Gilgit.

June 4

**Free media is one of the most important pillars in democracy** and the public forum on which opinions are made. Yesterday, the Head of Press and Cultural Section of the German Embassy, Dr. Dan Tidten, visited the National Press Club and had an interesting conversation with the journalists' community on various topics. Let's protect freedom of media together!

June 1

**German Ambassador Ina Lepel and Omer Aftab, CEO of Women**

**Empowerment Group (WEG)**, launched a project to end violence against women yesterday. The project involves an awareness campaign, capacity building and advocacy. “We strongly believe that closing the gaps between men and women in health, education, politics and economic participation will contribute to a more equitable and more prosperous society in Pakistan”, Ambassador Lepel said. We appreciate WEG’s commitment and hard work for the rights of women in Pakistan and look forward to our close cooperation.

## **German Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry launched in Karachi**

On 27 May the German-Pakistani Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GPCCI) was launched in Karachi. It is the first ever joint chamber by a European country in Pakistan. On this occasion GPCCI signed an MoU with the Pakistani-German Renewable Energies Forum (PGREF). The ceremony was attended by high-ranking guests from Germany, Ambassador Lepel, CG Schmiedchen, members of the diplomatic corps, the business community and the media .



## **Federal Foreign Minister Steinmeier on the beginning of the fasting month of Ramadan**



Speaking in Mexico City on 5 June, Foreign Minister Steinmeier issued the following statement to mark the beginning of the fasting month of Ramadan:

**I wish all Muslims a peaceful and blessed Ramadan in the company of their families.**

**This year, once again, millions of people will celebrate this special month in Germany and throughout the world.**

**For Muslims, Ramadan is an important time for reflection, contemplation and fellowship. I was able to experience this first hand last year, when I was privileged to celebrate Ramadan with Syrian families in Brandenburg. Despite the difficult journey these people had endured, the time spent together with their families gave them strength and optimism.**

**My desire is that in view of the many crises and conflicts in the Islamic world in particular, this festival will send a message of hope and peace, of respect and tolerance.**

### **May 29 Children are our future**

**We internationally protect their rights with the Convention on the Rights of the Child – Pakistan, like Germany, is a state party to all major international human rights treaties, i.e. the provisions of these treaties are legally binding on Pakistan.**

**One of these human rights treaties is the Convention on the Rights of the Child. States party to the Convention are obliged to regularly report on progress made in the implementation of the Convention. Recently Pakistan's fifth periodic report on the implementation of the Convention was examined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which is composed of internationally renowned independent child rights experts.**

### **May 28 German Ambassador Ina Lepel spoke at the 8th PowerGen**

**Conference on Thursday, together with Mohammad Younus Dagha, Federal Secretary Ministry of Water & Power, and a number of other distinguished representatives from the government and the energy sector. Ambassador Lepel shared Germany's lessons learnt from the "Energiewende" – Germany's energy revolution for secure, sustainable and affordable energy. She also highlighted the potential of renewable energy in Pakistan and the expertise of German companies in this field: "Renewables have the potential to play a significant role to end load shedding in Pakistan. We hope that they will continue to receive the attention from public and private stakeholders they deserve."**

### **May 27 The textile and garment industry is the backbone of**

**Pakistan's' economy. We support the All Pakistan Textile Mill Association (APTMA) in establishing a Sustainable Production Center, which helps members of the association and beyond to increase energy efficiency, water efficiency and labour standards in their production. GIZ country director signed a Declaration of Intend with APTMA for German support to the Sustainable**

**Production Center yesterday.**

May 27 Yesterday afternoon the **German delegation in Lahore learned more about TVET in Pakistan.** First they visited the Punjab Vocational Training Council hosted by its Chairman Faisal Ijaz Khan, to find out more about competency based training. Afterwards the delegation went to the premises of the Government Apprentices Training Center in which DB Schenker as one partner from the corporate sector offers Cooperative Vocational Training.

May 26

And here is the video of the ribbon cutting ceremony for the inauguration of the **first secretariat of Pakistan German Renewable Energy Forum (PGREF)** at the premises of the Department of Energy in Lahore!

A big thank you to Dr. Asad Rehman Gilani, Secretary Department of Energy of the Government of the Punjab and Dr. Stefan Oswald, Head of Division Afghanistan/Pakistan of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development!

May 26

The next appointment of the German delegation was a **meeting with Secretary Dr. Asad Rehman Gilani**, Department of Energy of the Government of the Punjab and his team. Dr. Stefan Oswald, Head of Division Afghanistan/Pakistan of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), had the honour to inaugurate the first secretariat of Pakistan German Renewable Energy Forum (PGREF) at the premises of the Department of Energy.

Background information:

The PGREF is a cooperation initiative between the Governments of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Federal Republic of Germany supported by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). The aim is to create a network between the two countries industries, public sectors and innovation networks in the Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficiency (EE) field. The German Government has been supporting the energy sector in Pakistan through GIZ's Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency project (REEE) since 2005. With the aim to reducing the power shortage in Pakistan and moving towards an optimal energy mix by incorporating more renewable energy sources, the PGREF intends to promote cooperation and knowledge transfer in the fields of renewable energy and energy efficiency in Pakistan.

May 26

A high level German delegation led by the Head of Division Afghanistan/Pakistan of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Dr. Stefan Oswald, is visiting Lahore today to



discuss **German Pakistan Development Cooperation** - and we will report live for you what they are up to!

Their first meeting was with the Chairman Planning and Development Board Punjab, Mr. Jahanzeb Khan and other representatives from the Punjab Government Authorities such as the Excise and Taxation Department and NAVTTC.

May 28

Germany, Netherlands and Pakistan support **living wages in the Asian textile**

**industry**. Living wages are necessary so that everybody can live and work with dignity. High-ranking delegations from the Netherlands and Germany, the ambassadors of both countries and the EU, Pakistan's Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development as well as participants from 20 countries participated in the Asian Living Wages Conference (ALWC) today. The conference's main aim is linking governments and social partners in Asian countries to international buyers in a joint effort to realize living wages in textile supply chains. Let's work together to support living wages in the Asian textile industry!

May 24

The intergovernmental consultations between Pakistan and Germany took place today. **Projects of GIZ, KfW and NGOs** were discussed between EAD and the German delegation. Future joint activities in the areas of good governance, renewable energy and sustainable economic development were agreed.

May 22

**Free Media** is an important pillar of every de\_herefore\_ociety. Last week, the German embassy with collaboration of Media House Islamabad, organized a six day journalists training for the television. Journalist from various channels took part and appreciated the effort.

May 19

**Pakistan and Germany signed agreements for a 7.5 million EUR grant** (900 million PKR) funded by the German Government through KfW Development Bank. The purpose of the project in cooperation with four NGOs is to help the poor and vulnerable groups in Pakistan to get better access to maternal and child health services. It should be more affordable, accessible and acceptable. The NGOs are the Aga Khan Foundation, DKT, the Family Planning Association of Pakistan and Greenstar Social Marketing. This grant will focus on maternal and child health in the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), Gilgit Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Northern Punjab.

May 17

Germany supports **vocational training for young Pakistanis**: The Ambassadors of Germany, the EU and the Netherlands distributed awards to the winners of the TVET Skills Mela at

Peshawar last week. Young people from all provinces of Pakistan, who have successfully completed a vocational training course, were invited to attend the Skills Mela in Peshawar. Our Ambassador Ina Lepel was impressed by the variety and quality of skills of the participants.

May 16

Two of our colleagues were in Quetta last week for project visits and **political consultations**. They were delighted to attend the groundbreaking of a practice site for young cricketers next to Ayub Stadium and to visit a government school for girls rehabilitated through German funding. In addition to discussions with H.E. Dr. Hamid Khan Achakzai, Minister of Planning and Development Balochistan, and Mr Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar, Spokesperson of the Government of Balochistan, they also looked at a Registration Card Modification Centre for Afghan refugees. We will continue our efforts to support refugee hosting areas and to contribute to the economic development of Balochistan!

May 13

**"E"rope Day** "brought a series of events: All EU embassies send their ambassadors to Pakistani universities to talk about the EU and their country. Our ambassador Ina Lepel gave a lecture at Fatima Jinnah Women University, while the head of our press and cultural section, Dr. Dan Tidten, did so at the National University of Modern Languages (NUML). Both lectures were well received - —e thank the students for their active participation!

May 12

This week representatives of the German Embassy travelled to a **small village of UC Komi Kot in AJK**, to visit the agriculture project of our partner Crescent Development Foundation. With German funds the Pakistani NGO trained marginalized women of several villages in modern farming techniques such as tunnel farming and the use of glass houses.

Beneficiaries told us, that after the trainings and with the new tools their production of vegetables increased between 50-100%! The women also founded Female Farmer Organizations, which contact the local markets to sell any excess vegetables. What a great way to contribute to the family income and start small enterprises! We were impressed by the achievements of these strong women living in a remote area!

May 12

Germany supports the **rehabilitation and reintegration of IDPs** to FATA through a 10-Million-Euro project, which will be implemented by SRSP. The project will support small scale community infrastructure re-construction such as irrigation channels, link roads and sanitation facilities, as well as provide skill training to the youth of FATA, explained German Ambassador Lepel at the project inception workshop in Peshawar.

May 11

Supported by German Development Cooperation the **Local Governance School in Peshawar** trains the newly elected Councillors in KP regarding their role and responsibilities. Together with our Swiss colleague we visited Peshawar and met with the school's management and a representative of the Local Government Department.

May 11

Many of you took great interest in our **Micro Project "G"rls biking to School"** implemented by the Pakistani NGO IEDF in District Pakpattan. We want to thank you for all your lovely comments and messages and share with you more pictures of the project! The biking school girls are now even seen along the Highway and the project is receiving international news coverage. If you are interested to learn more about the project, have a look at the article from Deutsche Welle in **Urdu!**

May 10

On the occasion of "E"rope day" under the event "A"mbassadors back to Universities", each **ambassador of the EU member states visited different universities to speak about the EU** and their country. Our ambassador Ina Lepel gave a well received presentation at the University of Haripur.

May 8

Let us all celebrate **World Red Cross Red Crescent Day** today, which is devoted to the Red Cross and Red Crescent family and its 17 million volunteers in 190 countries. On Friday, we were delighted to participate in Pakistan Red Crescent's festivities that included H.E. Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mr. Iqbal Zafar Jhagra and PRC Chairman Dr. Saeed Ilahi. Germany has been a long-standing supporter of both the Red Crescent and the Red Cross. We appreciate their commitment to those that need our support the most and wish them all the best for their future efforts to be "Everywhere for Everyone"!

May 6

**Good news for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa!** Today, German Ambassador Ina Lepel and Ms Mishaal Tareen from the Foundation for Integrated Development Action (FIDA) signed a project agreement for a community development and small infrastructure programme. The project will fund small infrastructure schemes based on specific community needs with a focus on D.I. Khan. We hope that our efforts will contribute to improving local infrastructure and to providing economic opportunities in southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

May 5

The Head of Cooperation of the German Embassy Islamabad visited Baluchistan, where the **World Food Programme (WFP)** supports the the provincial government in community based

stunting and malnutrition prevention. She met with lady health workers in Nushki District, spoke to beneficiaries and visited the the warehouse facilities.

May 4

Ambassador Ina Lepel recently met with Minister of State for Federal **Education and Professional Training**, Engr. Baligh-ur-Rehman. Among other issues, German-Pakistani cooperation in the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Reform was discussed.

April 30

Next to **the Development Cooperation of the German Government** also many private German companies are supporting development projects in Pakistan. One example is the German based environmental service provider BlackForest Solutions GmbH. The company, which also has business activities in Pakistan, gave some of its profit back to the needy: Together with other national and international donors and the help of the Bin Qutab Family and Foundation, they set up the Begum Noor Memorial Hospital located at Bhubhar in Chakwal district. The hospital is serving the rural population with medical treatment asking only for symbolic charges which makes it affordable even for the poorest.

What a great initiative!

April 29

Ambassador Lepel and the **Representative of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in Pakistan**, Mr. Lars Bergmeyer, visited the Abottabad Campus of COMSATS Institute of Information Technology (CIIT) yesterday. CIIT Abottabad has a joint research project in chemical sciences with the German Rostock University, and its Centre for High Mountain Research also works closely with German researchers. Ambassador Lepel and DAAD representative Bergmeyer were briefed about the work of CIIT Abottabad and discussed future cooperation

April 28

Good news for financial inclusion in Pakistan! Today, **the German Development Bank KfW signed an agreement together with the United Kingdom and the Pakistan Poverty Allevation Fund** to create the Pakistan Microfinance Investment Company (PMIC). The PMIC is designed to help provide millions of hard-working entrepreneurial people with small loans to boost economic growth and development in Pakistan – very much in line with the Government of Pakistan’s National Financial Inclusion Strategy. H.E. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar attended the signing ceremony along with other dignitaries. We hope that Germany’s support will create additional opportunities for the millions of financially excluded people in Pakistan and support the Government of Pakistan in implementing its financial inclusion strategy.

April 28

Let us introduce you to the new Buddy Bear of the Embassy! Designed by the **Phool Patti** (@<https://www.facebook.com/phoolpatti1>) team comprising Ali Salman Anchan and Haider Ali, this Buddy Bear will be placed in front of our Embassy to welcome our visitors, like in many other German Embassies around the world.

„Buddy Bears are the best Ambassadors for Berlin and for an open-minded and cosmopolitan Germany.“ ” –ederal Foreign Minister, Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier

The bear is the heraldic animal of Berlin and the project "UNITED BUDDY BEARS - The Art of Tolerance" promotes living together in peace and harmony. Each Buddy Bear shows the individual design created by international artists on behalf of their native countries. About 140 Buddy Bears (each 2m tall) representing different countries are part of an exhibition on a global tour. The diverse design of the Buddy Bears - always typical for the respective countries - enables the visitors to experience a journey around the globe. For further details, please visit [www.buddy-bear.com](http://www.buddy-bear.com).

April 27

Every day, many letters and cards reach our embassy. This one was particularly touching: A German citizen wrote to express his **heartfelt sorrow and grief about the murderous terrorist attack in Lahore** one month ago. He or she did not give us his or her address and therefore remains anonymous – but with this post, we convey this person’s message to you.

Humanity sees no borders.

Full translation of the German text:

“Dear Sir or Madam,

The attack in Lahore deeply disturbed me. I am praying for solace for the bereaved, and healing for the injured.

Yours respectfully,

Stahl”

April 26

Last month we reported about the inauguration of a micro project supplying free **bicycles to school-going girls in District Pakpattan**, in order to improve the school drop-out rate. Only a month later, our project partner IEDF has sent us these photos of girls riding to school on their brand new bikes, funded by the German Embassy! We wish you all the best for your education, girls, keep going! :-)

April 26

**Allama Iqbal lived and studied in Germany** - –in his honour, the Muslim Institute,

the IIUI and the IRD organised a seminary on Iqbal's message of peace. The head of our press and cultural section represented Germany and gave a speech on the German philosopher Nietzsche's idea of "Übermensch" and the similarities to Allama Iqbal's concept of "Kāudi". It was great to see how Western and Eastern philosophy inspire each other - Allama Iqbal's works are a great example for that.

April 25

On the occasion of the **visit of KfW Director Afghanistan and Pakistan, Olaf Zymelka**, from Frankfurt the German, French and EU Ambassadors Ms. Ina Lepel, Ms. Martine Dorance and Mr. Jean-Francois Cautain visited the hydro-electric power station Warsak this weekend. The dam and water power plant on Kabul river is to be rehabilitated by WAPDA with funds from KfW (Germany), AfD (France) and the EIB (EU).

The preparations for the mega project are already under way and by 2019 the Warsak hydro-electric power station will generate more power more efficiently and eco-friendly!

April 23

Last week, Irina Felten, wife of our Deputy Head of Mission Peter Felten, launched her new book **«Der Härteposten Lissabon – Aus der Feder einer Diplomatenhausfrau»** at an event hosted by the Portuguese Embassy in Islamabad. Mrs Felten holds a doctorate in German philology from Volgograd University. Since her marriage she has lived in different places around the world with her husband. In 2013, they moved to Islamabad. In her humorously written book «Der Härteposten Lissabon» Irina Felten shares her personal impressions of their posting in Portugal from 2004 to 2007. Maybe her next book will cover her experiences in Pakistan?

If you are curious, you can find an excerpt in German language

here: <http://www.epubli.de/.../H%C3%A4rteposten-Lissabon-Irin.../48757>

April 21

Last weekend the Pakistani-German business community celebrated the bilateral business ties with a Spring Gala in Lahore bringing together elements of both cultures. While sponsors could exhibit their products the event was all about **"Made in Germany" in Pakistan and "Made in Pakistan" in Germany.**

Under the patronage of the German Embassy Islamabad, the gala was organized by Ms. Sowaba Shehzad, Mr. Pervaiz Akhtar and the team of the Pakistan-German Business Forum (PGBF) with Ambassador Lepel as the chief guest. The event will have a lasting impact: The net earnings from the Spring Fest will be given to the Mission High School Dalwal, which offers education for 300 underprivileged children.

Sponsors of the event were Dewan Motors BMW, BASF, KSB Pumps, METRO cash and carry, ALNO German Kitchens, DB Schenker, Robert Bosch Middle East FZE, EFU, DS Concept, Ravi Agric, Excel Engineering and Sitara chemicals. Thank you for making this Gala possible!

April 21

## Attention! German language teachers needed in Pakistan!

More and more students in Pakistan want to learn German. Next to the Annemarie Schimmel Haus in Lahore and the Goethe-Institut in Karachi, seven certified PASCH schools teach German in Pakistan, as do many private institutions. However, there are not enough German teachers to meet the demand. If you are qualified to teach the German language or you know someone, who might be interested, please send us your information (and CV) to [info@islamabad.diplo.de](mailto:info@islamabad.diplo.de).

April 19

German Ambassador Ina Lepel took part in the inauguration of a newly-constructed Government Primary School in Hayatabad yesterday.

Under the RAHA initiative funded by the German Government, the UNHCR and the provincial government of KP have enhanced school enrolment ratio in the province by creating space for additional 5,000 children and improving learning conditions for over 10,000 children already attending schools.

In her speech, Ambassador Lepel underlined the need to support the communities which have been hosting Afghan refugees for so many years along with the refugees themselves. The improvement of living conditions regarding education, health and community infrastructure is a key concern to German development cooperation.

April 18

The Punjab University Law College invited the head of our press and cultural section as well as the head of the DAAD office to a joint lecture on Friday. Dr. Tidten gave a lecture on the **refugee crisis** and the basic structure of the constitution - –the latter being a topic widely discussed by Pakistani lawyers recently. Head of DAAD Lars Bergmeyer explained about study and research opportunities in Germany. It was great to see how active the students are - –eep it up!

April 14

## Germany in a suitcase!

On Monday Dr. Tidten, Head of Press and Cultural Section, visited Roots International School to experience the travelling and interactive exhibition "D"utschland im Koffer". The Exhibition by Goethe Institut lets students discover Germany and the German language through two large walk-in suitcases.

April 12

Ambassador Ina Lepel visited the ruins of **Takht-Bhai-Monastery in Mardan District** last week and was very impressed by the rich cultural heritage of the Gandhara civilisation in Pakistan. Two thousand years ago, the heart of Mahayana Buddhism was beating in this region full of monasteries, libraries and meditation sites - –the archaeological sites of the Gandhara civilisation in Pakistan are a treasure for all mankind. According to the “Noble Eightfold Path”, one of the central teachings of Mahayana-Buddhism, everybody can achieve enlightenment and redemption through the right practice and meditation – something our Ambassador tried out on the spot.

April 11

**Good news for FATA!** Last week, German Ambassador Ina Lepel signed a project agreement with the FATA Research Centre, a Pakistani think tank. The project aims to build on the momentum of the ongoing discussions on governance reforms in FATA and includes in-depth research on reform options based on consultations with stakeholders and the people of FATA. We hope that this research will contribute to an informed debate and the ongoing reform process!

April 11

On the occasion of the UN's **International Day of Sports for Development and Peace**, a group of diplomats played football with and against women from the Pakistan National Football team and Rawalpindi's Young Rising Stars, yesterday. While Ambassador Ina Lepel spectated, our Head of Commercial Section, Mr. Müller-Berner, participated as a player. What a great way to show how football is a powerful vehicle for social inclusion, gender equality and youth empowerment.

The event was co-organised by UNWomen and Serena Hotels.

April 10

Germans and Pakistanis have a passion for sports. A great example is **Abad Arkam, a young Pakistani-German**, who helps refugees and brings people together through Cricket! Abad was born in Pakistan but moved to Germany eleven years ago. He has recently founded the first Cricket Club in Moers, Germany, the Moers Cricket Club e.V. Abad is convinced that sport has a positive influence on the society, so he initiated the project "Cricket for refugees" together with the city Moers. Through sport and with his language skills he helps refugees to integrate in Germany (have a look at this article -).

Abad recently travelled to Pakistan to visit his home village near Rawat, where he founded the Sport Club Mohra Darogha as a partner club to his cricket club in Moers. Together with friends and neighbours he wants to promote sport activities for children and teenagers.



We are impressed by Abad's' commitment and dedication to help others! Thank you for visiting the Embassy and sharing your ideas with us!

April 9

Germany continues to support **Higher Education in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa**: In Mardan, Ambassador Lepel and two First Secretaries of the Embassy visited the Abdul Wali Khan University's' library and several departments. She met Vice-Chancellor Dr. Ihsan Ali and twenty faculty members for a discussion about opportunities to study and do research in and in cooperation with Germany. Some of the faculty members have already studied in Germany and were fluent in German - –ehr schön!

April 8

During her visit to Mardan, Ambassador Ina Lepel inaugurated the **women shelter Dar-ul-Aman**. Women who have experienced violence can find refuge and support here. The shelter was rehabilitated with the help of German Development Cooperation.

April 6

This week, we welcomed another project partner at our Embassy: **Mr. Shahjahan Sayed, Director of Media House Islamabad**, and German Ambassador Ina Lepel signed a project agreement aimed at enhancing technical capacities of journalists from FATA and KP. Participating journalists will be trained in modern journalistic standards and tools that will help quality reporting on sensitive issues from conflicts-struck regions of Pakistan.

April 5

In Lahore, ambassador Lepel had a **meeting with Archbishop Sebastian Francis Shaw O.F.M.** and some of the sisters. It is good to see how Pakistanis of all faiths are standing together in the hour of need

April 2

Germany continues to support Pakistan: Moving into the 55th year of Financial Cooperation with Pakistan, Federal Secretary for Economic Affairs, Tariq Bajwa (I.), and German government-owned development bank **KfW's' Country Director Wolfgang Moellers** exchanged the contracts of worth Rs 2.9 billion for the Blood Transfusion System, Reproductive Health, and Rehabilitation of Refugee Affected & Hosting Areas.

## The Netherlands

June 30: During her road trip to Karachi **Ambassador Seppen was mesmerised by the beauty and culture of Pakistan**, from pottery making in Multan to the museums and archaeology of its ancestors.



June 30

A team of 7 Pakistani dairy trainers visited the Dairy Training Centre in Netherlands for 2 weeks to learn the latest practices in dairy management. This tailor-made training is part of **the Netherlands' 'upport to the growth and modernisation of Pakistan's'dairy sector.**

To learn more about the Netherlands Tailor-Made Training programme and its requirements, please visit: <https://www.epnuffic.nl/.../nfp-tmt-tailor-made-training-prog...>

June 28

The 28th **Pakistan Ambassador Dosty Cup** was played in The Hague between the Pakistani Community Team and Dutch Foreign Ministry Team. The Pakistani team won the match by 6-4 and retained the cup. The Pakistan Ambassador Dosty Cup is an annual event hosted by the Embassy of Pakistan in The Hague, expressing the passion for hockey which Pakistan and the Netherlands share.



June 20

Deputy Head of Mission Renate Pors attended an event to commemorate **World Refugee Day in Islamabad** today. Ms Aqeela Asifi who won the UNHCR 2015 Nansen Award spoke at the occasion. The award was granted to her for the promotion of education amongst Afghan Refugees. More than 60 million worldwide have fled their homes to move to a safer place. This commemoration gave faces to only some of them who are in need of support.



June 16

The Netherlands Embassy and the Canadian High Commission provided a 3-day course on **document forgery** for officials from the Islamabad Police and National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA). The training was arranged by the Embassy of France and conducted at Police Lines in Islamabad. Certificates were distributed to the participating officials.



June 13

Deputy Head of Mission Renate Pors participated in a ceremony recently for handing over **Foetal Dopplers** to Dr Hasan Orooj, Chief Director Public Health Islamabad. These dopplers monitor foetal heart beats to ensure mother and child health during pregnancy. The foetal dopplers will be used at public health facilities in urban areas of Islamabad. This project was initiated by the Embassy of the Netherlands in 2013 and is presently funded by the Norwegians and implemented by IDRAK.





June 7

The Embassy team would like to wish **Ramzan Kareem** to all those celebrating.



June 2

During her visit to Karachi, Ambassador Jeannette Seppen was received by the chairmen of both Karachi Port Trust and the Port Qasim Authority. **The ports of Pakistan and Rotterdam have a special bond**, working together since decades to improve infrastructure, logistics and management.



**May 31**

The Embassy organised a special **meeting between the Pakistan Buyers Forum** and the Secretary of Commerce in Islamabad last week to discuss efforts to improve labour, safety and environmental standards in Pakistan's textile sector. These 24 international fashion brands and buying houses represent more than half of Pakistan's textile exports and are committed to keeping Pakistan an attractive textile sourcing destination internationally. During this meeting, the Pakistan Buyers Forum also launched their brand new website: <http://buyersforum.info/>



May 30

During an **Agri-Trade Event in Lahore** last week, 2 business deals were signed between Dutch and Pakistani dairy companies. A total of 9 visiting agri-companies from the Netherlands met with 25 agriculture and food companies in Punjab to explore possibilities for collaboration, joint ventures and knowledge cooperation. The visiting Dutch companies were excited about the rapidly growing agricultural relations between Pakistan and the Netherlands, and were keen to return to Pakistan to expand their business here.



May 27

**Deputy Head of Mission Renate Pors** visited the **Government High School, Panjgaran, Islamabad**, to share her childhood experiences with the female students, aged between 12-15. She related the choices she had to make when living in the

Netherlands between the age of 10 -20. There was a lively discussion on the girl's career wishes and perspectives, with an active participation of the parents and teachers too.

The Embassy of the Netherlands and UN-Women organized this session to focus on the choices girls can make as an activity motivated by the International Women's Day, which was on 8 March.







May 26

Yesterday the **Asian Living Wage Conference**, organized by the Governments of Netherlands Germany and Pakistan in cooperation with the ILO, started in Islamabad. More than 200 guests, including government officials, manufacturers, members of trade associations and trade unions from 20 countries attended. Tanja Gonggrijp Deputy Director for Sustainable Economic Development underlined the value of labour and called upon all stakeholders to realise living wages through social dialogue.

May 25

The economic team of the Embassy participated in the **Pogee Energy Fair in Lahore** last week to showcase Dutch expertise in renewable energy. Many Pakistani entrepreneurs and experts visited the bright orange Dutch stall to learn more about the energy solutions the Netherlands has to offer. Indeed, the Netherlands has a strong standing in the areas of renewable energy and energy efficiency and a leading position in wind energy at sea, biomass processing and greenhouse farming. To learn more, visit: <http://www.hollandtradeandinvest.com/key-sectors/energy>



May 18

Ambassador Jeannette Seppen visited the very successful **Rice Warehousing Project** at **Hafizabad** during her last visit to Punjab. This food security project (implemented by the NRSP

with the support of Enclude from the Netherlands) allows farmers to store their rice until they obtain a better price for it, whilst their deposit can also be collateral to allow them to sow the next crop. In the first year of the project, participating farmers doubled their income!



May 16

Karachi turned orange for a night last week during the **King's Day celebration** organised by Honorary Consul Tarek Khan. Lots of citizens, friends and partners of the Netherlands celebrated the birthday of King Willem Alexander and the friendship between the Netherlands and Pakistan.



NETHERLAND KINGS D.  
Celebration 2016 Karachi





May 12

Ambassador Jeannette Seppen attended the **National Skills Competition Prize Distribution Ceremony** in Peshawer last week. The competition was organised by National Vocational & Technical Training Commission (NAVTTTC) for young people who participated in the TVET system and gained skills defined by industry. The Netherlands Government strongly believes the importance of training youth in Pakistan with marketable skills to equip them to find better jobs and provide for their families





May 11

Ambassador Jeannette Seppen welcomed the **Dutch dairy cows** at At-Tahur Dairy near Kasur, where Prema Milk is made. She was happy to see how these world-class animals thrive even in Pakistan. More and more dairy producers are investing in Dutch dairy cattle, because of their unmatched production and robust health.



May 6

Last week Ambassador Jeannette Seppen attended the **launch of the annual report 2015** by the Centre for Legal Aid Assistance and Settlement (CLAAS). The report addresses core issues faced by Christians in Pakistan. The Netherlands strongly advocates an inclusive society, where the rights of religious minorities are protected and will continue to engage with Pakistani partners on this.



May 3

Today is **World Press Freedom Day**. Freedom of expression – including press freedom and freedom of access to information – is a fundamental human right. It acts like a catalyst: freedom of expression allows people to demand other human rights, such as justice, equality before the law and freedom of religion or belief. Without freedom of expression, these other freedoms cannot be properly exercised. Freedom of expression makes democracy more meaningful and institutions more accountable. It contributes to a free and better balanced debate. In the Netherlands we go to great lengths to defend this freedom. This is why we are here today on this World Press Freedom Day in Pakistan, to support the right to freedom of expression together with #UNESCO and in collaboration with Media Matters for Democracy and the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives.

May 2

Ambassador Jeannette Seppen recently met with Minister for Commerce Khurram Dastgir Khan to discuss the strong **commercial ties between Pakistan and the Netherlands**. The Ambassador expressed her happiness about the rapid growth of Dutch trade and investment in

Pakistan. Minister Dastgir recognised the Netherlands as a valuable knowledge and trade partner, and especially praised the Dutch CBI programme which helps Pakistani companies access the EU market.

May 1

Today is **Labour Day**! Access to decent and safe work is an important human right and a condition for sustainable economic development. The Netherlands strongly supports improving labour conditions in Pakistan - through the Asian Living Wage Conference, the Pakistani Buyers Forum and a labour inspection reform programme with #ILO and the Pakistani Government.

April 28

Ambassador Jeannette Seppen met Minister for National Food Security and Research, Sikandar Hayat Khan Bosan in Islamabad earlier this week. **The Dutch agricultural sector** has a lot to offer Pakistan to help make it more food secure. Indeed, the Netherlands was rated the most Food Secure Nation in the world in a recent study due to the high production, agricultural innovation, adequate storage and distribution of food, as well as a good integration of logistic and commercial networks and a resilience against natural disasters.

April 26

## A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS ON SOCIAL PROGRESS

The Netherlands contributes to development in Pakistan mainly through these organisations







*Holland, Your Colourful Connection*





*Holland, Your Colourful Connection*



*Holland, Your Colourful Connection*



## Food security: Dutch potato seeds offered as solution

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/1083599/food-security-dutch-potato-seeds-offered-as-solution/>

The Netherlands, a country of 17 million inhabitants produces enough food for 70 million. It is truly a food secure nation. Pakistan is facing a malnutrition crisis that is amongst the worst in the world and improvements are needed. In order to safeguard the country's future development, wellbeing of its population and prosperity, urgent action is required. Private companies could take a leading role to launch a multiplication of Dutch potato seeds in Pakistan with a view to reducing input cost to farmers as well as establishing a vibrant seed industry in the country, resulting in higher yields. The Netherlands can share its expertise and technical know-how in agricultural practices.



April 9

Yesterday the Embassy hosted a high tea to welcome the Dutch companies attending the **Texpo Fair** in Karachi. Many Dutch companies already present in Pakistan attended as well to network and exchange information on doing business in Pakistan. The guest of honour was the Pakistani Ambassador to the Netherlands, H.E. Moazzam Khan.



April 6

Deputy Head of Mission Renate Pors visited Pir Mehr Ali Shah Agricultural University in Rawalpindi yesterday together with **Dutch expert Romke Wustman** for a series of lectures on Food Security. This university has successfully indigenised a hydroponics system from a model originating in the Netherlands which is accessible to local farmers in Pakistan. This is a beautiful example of how Dutch-Pakistani collaboration and exchange of expertise has resulted in increased high quality food production!



April 5

Last week, another airplane full of **good-looking Dutch cows** arrived in Pakistan! They were brought here by HUNLAND Trade and will produce their delicious milk at Nishat Dairy Private Limited. Dutch dairy cows are reknown worldwide – they can produce up to 40 liters of milk a day, and can thrive even in Pakistan's harsh climate.



April 4

Renate Pors, Deputy Head of Mission at the Netherlands Embassy highlighted **the Netherlands commitment to Food Security** today by inaugurating the series of events the Embassy has organized for the visit of the Dutch Expert Mr Romke Wustman. The first event was a discussion at PARC (Pakistan Agricultural Research Council) on seed concepts, challenges and opportunities. The remaining programme which includes a series of lectures, seminars and media appearance will follow in Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Lahore.



## Norway

June 2

### Strengthening Institutional and Community Resilience in the Hazardous Areas of Pakistan

On June 2nd, 2016, a knowledge dissemination seminar of the Norwegian-supported project “Strengthening Institutional and Community Resilience in the Hazardous Areas of Pakistan” was arranged at Islamabad Hotel. The event was attended by the project beneficiaries, civil society institutions, government officials and others. Ambassador of Norway, Mr Tore Nedrebø, was the chief guest.

First secretary of the embassy, Mr. Tom Jørgen Martinussen, also participated in the event. Ms. Nusrat Nasab, Chief Executive Officer of FOCUS Pakistan in her opening remarks appreciated the support of Norway to the Aga Khan Development Network’s development and humanitarian programme over the last several years. She particularly lauded the support extended for the disaster preparedness activities, which has benefited thousands of community members, government officials and others. This support and activities of disaster preparedness activities have also contributed to

saving many lives. She noted that climate change has adverse impact on the lives of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral through an increase in frequency and intensity of disasters.

Ambassador Nedrebø appreciated the work of AKDN and FOCUS in the development as well as humanitarian sectors. He appreciated the disaster preparedness work gained through the project and shared his impressions from a recent visit in the north, where he witnessed a disaster simulation which was followed by a quick response to a real-life car accident by FOCUS team in Hunza. He stressed the need to build more synergies and coordination among DRR actors, government authorities and donors.

The project “Strengthening Institutional and Community Resilience in the Hazardous Areas of Pakistan” funded by Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE) was initiated in January 2015 and will phase out in June 2016. The total funding made available was about USD 400,000. The project was built on lessons learned from the phase 1 implemented during 2012-2014.

The aim of the project has been to strengthen community resilience through the implementation of integrated DRR activities and building the capacity of government and community institutions. More specifically, the project had three main goals:

Improved risk anticipation and Early Warning Mechanisms through strengthening institutional and local capacity and information sharing practices

Enhanced and sustained community and institutional preparedness to DRR through community awareness and training sessions for community members including women, DRR planning, stockpiling and school based interventions

Develop and strengthen linkages among DRR practitioners including government officials through capacity building sessions and formation of networks in Gilgit-Baltistan

The project has benefitted over 38,000 individuals from the communities, government departments and other sectors. Through the project over 40 hazard and risk maps were prepared, 37 villages based disaster risk management training sessions and disaster risk management plans were prepared. Also, 7 comprehensive disaster management training sessions were arranged for local support organizations were arranged and stockpiles of basic response equipment including tents, blankets, basic search tools and first aid boxes. This helped locals in building resilience to disasters.

Additionally, sessions on basic swift water rescue were arranged in the areas, where water hazard



remains dominant.

To improve early warning system, a center of early warning was established in Gilgit, which is equipped with necessary skills and resources for flood, snow avalanches, debris flow and landslides. The center is also linked with the extensive meter based early warning system installed at Mayo village in Hunza. The system has been procured from Taiwan and would help local communities in monitoring the landslide cracks and also warn in timely manner in case of any major changes happening at the landslide.

The project also contributed in improving coordination and linkages among disaster risk reduction (DRR) actors in Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral with creation of DRR forums. Also, over 200 policemen and women were trained in first aid and mass casualty as first responders.





May 26

## Opening of Leif Larsen Music Centre at Altit

On 26th May 2016, Norwegian ambassador Tore Nedrebø opened the Leif Larsen Music Centre at Altit in the Hunza valley of Pakistan's mountainous Gilgit- Baltistan northern region. The Centre is dedicated to the memory of the late previous Norwegian ambassador to Pakistan, Leif H. Larsen, who tragically expired in a helicopter accident in nearby Naltar in May 2015.

The purpose of the centre is to provide facilities for traditional musicians and performers of Gilgit-Baltistan and Chitral to train youth in different traditions and genres of mountain music. The centre will follow the *Ustad-Shagird* (teacher-apprentice) model of music education, which the Aga Khan Music Initiative has previously implemented in central Asian countries. An internationally renowned music educator and music events expert, Mr. Will Ramsay, visited Hunza last year and to help develop the community-based music education and out-reach programme that is now based at the Leif Larsen Music Centre.

The Centre will provide short residencies for visiting artists, writers, historians and environmentalists during summer and music education and production during autumn and winter. It will also help local communities organise different festivals and music events. Currently, 32 young students (18 female and 14 male) are enrolled in two months' basic training in seven local music instruments short courses, supported by five local musicians.

The Leif Larsen Music Centre was constructed by the Ciqam social women enterprise, using local materials and vernacular architecture. It was jointly funded by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Islamabad (47%) and the Aga Khan Music Initiative (53%) at a total cost of about USD 150.000.

At the opening ceremony also the ambassadors of the European Union, Mr. Jean-François Cautain and his wife, of Switzerland, Mr. Marc George, and of the acting high commissioner of Canada, Mr. Andrew Turner, were present. So were representatives of the Aga Khan Cultural Services in Pakistan, the Aga Khan Planning and Building Services in Pakistan, FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance, the Aga Khan Foundation Pakistan and Aga Khan Rural Support Programme as well as representatives of the local community and residents at the centre.

## Sweden

June 2

### **Carl Bildt in Islamabad: “India and Pakistan can use EU as an example”**

“EU could serve as an example to India and Pakistan” former Swedish Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Carl Bildt, stated in a public speech in Islamabad on Wednesday, 1st June. He continued “Inter-regional cooperation is critical to solve contemporary geopolitical challenges, and this line of thinking applies not only to the EU but to any international region”.

Mr Bildt’s speech titled “Global Security Challenges in the Era of New Geo-Political Realignments: European Responses”, covered a wide spectrum of global events over the past decades, which have led the world to where it stands today. The issues ranged from the crucial role of trade relations and political dialogue to the propaganda apparatus of Daesh and Bildt the return of European politics to those of decades past due to the deteriorating relationship with Russia in the wake of the annexation of Crimea. On the latter, Carl Bildt laconically quipped that “Invading another country, usually does not end with them becoming friends”.

A veritable all-rounder in the field of global issues and international relations, Mr Bildt is a much consulted analysts on a broad spectrum of topics. Among a multitude of other appointments he is one of the Special Representatives of the Swedish Prime Minister for Sweden’s Candidacy to the United Nations Security Council. He visited Pakistan in that capacity.

H.E Tariq Fatemi, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, was a chief guest to the event and delivered gave his remarks followed by a vivid and engaging question-and-answer session with the audience. The event was co-hosted by co-hosted by the Embassy of Sweden in Islamabad and the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS).

Coverage in national media:

<http://crss.pk/.../media-coverage-for-crss-public-talk-with-.../>

<http://tribune.com.pk/.../economic-downturn-impacted-geopoli.../>

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/.../pak-india-to-resolve-outstanding...>

**UK**

## **Evaluation of Delivering Reproductive Health Results (DRHR) through non state providers**

**30 June 2016**

**Part of:**

**Evaluations completed: April 2016 to March 2017 and Pakistan**

**An evaluation of the DRHR programme's impact on access to and utilisation of reproductive health services and commodities, equity and quality of care.**

**Evaluation of Delivering reproductive health results (DRHR) through non state providers**

**[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/533669/Delivering-Reproductive-Health-Results-Non-State-Providers-Pakistan1.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/533669/Delivering-Reproductive-Health-Results-Non-State-Providers-Pakistan1.pdf)**

**Detail**

**DFID Delivering Reproductive Health Results (DRHR) through Non-State Providers programme has supported Marie Stopes International (MSI) and Population Services International (PSI) over 4 years (2012–2016) in relation to expanding the delivery and utilisation of high-quality reproductive health (RH) services and commodities in under-served urban and rural areas in southern Punjab, northern Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). MSI works with Marie Stopes Society Pakistan (MSS) and uses a social franchising (SF) approach. PSI works with its local counterpart Greenstar Social Marketing (GSM) and uses a social marketing (SM) approach.**

## **UK aid supports new motorway construction in Pakistan**

**From: British High Commission Islamabad and DFID Pakistan**

**First published: 21 June 2016**

**Part of: Pakistan**

**UK's Department for International Development (DFID) will assist Government of Pakistan for upgrading sections of Motorway in Punjab.**

**The United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) attended the signing of an agreement between the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of Pakistan for a \$34 million grant to build the remaining 64-kilometre section of the motorway (M-4) connecting Shorkot and Khanewal in Punjab province.**

**The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will administer the UK's \$34 million grant and the additional \$100 million loan by the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).**

**The agreement was signed between Pakistan's Secretary for Economic Affairs Tariq Bajwa and ADB Country Director for Pakistan Werner E. Liepach, in a ceremony attended by Pakistan's Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, ADB Vice President Wencai Zhang and the Head of UK's Department for International Development (DFID) Joanna Reid.**

**Speaking at the signing ceremony, the Head of UK's Department for International Development (DFID) Joanna Reid said:**

**DFID and ADB are supporting the government of Pakistan to create regional connectivity, economic growth and stability in Pakistan. The agreement signed today is an important step in this direction. The UK's collaboration will support Pakistan to improve road safety and to create an environment that will transform roads into economic corridors. This partnership will not only help Pakistan promote and expand trade with regional partners, but also to create more jobs and sustainable livelihoods.**

**This partnership is a unique moment, as this will be one of the very first AIIB investments as a new institution. The UK is supporting the Government of Pakistan three times over through this project – as an investor in the ADB, as an investor in the AIIB and through a grant directly from DFID.**

**ADB will administer both the DFID grant and the AIIB loan to assist Pakistan to upgrade key sections of primary north-south highways and motorways through its transport sector projects. This project is part of a 1,800 kilometres Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) transport corridor. Once completed, the transport project will help substantially cut travel time between Karachi and Peshawar and link up Pakistan with the Central Asian countries boosting regional trade and commerce.**

**Notes to editors**

**The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a multilateral development bank (MDB). Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang announced the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) initiative during their respective visits to Southeast Asian countries in October 2013. The Bank was envisaged to promote interconnectivity and economic integration in the region and cooperate with existing multilateral development banks.**

**Following this announcement, bilateral and multilateral discussions and consultations commenced on core principles and key elements for establishing the AIIB. In October, 2014, 22 Asian countries gathered in Beijing to sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to establish the AIIB. At a Special Ministerial Meeting following the signing of the MOU, Mr. Jin Liqun was appointed as the Secretary General of the Multilateral Interim Secretariat.**

# **Her Majesty the Queen to honour two young Pakistanis with Queen's Young Leaders Award**

**17 June 2016**

**Her Majesty the Queen will present a Queen's Young Leaders Award to two exceptional young people from Pakistan at a ceremony at Buckingham Palace in London on Thursday 23rd June.**



**Queen's Young Leaders award winners, Zainab Bibi (26) and Muhammad Usman Khan (27)**

**As the Commonwealth celebrates the Queen's 90th birthday, this year's Award winners, Zainab Bibi (26) and Muhammad Usman Khan (27), are being recognised by The Queen for taking the lead in transforming the lives of others and making a lasting difference in their communities.**

**As a Queen's Young Leader, they will be representing Pakistan as they join winners from 45 different Commonwealth countries in London for five days of high-level engagements, all designed to help them further their life-changing work.**

**Before receiving their Queen's Young Leaders Award at Buckingham Palace, the winners will visit 10 Downing Street and the UK headquarters of global social networking company Twitter, and meet with senior executives from BBC World Service.**

**They will also meet the Commonwealth Secretary General, Baroness Scotland, take part in workshops at the University of Cambridge, have meetings with UK business leaders and visit projects that are changing the lives of vulnerable people in the UK.**

**Selected through a competitive process where thousands of young people from all over the Commonwealth applied to be a Queen's Young Leader, Zainab Bibi said:**

**As the time is getting close, my excitement to meet The Queen is sky rocketing. I have no words to explain my feelings; I am anxiously waiting for the best week in my life.**

**Muhammad Usman Khan added:**

**I am super excited about the Residential Week for The Queen's Young Leaders Programme. It's a prestigious opportunity to learn, share and acknowledge being a Queen's Young Leader. This year's Award winners are working to support others, raise awareness and inspire change on a variety of issues including education, climate change, gender equality, mental health and improving the lives of people with disabilities.**

**The application process to become a 2017 Queen's Young Leader opens on Friday 24 June 2016. The programme is looking for people aged between 18 and 29 who are dedicated to creating positive changes to the lives of people in Pakistan.**

**Details about how to apply to become a Queen's Young Leader, together with information about the 2016 Award winners and Highly Commended runners up, is available [here](#)**

**Notes to editors:**

**The Queen's Young Leaders Programme**

**The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust, in partnership with Comic Relief and The Royal Commonwealth Society, has established The Queen's Young Leaders Programme in honour of Her Majesty The Queen's 60 years of service to the Commonwealth at the time of her Diamond Jubilee. Guided by the values of the Commonwealth Charter, the goal of the Programme is to enable young people to step up as leaders and improve the lives of people across the Commonwealth.**

**Award details**

**Each year from 2014 to 2018, 60 exceptional young people will be selected to receive a Queen's Young Leaders Award and become 'Queen's Young Leaders' – one for every year that the Queen had served as Head of the Commonwealth at the time of her Diamond Jubilee.**

**As part of the Award, winners will receive bespoke mentoring and online learning provided by the University of Cambridge. Award winners will attend a week-long residential programme in the UK in June, when they will receive their Award at Buckingham Palace from Her Majesty the Queen.**

**Criteria to win an award:**

**Nominees will have proven experience of working to improve their communities locally, regionally or at a national level and will show evidence of their achievements**

**Nominees will be aged between 18 and 29 for the year of the Award and be citizens of a Commonwealth country**

**Nominees will demonstrate evidence of their leadership qualities**

**Priority will be given to individuals who have overcome challenges to achieve their goals**

**All nominees will need to be supported by a suitable referee.**

**For more information contact:**

**Ruth Maurice at Comic Relief on 020 7820 2500 or [r.maurice@comicroelief.com](mailto:r.maurice@comicroelief.com)**

## **British High Commissioner hosts Iftar dinner for Pakistan Cricket Teams**

**17 June 2016**

**The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG, hosted an Iftar dinner for the Pakistan Men's Cricket Team and the Pakistan Cricket Board ahead of the team's departure for the United Kingdom.**

**The Pakistan Men's Cricket team is set to challenge England in a packed tour of four Tests, five One Day Internationals and one T20 International match in July and August. The Women's team, who have already arrived in England, will play three One Day Internationals and three T20 International matches.**

**The High Commissioner passed on a message from the British Prime Minister David Cameron written especially for the dinner. The Prime Minister's message said:**

**A UK tour by Pakistan's cricket teams is always an exciting prospect and I am sure we can expect some exceptional cricket this summer. But this trip also provides an opportunity to pause to reflect on, and celebrate, the wider historical, cultural and community links that exist between our two great cricketing nations.**

**As you break your fast together on the eve of your departure to the UK, please accept my very best wishes for the Holy month of Ramadan. I hope that both the men and women's teams have a fantastic stay in Britain. And I hope that one day in the not too distant future I will be able to wish the England cricket team a successful tour of Pakistan.**

**During the event, the British High Commissioner faced a delivery from Pakistan's lead cricketer Azhar Ali, with Pakistan Test squad skipper Misbah-ul-Haq in the slips.**

**The British High Commissioner was joined by prominent figures from the worlds of sport, culture, media, business, government and civil society to wish the 'Boys and Girls in Green' well. Joined by the PCB's Chairman, Mr Shaharyar Khan, and Chairman Executive Committee, Mr Najam Sethi, Thomas Drew extended his best wishes to both England and Pakistan and said:**

**I am delighted to be hosting this Iftar dinner for the Pakistan Cricket Team on the eve of your**



departure for the United Kingdom to play England.

This is a significant event for me - not just because I like a good game of cricket. It is also because of the power of sport to achieve all the things that I, as a diplomat, try to do to bring our two countries together. Our respective cricket teams – Men and Women's – have ambassadorial powers that I can only dream of.

Sport is particularly powerful in reaching out to the young, who represent the future of our two countries – and are the focus of so much of the UK's work here. Indeed, alongside our education work, this magnificent British Council library, which I opened only two weeks ago is another important example of that.

I haven't forgotten who pays my salary, fond though I am of Pakistan, so I won't pretend that I will be supporting anyone other than the home team. But my biggest hope is for a great summer of sport, where the cricket does the talking. And I wish Pakistan's teams a fabulous stay in Britain. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman PCB, Mr Shaharyar Khan, said:

It is indeed most thoughtful of the British High Commissioner HE Thomas Drew to have hosted the Pakistan team immediately prior to its departure for England.

Cricketing relations between England and Pakistan have always been characterized by great and highly entertaining rivalry. From its first tour after its recognition, Pakistan's most memorable Test victory at the Oval gave the nascent nation its first cricketing super star in Fazal Mahmood.

The upstart babe of cricket then not only held its own by drawing the maiden Test rubber but also became the only nation until now to have bested England in the mother country on its first tour! Manager Intikhab Alam, who having skippered Pakistan on 1971 and 1974 tours and having represented Surrey for decades on end, is no stranger to England. The team is indeed backed by a support staff second to none.

I am positive that the squad assembled here tonight under Misbah-ul-Haq shall give a good account of itself on the forthcoming tour, not only on the field of play but also in terms of winning friends through impeccable display of grace and sportsmanship

To Misbah and his charges, I would say, play hard, giving no quarter to England, for under Alastair Cook they are too good an outfit to not make you regret it. That said, I would also exhort to you all to follow the best traditions of the game.

At the conclusion, I again thank HE Thomas Drew and the staff of the British High Commission for their hospitality and thoughtfulness.

Notes to editors:

An original copy of the message from the British Prime Minister David Cameron written specially for the Iftar dinner can be found [\[here\]](#)

More Photograph from event are available on [British High Commission's Flickr Gallery](#)

## **British mountaineers arrive in Pakistan to break records while tackling K2**

15 June 2016

The seven member expedition is led by Di Gilbert, from the Highlands, who could become one of the first British women to get the 'gold medal of mountaineering'. The group also includes Captain Jake Meyer, from Gloucestershire, who could become the youngest Brit to reach the top of K2, which is the world's second highest mountain. Nepalese Sherpa Mingma Dorchi could also become the first person to climb the mountain three times.

The group is completed by fellow Brits Pete Brittleton from the Lake District and Paul Etheridge from Ipswich, as well as Canadian Jean-Bernard Charron and Nepalese Sherpa Phurba Ongel. They also met the head of the DFID Pakistan Joanna Reid, British Consul Jon Ryan and Islamabad-based diplomat Richard Oldfield, who is also planning to climb to K2's basecamp.

Only eight other Brits who have reached the summit of the "Savage Mountain", three of whom died on the descent.

Speaking to the mountaineers, the Acting British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Patrick Moody said: It is a complete honour to meet such an incredible group of people. K2 is the second highest mountain in the world, but its inaccessibility, the technical requirements and the danger it presents, makes it the most prized trophy for the world's best mountaineers. The team's bravery, good humour and attitude before taking on this enormous challenge, is truly humbling.

I am also very happy to see the re-emergence of Pakistan as a destination for the best mountain climbers in the world. With five mountains over 8000 meters, Pakistan has more high mountains than anywhere else in the world, and expeditions like this are important for the local economy and to showcase the incredible natural beauty of Pakistan.

**I extend my warmest wishes to all the participants.**

**Joanna Reid, Head of DFID Pakistan, added:**

**As a woman, I am particularly proud to wish the group led by Di, the very best of luck. Pakistan is a hard place to be a woman, and her courage and leadership should be an inspiration for many others**

**Notes to editors:**

**Follow the adventures of the group [here](#) and for updates please see the [link](#)**

## **UK's Secretary of State for International Development makes third Pakistan visit**

**9 June 2016**

**Justine Greening, Secretary of State for the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) concluded a two-day visit to Pakistan.**

**The Secretary of State met with political leaders, including Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Foreign Affairs Adviser Sartaj Aziz, KPK Governor Zafar Iqbal Jhagra, KPK Chief Minister Pervez Khattak and the Punjab Finance Minister Ayesha Ghaus Pasha.**

**The Secretary of State's discussions focused on looking at governance, public service delivery and economic cooperation. Discussions focused on Pakistan's Development and economic growth agenda, and Pakistan's role in regional security and stability.**

**The Secretary of State met with Fiza Farhan, a member of the High-Level Panel of the UN Secretary-General on Women's Economic Empowerment, as well as members of the Punjab Women's Economic Empowerment Committee to discuss the role of women in inclusive and equitable growth.**

**Justine Greening, Secretary of State for the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) said:**

**Pakistan is one of the UK's most important partners and we remain committed to supporting Pakistan's transition into a stable democracy that is self-sufficient in tackling poverty, providing basic services and opportunities for young men and women.**

**The Government of Pakistan has taken a number of measures since the country's first-ever democratic transition of power to improve economic stability, consolidate democracy and play a more constructive international role. I was also encouraged by the progress I saw on protecting and**

empowering women and girls. But there is still much more to do, and this work is critical to the country's long term prosperity.

## **British High Commissioner extends Ramazan greetings**

7 June 2016

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG, has issued his first statement to the Muslims of Pakistan and the region to mark the beginning of the holy month of Ramazan.

In his message the British High Commissioner Thomas Drew said:

**Assalam-u-Alaikam!**

At the advent of the holy month of Ramazan, I would like to extend my best wishes to you, your families and friends.

The holy month of Ramazan teaches the virtues of tolerance and being good to others. It is a time to turn our thoughts to helping those who are disadvantaged.

I extend Ramazan greetings to all Muslims in Pakistan, the UK and around the world, who will sacrifice their day-to-day comforts to show their devotion to God.

**Ramazan Mubarak.**

## **British Council to launch new libraries to enhance UK-Pakistan relationship**

6 June 2016

After significant public demand in Pakistan, the British Council aims to rebuild and revolutionise its library offer to provide a 21st Century experience to students and professionals.

The British Council today launched a new network of libraries across Pakistan at the inaugural ceremony of a new, purpose-built library in Lahore.

The libraries project is intended to foster creative expression and building greater cultural links between the UK and Pakistan.

After significant public demand in Pakistan, the British Council aims to rebuild and revolutionise its library offer to provide a 21st Century experience to students and professionals. Library members will gain access to special events held in the libraries, as the British Council aspires to generate ideas, discussion and bring people and communities together in a safe cultural setting.

The Lahore opening will be followed by a second library opening in Karachi, with an accompanying

**digital partnership to enable Pakistanis to access a vast catalogue of contemporary UK journalism, publications, films and music.**

**Security concerns in 2001 forced the closure of British Council libraries in Pakistan that for almost fifty years had played a highly valued role in supporting Pakistani learning and cultural expression. Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, two-time Oscar winning Pakistani film-maker and journalist, said:**

**One of my favourite memories of growing up in Karachi was the British Council library. There was a certain magic about going; there were books from all over the world, and I would be excited to see what book I would find that week. I was very sad when the British Council library stopped and I always felt it was a part of my childhood that I would want to have again. I'm so excited to hear that now my girls who are growing up in the city will have access to the same adventures, the same world, the same magic that I did once the British Council opens its library.**

**Through the new Lahore and Karachi libraries, together with partner and virtual libraries the British Council aims to redefine the library experience in Pakistan, by reinventing physical walk-in spaces, giving members access to a series of curated events and exhibitions, and providing a digital library resource that will bring the very best of UK and Pakistan content to people across the country. The opening ceremony was attended by Sir Ciarán Devane, Chief Executive British Council, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan Thomas Drew, Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, Minister for Schools, Government of Punjab, Zakia Shahnawaz, Minister for Higher Education and high level dignitaries from the provincial and federal government.**

**Speaking at the signing ceremony, Sir Ciaran Devane, CEO, the British Council said: The British Council's purpose is to create a basis of friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and the wider world. Our libraries played a vital role towards this aim in the 20th century, and I am delighted to open this new library today, fit for the 21st century. By sharing UK with Pakistan our libraries will become hubs where an exchange of creativity, connectivity and ideas can take place.**

**Minister Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, stated: Throughout history Lahore has been the hub for dialogue and creative expression with landmarks such as the Pakistan Tea House; where ideas have flowed freely. It is an immense to be launching the British Council's library in Lahore that aim to become convening spaces for the youth of Pakistan. We are also extremely delighted to strengthen our existing relationship with British Council in Pakistan by finding synergies for British Council to support the government of Punjab in its digital library ambitions across the province.**

**British High Commissioner, Thomas Drew CMG said:**

The British Council Libraries have a fabulous legacy in Pakistan. Many people in Pakistan have fond memories of immersing themselves in English language writing in the past. I am therefore delighted to be here to see the reopening of the new, improved British Council library in Lahore.

The new libraries in Lahore and Karachi, and the national digital library, will not just offer English language books and material in print and online, but will also strengthen the human relationship between our two countries and offer a space for cultural debate. They will be a great asset for Lahore, for Karachi and indeed the whole of Pakistan.

**Notes for the editors:**

British Council staff are available for interview.

Photos available on request.

The British Council's library in Lahore is now open, the British Council library in Karachi will open in July 2016

For more information about membership please visit [here](#)

## **About the British Council**

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and build trust between them worldwide.

We work in more than 100 countries and our 8,000 staff – including 2,000 teachers – work with thousands of professionals and policy makers and millions of young people every year by teaching English, sharing the arts and delivering education and society programmes.

We are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter. A core publicly-funded grant provides 16 per cent of our turnover which last year was £973 million. The rest of our revenues are earned from services which customers around the world pay for, such as English classes and taking UK examinations, and also through education and development contracts and from partnerships with public and private organisations. All our work is in pursuit of our charitable purpose and supports prosperity and security for the UK and globally.

For more information, please visit: British Council's [website](#). You can also keep in touch with the British Council through [twitter](#) and [blogs](#).

## **British High Commissioner opens the Amir Khan academy in Islamabad**

**6 June 2016**

British High Commissioner Thomas Drew CMG today joined British champion boxer Amir Khan to

open the Amir Khan Academy at the Islamabad Sports Complex in Islamabad, Pakistan. The new venue is Amir Khan's first boxing academy in Pakistan.

Speaking at the launch, Thomas Drew said:

You came here to see a boxer not an Ambassador, so I will keep it short.

But what Amir Khan is doing here is about more than just boxing, so I do want to say a couple of things.

When I heard the news of the death this morning of one of the world's greatest boxers, I knew exactly what I wanted to say. Mohammed Ali was a great boxer, like Amir, but he was also more than that. He was an inspiration to millions throughout the world. He touched everyone, but had a particular impact on the young. He inspired not just through the grace of his boxing, but also through the sense of purpose he instilled – a desire and a determination to achieve in life.

This is what tonight is about. Through his academies, Amir Khan is inspiring the next generation – in Pakistan and in the UK – themselves to achieve in life. I too therefore am very proud to be taking part in the opening of his academy in Islamabad – the first in Pakistan.

As I said at the beginning, boxers and Ambassadors are very different beasts. What we do, however, have in common is our desire to help Pakistan, the 6th biggest country in the world, unleash its full potential. And we both recognise that in this fast growing country – where nearly 60% of the population is under 23 – that means investing in its youth. The British Government's biggest development programme anywhere in the world is in Pakistan. And the biggest bit of that is in education. Only yesterday I opened a new British Council library for young people in Lahore and a new digital library for others across Pakistan. And we, like Amir, recognise through our programmes the power of sport – though I won't claim to have anything like the pulling (or punching) power that he has.

So, to return to where I started, this is a sad day for the world of boxing. But I take comfort too in the knowledge that an element of Mohammed Ali's power to inspire future generations lives on in initiatives such as this.

I wish you all well.

## **Members of the Royal College of Defence Studies UK visit Karachi**

**31 May 2016**

The international delegation including senior military and civilian officials from around the world visited Pakistan.

**A delegation from the British Royal College of Defence Studies (RCDS), led by Maj Gen (R) Simon Porter, visited Karachi as part of their week-long visit to Pakistan to learn about the security, economic, business and political aspects of the country.**

**During their visit to Karachi, the delegation called on military officials and the Pakistan Stock Exchange Limited (PSE), where they met the PSE's Managing Director and members of the Board to discuss macro-economic reforms. They also attended a networking reception hosted by the British Deputy High Commissioner, John Tucknott MBE, where they met prominent members of the business community.**

**Speaking during the visit, British Maj Gen (R) Simon Porter said:**

**Karachi is a huge and growing city, in a strategically important location, and will increasingly become a very important city to the rest of Asia and the World. Understanding its growth, its economy and the security situation was time well spent.**

**It is a city full of energy, entrepreneurship and creativity and we are all looking forward to watching the city's growth over the coming decades.**

**The international delegation included senior military and civilian officials from around the world. As part of the tour agenda, the RCDS delegation had planned a series of meetings with Government as well as non-government officials and institutions in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi.**

## **British High Commissioner visits Mardan to review UK's Education and Health support**

**27 May 2016**

**The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG, visited Mardan where he toured two schools and a Basic Health Unit.**

**The schools are being supported through the UK's education sector programme in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The programme comprises both financial support to the Elementary and Secondary Education Department in the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and a school reconstruction and rehabilitation programme carried out by an international construction firm, IMC.**

**The boys' Government Higher Secondary School in Mayar has been revamped by IMC to include 13 classrooms, new offices for the Principal and for administration, and a new toilet block with 11**



washrooms, including one for children with disabilities.

The girls' Government Higher Secondary School in Par Hoti will have 19 new classrooms which will allow many more girls to attend school. When fully functional, the two schools will help educate more than 2,100 students, including 1,260 girls.

The High Commissioner also visited the Basic Health Unit in Sheikh Maltoon, supported by UK aid. The unit provides basic out-patient and preventive health services, including nutrition, family planning and routine immunisation for under-privileged local communities in the area. He met a community group that plays an important role in helping services to better reflect local needs. The British High Commissioner met the Provincial Minister of Education, Mr. Muhammad Atif Khan and the Provincial Health Minister, Mr. Shahram Khan Tarakai, and discussed provincial public service priorities and the UK's on-going support programmes in the education and health sectors. Talking about his second visit to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in two weeks, the British High Commissioner Thomas Drew said:

I was delighted to visit Mardan today to see for myself how the UK is working with local schools and healthcare providers to improve education and health in the province. I was able to discuss with the Provincial Ministers for Education and Health their priorities in these areas and how we work together to maximise the impact of UK aid.

While visiting the two schools, I was able to see for myself how our support for construction work is allowing more young people to go to school and have a better learning environment; and how our support to the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is improving the quality of teaching and learning. It was a pleasure to meet children who are getting a better education thanks to UK aid, including the boys of the Higher Secondary School in Mayyar and the girls of the Higher Secondary School in Par Hoti.

I was also pleased to visit the Basic Health Unit in Mohabatabad to see how UK aid is helping to tackle the health challenges in the province by increasing access to medicines and vaccines, and care for expectant and new mothers. It was good to see how local communities are working to promote improvements in primary health services.

## **Members of the Royal College of Defence studies UK visiting Pakistan**

**27 May 2016**

**A delegation of students from the British Royal College of Defence Studies (RCDS), led by Maj Gen (R) Simon Porter, are visiting Pakistan this week for an overseas study tour to learn about issues of global**

and regional importance, including the security situation in the region.

The international delegation includes senior military and civilian officials in the armed forces from around the world.

As part of the tour agenda, the RCDS delegation will have a series of meetings with government as well as non-government official and institutions.

They met with Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, General Raheel Sharif, who is an alumnus of RCDS, the Chief Minister of Punjab, Mian Shahbaz Sharif, the Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Defence Lt Gen (R) Abdul Qayyum, President of Foreign Service Academy (FSA), Lt Gen Nazir Ahmed Butt; and the Institute for Strategic Studies, Research & Analysis in Islamabad and the National School of Public Policy (NSPP) in Lahore.

Speaking during the visit, British Maj Gen (R) Simon Porter said:

The Royal College of Defence Studies' visit to Pakistan provides our students the opportunity to examine in detail an important region of the world. It was particularly valuable to meet some of Pakistan's most important figures – including General Raheel Sharif, Shahbaz Sharif and Lt Gen (R) Abdul Qayyum.

It was particularly valuable to hear about Pakistan's counter extremism work. Pakistan's efforts to eradicate militancy and extremism are difficult and important and our thoughts are with those members of the Pakistani army who paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

## **Improved UK visa application system launches in Pakistan**

26 May 2016

As part of a global rollout, 'Access UK' (previously known as the Online Application Service) has launched in Pakistan yesterday, making it easier for customers to apply for a visa to visit the UK. The UK has introduced an improved online application service for individuals wishing to apply for a visa to visit to the United Kingdom (UK).

The UK is committed to making it more convenient, quicker and easier for applicants to apply for UK visas, and the new system offers a more simple and intuitive customer experience. In response to feedback from customers around the world, 'Access UK' will provide a number of benefits for visa applicants:

The application form is shorter, with questions logically ordered based on customer feedback. The service will be available in a number of languages, including Urdu. However customers will need

to supply their answers in English.

The form is dynamic and asks relevant questions based on a customer's previous answers. Customers can review, edit and download their partially completed application at any point before submission.

The application fee is displayed in the appropriate currency. Customers can apply, book their Visa Application Centre (VAC) appointment, and pay for the relevant service standard seamlessly.

The service is available on mobile devices, enabling application forms to be completed on smartphones or tablets.

The service also offers additional convenience to customers who plan to make a separate application for a Schengen Visa. The system will partially auto-complete a Schengen application form, which is then made available to customers to download and print.

Following the success of Access UK in mainland China, UKVI is rolling out the service globally to customers applying for a Standard Visitor Visa, Visitor (Marriage & Civil Partnership), or Visitor (Permitted Paid Engagement) Visa.

Customers can now use Access UK to apply, book an appointment and pay for their application through the standard, priority or super-priority visa service (where applicable). Over 330,000 applicants have already used Access UK and feedback is really positive.

The service is offered in parallel with Visa4UK. Customers wishing to apply for visa routes not yet supported by Access UK (such as Tier 4 student visas) should continue to use Visa4UK.

## **New British High Commissioner says "it is great to be back" in Pakistan**

26 May 2016

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG, spoke to a media reception that he hosted at his residence at the British High Commission in Islamabad. Following is the full text of his speech:

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming. This is not really a press conference or a big policy speech. What I really want to do is to say thank you for welcoming me to Pakistan – and to meet as many of you as possible who work closely with my press team here.

I will, though, take the opportunity to say a couple of things. I have now been here three months; and I presented my credentials as High Commissioner to the President three weeks ago. It is great to be back. On a personal level, I have been enjoying being out and about rediscovering the things that I so liked about Pakistan when I served here as Political Counsellor 10 years ago.

From the freshness and beauty of the Margalla Hills to the history of Peshawar Old City, the cultural vibe of Lahore or the commercial buzz of Karachi;

To the food – which I am determined to use my time here to learn how to cook

To, finally and most importantly, seeing old friends and meeting new ones.

But on a professional level too, this is a fabulous place for a British diplomat. Most importantly, because what we do matters – for the UK and Pakistan. Secondly – and this makes things easier – because our interests are aligned: what is good for Pakistan is good for the UK and vice versa. And thirdly because working together, we can actually make a difference. I am lucky enough too to have the resources to support it. It is a mark of our commitment that the British mission to Pakistan is our second largest in the world; our bilateral development programme here is our biggest anywhere in the world; and there is huge interest and support for the country at the highest levels of our government.

My job here is to make sure I use my privileged position here to good effect – for our mutual security, for regional stability, and to help promote the economic and political development of the country in a way which enhances the prosperity and well being of both our countries. The most exciting part of my challenge is helping Pakistan unleash its potential.

And 3 months in, I am even more convinced that that potential is huge. You just need to look at the map, or at the young and growing population. It is easy to forget that Pakistan is the 6th largest country in the world. But there is also a lot to do to make the most of that potential. And that is what we would like to do. Because it is good for Pakistan. But because it is good for us too.

A final word on another important part of my job. People to people links are important to all countries. But there really is something special about those between the UK and Pakistan. It is partly about our history. But now it is also about that more than 2% of the population of the UK are of Pakistani origin. And nothing demonstrates that better than our new mayor of London. Sadiq Khan, the Muslim son of bus driver whose parents were born in Karachi, received more individual votes than any other Briton in the UK's history. But he is joined by successful sportsmen and women,

entertainers, journalist, businessmen and many more. Building further on the links that bind us will be another big part of my job.

In short, it is great to be back. Thank you.

## **British High Commission reaffirms commitment to the people of the Punjab**

**20 May 2016**

The Government of Punjab and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) met to coordinate and review UK Aid's support for the people of Punjab.

The UK's Department for International Development Pakistan office, which is part of the British High Commission, met with the Planning and Development Department of the Government of Punjab on 18th May 2016 for high level discussions to review implementation of key programmes of support to the people of the Punjab in areas such as education, health, economic growth, and governance. Joanna Reid, Head of DFID Pakistan, co-chaired the session with Mohammad Jehanzeb Khan, Chairman of the Planning and Development Department, Government of the Punjab.

Both sides reviewed key programmes and priorities under the 2016-17 provincial budget and looked at ways to link UK Aid's work to the growth strategy of the provincial government. They also discussed the joint commitment to provide basic services to the people of Punjab.

Joanna Reid, Head of the Department for International Development in Pakistan, who co-chaired the meeting, said:

Pakistan is one of the UK's top development priorities. At today's meeting with the Government of Punjab, we reviewed the positive progress made in the last six months. We focused on linking DFID's plans with the Provincial Government's strategy to drive growth and provide basic services to the population. I am delighted to be able to reaffirm our commitment to continue the UK's support to the most marginalised communities and vulnerable people across the province of Punjab.

Since 2011, UK Aid in Pakistan has benefited more than 6.3 million children in primary school education; provided training in new skills for 102,000 people; helped 1.54 million more people access micro-finance loans, including 965,000 women; ensured nearly a million births involved nurses, midwives or doctors; and provided over 4.1 million flood-affected individuals with humanitarian assistance.

## **British High Commissioner's visit to Peshawar**

**13 May 2016**

The British High Commissioner, Thomas Drew CMG, met Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Pervaiz Khattak and other senior politicians during his first visit to Peshawar for 9 years, and his first as High Commissioner.

The High Commissioner and the Chief Minister discussed the provincial government's top priorities – education, health, security and tackling corruption. The Chief Minister highlighted his focus on delivering services for the poor and vulnerable in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Before his visit, the High Commissioner met Governor Iqbal Zafar Jhagra to discuss the future of FATA.

During the visit the British High Commissioner also met parliamentarians and members of civil society to discuss their priorities and the challenges they faced.

Thomas Drew CMG, British High Commissioner to Pakistan, said:

It is a real pleasure for me to visit the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially as the UK works so closely with the provincial government. The UK is directly supporting the province in areas such as health and education, which have a daily impact on the lives of the population of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. We have also provided support to initiatives such as the Chief Minister's Delivery Unit to ensure improved delivery of the government's top priorities.

Over the past two years, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has had a strong focus on improving the delivery of services in the province with tangible results. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has taken welcome steps to improve accountability and transparency in the province through landmark legislation such as the Right to Information Act.

## **British Business Centre in Pakistan signs MoU with SEED Ventures**

**10 May 2016**

**MOU signed between British Business Centre and SEED Ventures for development of entrepreneurial landscape between Pakistan and the UK.**

**A new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 3rd May 2016 between the British Business Centre and SEED Ventures.**

**SEED Ventures is an enterprise development organisation that works to promote and facilitate entrepreneurship, which will help promote trade, industry, investment and economic relations between the UK and Pakistan.**

**The 2 entities will work together to develop the enterprise and social enterprise landscape in the 2 countries through cross-border relations and initiatives.**

**John Tucknott MBE, British Deputy High Commissioner said:**

**The UK already enjoys a strong relationship with Pakistan in the key area of prosperity. The British Business Centre's goal is to contribute to an increase in bilateral trade and investment, in line with the commitments made by Prime Ministers David Cameron and Nawaz Sharif when they met in London in April 2014. We welcome the support that SEED Ventures is extending towards the Centre in order to help achieve this goal.**

#### **MoU agreement**

**According to the MoU, SEED Ventures and British Business Centre have agreed to work collaboratively as partners.**

**This will enhance, promote and support the entrepreneurial segment of Pakistan and the UK through cross-border enterprise development, local business solutions, and 360-degree business consultancies.**

**Working together they will create synergies with the:**

**development sector**

**private sector**

**locally operating UK organisations**

**Speaking at the ceremony as Chief Guest, Dr. Ishrat Husain - former Governor of State Bank of Pakistan said:**

**The bi-lateral trade and investment relationship between our 2 countries holds great significance for the Government of Pakistan. The UK Prime Minister – David Cameron has underlined the UK Government's full support for a democratic Pakistan and has offered assistance along the democratic path the Pakistani people have chosen.**

**We want this relationship to flourish in the coming years and we hope such initiatives continue to take place in order to build the relationship between our two countries. We already see a strong British trade and investment presence in Pakistan and with this agreement we hope more British businesses and investors will come and see firsthand the opportunities that Pakistan overall has to offer.**

**CEO and co-founder SEED Ventures, Faraz Khan during his speech said:**

The entrepreneurial climate in Pakistan is changing, with a necessity to support and promote the rapidly emerging start-ups, SMEs and larger enterprises further scaling up.

He also commented that

the industries are unable to absorb the graduates that the country is producing and entrepreneurship must be introduced as an avenue all across various landscapes in Pakistan.

He further stressed upon the benefits of strong points of alignments between organisations working in this segment in the two countries and furthering the mandate of the 3 entities – British Business Centre and SEED Ventures. It will ensure an increase in cross-border trade relations, capacity enhancement, financial inclusion, and economic empowerment of all communities.

#### MoU signing ceremony

The MoU was signed by SEED Ventures' Chief Executive Officer and co-founder Faraz Khan, and British Business Centre's Chief Executive Officer Malahat Awan. It was witnessed by: Dr Ishrat Hussain, former Governor State Bank of Pakistan and the country's prominent economist

John Tucknott MBE, British Deputy High Commissioner

Khusro Ansari SEED Ventures' Director and co-founder

prominent members of the business community

British Business Centre in Pakistan

The British Business Centre will offer access to a number of services to UK and Pakistani member companies including:

providing a base for visiting UK companies

market research

business opportunity promotion

event management

networking opportunities

bespoke professional and sector specific services.

#### Notes to editors

##### About British Business Centre

The **British Business Centre** is a new body set up by the British Government in Pakistan that marks a step-change in facilitating bilateral trade between UK and Pakistan.

##### About SEED Ventures

**SEED** - Social, Entrepreneurship and Equity Development - is an enterprise development organisation and investment firm that works to create and develop a global sphere of entrepreneurial solutions across multiple structured verticals in regional, national and international markets to bring about a



societal and economic change. SEED works in a structured and strategic manner to promote and facilitate entrepreneurship at various levels, be it Start-ups, Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs), Microenterprises or Grass root Entrepreneurs.

A strong mandate at SEED is social and financial inclusion throughout the various landscapes in the region. Its various programmes cater to different segments of the society understanding after extensive research and on-ground work, the different environments and their specific issues and needs.

Hence, the company works with public and private sectors, media as well as academia, and has programmes for urban centres, urban slums, rural, semi rural and regional areas investing in the grassroots economy and start-up landscape.

## **British High Commissioner presents credentials to President Mamnoon Hussain**

**3 May 2016**

The new British High Commissioner to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG, presented his credentials to President Mamnoon Hussain at a ceremony at the Presidential Palace in Islamabad.

Mr Drew arrived in Pakistan in February this year, succeeding Mr Philip Barton CMG OBE. Speaking after the ceremony, Thomas Drew CMG, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, said: It is a huge privilege to be working here in Pakistan and to be leading one of Britain's largest diplomatic missions. Nearly ten years ago, I moved to Pakistan for the first time, to be the Political Counsellor in the British High Commission. I became a great friend of the country and its people. I feel a great sense of energy at coming back here. I am energised at seeing old friends, by the prospect of discovering more of the beautiful country and, most of all, by the prospect of doing work which is so important for both our countries.

Pakistan matters to the UK and, I like to think, the UK matters to Pakistan, for each other's security, for regional stability and for each other's prosperity. Central to that are the 1.5 million British people of Pakistani origin who have made the UK their home.

**Notes to the Editor**

Follow the British High Commissioner on Twitter [@TomDrewUK](https://twitter.com/TomDrewUK)

Details of Mr. Thomas Drew, the High Commissioner to Pakistan, and his appointment can be

found [here](#)

Photographs from the ceremony will be available through Press Information Department, Government of Pakistan.

## **Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 90th birthday celebration in Lahore**

**27 April 2016**

The British High Commissioner hosted a party in Lahore to celebrate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 90th birthday, alongside Chief Guest, the Chief Minister of Punjab, Mian Shehbaz Sharif.

Guests from all over Punjab joined the celebrations, including representatives from the Punjab Assembly and leading members of the provinces military, civil society and business communities. 2016 marks the 64th anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne, when she became both the British Sovereign and the Head of the Commonwealth.

The British High Commissioner, Thomas Drew CMG, and the Chief Guest, the Chief Minister of Punjab, Mian Shehbaz Sharif toasted HM Queen and President Mamnoon Hussain.

Speaking on the occasion of Her Majesty The Queen's birthday, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG said:

A lot has changed in this part of the world since the Queen was born in 1926. A country that did not exist is now the 6th biggest in the world. And even since the Queen first visited Pakistan in 1961, Lahore has grown from a city of 1.5m people to one of over 10m. The ties between our two peoples too are unrecognizable, Britons of Pakistani origin numbered around 25,000 in 1961. They now make up over 2% of our population, and many have their roots in Punjab. The ties are different, but just as intense. We are perhaps even more interdependent.

One thing that has not changed is Lahore's unique buzz. It is a city that exudes energy, creativity and culture. What has changed, however – and I hope you will forgive my first impressions – is a sense of hope and change. Things are happening here. Things are getting done. It is good to come back to the feeling of a city, province and country that are starting to fulfil their potential.

That potential is exciting. You just need to look at the map to see it. Indeed, I gather that if Punjab were a country it would be the 11th most populous in the world.

That Pakistan does fulfil its potential is of enormous importance to the UK. The nice thing about being a British diplomat in Pakistan is that our interests really are aligned. It really is the case that what is good for Pakistan is good for the UK and vice versa. And I am not just talking about my ambition to

have the England cricket team come back to play a match here at the Gadaffi stadium.

Of course, the cynics among you will say that all of our ambassadors around the world are saying things like this on the Queen's birthday. Perhaps, but I am lucky enough to have the resources to support it. That is why we have our second biggest diplomatic mission anywhere in the world here, that is why we have our biggest bilateral development programme anywhere in the world here – a large part of which is focused on Punjab. And it is why we continue to build.

We have just opened a British Business Centre in Pakistan to help British and Pakistani companies do business with each other. It today signed a memorandum of understanding with the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. We are about to open a new British Council Library here in Lahore, as well as one in Karachi.

In short, the British Government is behind Pakistan and wants to make a difference – for Pakistan, for the UK, for Punjab and for Lahore. And it is even better that we can do it with friends like everyone here tonight.

## **British Business Centre in Pakistan signs Lahore agreement**

26 April 2016

**British Business centre signs agreement to boost trade and investment between the UK and Pakistan fulfilling promise of UK Prime Minister.**

**A new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed today between the [British Business Centre](#) and the [Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry \(LCCI\)](#), as promised by UK Prime Minister David Cameron. The MoU will help boost bilateral trade and investment between the UK and Pakistan. The signing was witnessed by the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG. The British Business Centre and its partnership with the LCCI helps create a new body set up to assist British and Pakistani businesses develop closer links.**

**The signing ceremony was also attended by the Finance Minister of Punjab, Dr Ayesha Ghaus Pasha, and senior members of LCCI including the Senior Vice President, Mr Almas Hyder.**

**The MoU will facilitate and expand trade and investment cooperation between the United Kingdom and Punjab through the exchange of information on economic, commercial and industrial matters. Speaking at the ceremony, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG said: The British Business Centre opened earlier this year. It fulfils the commitment, given by Prime Minister Cameron to Prime Minister Sharif, that the United Kingdom Government, with the**

assistance of the Government of Pakistan, would establish a new body in Pakistan to boost bilateral trade and investment between our 2 countries.

Today's agreement with LCCI is an important step in that process. It will make real the work of the British Business Centre in Lahore - another step to strengthen the existing trade and investment partnership between the United Kingdom and Pakistan.

The Centre will work throughout the country. But today's signing in Lahore is particularly special for us – not just because we do so on the day that we are also celebrating HM The Queen's Birthday in Lahore – but because Lahore, and the province of which it is capital, matter.

Lahore is one of the 20 most populous cities in the world; indeed if Punjab was a country, it would be the 11th most populous; and has a large and growing consumer class. Just look at the energy of the provincial Government which Dr Pasha represents. Things are getting done. And just look at the historical links between our 2 – countries.

So of course, British and Pakistani businesses should be working together here and thriving. It is a message I give here and one I give back in the UK. And this MoU is an important part of it. Through it, the British Business Centre can assist in opening up the opportunities available to a wide business audience in the UK.

I thank the Senior Vice President, Mr Almas Hyder, for joining with the British Business Centre and creating this partnership. We look forward to working with you and your team to harness the great potential that this highly lucrative market has to offer.

## **UK and Pakistan to set up an integrated disease surveillance system**

25 April 2016

The CEO of Public Health England, Duncan Selbie, visited Islamabad and Lahore this week to launch the new team and to discuss priorities with members of the Governments of Pakistan and Punjab. The UK will be providing more support for Pakistan to detect and respond to disease threats, thanks to a new team based at the British High Commission in Islamabad.

Public Health England is working with the Government of Pakistan, the Government of Punjab and the UK aid body, the Department for International Development, to help Pakistan improve its ability to deal with current and emergent public health threats.

In Islamabad and Lahore, the team will work with local authorities to set up an Integrated Disease

**Surveillance System, which means Pakistan will be able to detect, verify and respond to national and global disease threats or health alerts before they become epidemics.**

**The CEO of Public Health England, Duncan Selbie, visited Islamabad and Lahore this week to launch the new team and to discuss priorities with members of the Governments of Pakistan and Punjab. Following a meeting with the Duncan Selbie, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG, said:**

**I am delighted that Public Health England has set up a team here at the British High Commission in Pakistan. Early detection, verification and response to disease threat is vital to saving lives, keeping people healthy and Public Health England has unrivalled skills and experience.**

**This is only possible because of the vision and commitment of the Governments of both Punjab and Pakistan and I hope that we will be able to work together to save many lives in the future.**

**The new Public Health England team came to Pakistan following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the CEO of the Public Health England Duncan Selbie and the Chief Minister of Punjab, Shahbaz Sharif. The work is being supported with £1.85 million (about PKR 277 million) of the UK aid funding.**

## **British High Commission celebrates the 90th birthday of Her Majesty The Queen in Islamabad**

**24 April 2016**

**This high-profile event featured, Ghulam Murtaza Khan Jatoi, Federal Minister for Industries and Production as the Chief Guest.**

**The British High Commissioner to Pakistan Thomas Drew CMG celebrated the 90th birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in Islamabad with a reception showcasing the shared cultural ancestry and history of Pakistan on 21st April 2016.**

**The event this year, featuring the music from a British military quintet and delicious British cuisine, also marked the 64th anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne, when she became both the British Sovereign and the Head of the Commonwealth.**

**This high-profile event featured, Ghulam Murtaza Khan Jatoi, Federal Minister for Industries and Production as the Chief Guest, along with prominent guests from the world of government,**

diplomacy, culture and the media.

Speaking at the Queen Birthday Party reception, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan Thomas Drew CMG said:

Though I have been High Commissioner less than 2 months, I first came to work in the High Commission 10 years ago. I am not incidentally the only one. Look at the receiving line: our Defence Adviser served here in 2007; so did my wife, herself, a diplomat posted here in 2010. We have all seen a lot of changes.

One thing that has not changed is Pakistan's unique buzz. For all the difficulties of the last decade, the country continues to exude energy, creativity and resilience. What has changed, however – and I hope that you will forgive the first impressions of a newcomer – is the sense of hope and change. It is great to come back and get a feeling of a country, for all the difficulties, starting to fulfil its potential. The potential is exciting. You just need to look at the map to see it. How long will it take, for example, before we view Karachi through the same lens as its peers in Sao Paolo or Shanghai? I am sure we will.

That this country does fulfil this potential is of enormous importance to the UK. The nice thing about being a British diplomat in Pakistan is that our interests really are aligned. It really is the case that what is good for Pakistan is good for the UK and vice versa. And I am not just talking about my ambition to have the England cricket team come back to play a test series in Pakistan.

Of course, the cynics among you will say that all of our Ambassadors around the world are saying things like this on the Queen's birthday. Perhaps. But I am lucky enough here to have the resources to support it.

That is why we have our second biggest diplomatic mission in the world here; that is why we have our biggest bilateral development programme here. And why we continue to build. We have just opened a British Business Centre to help British companies; we are about to open a new British Council Libraries in Lahore in Karachi.

In short, the British Government is behind Pakistan and wants to make a difference – for Pakistan and for the UK.

## **Standard Chartered collaborates with the British Deputy High Commission to celebrate Pakistani Women**

22 April 2016

A panel discussion titled "Celebrating Pakistani women: the importance of diversity for business

growth" was held at the British Deputy High Commission, Karachi on 20th April 2016. The panellists included: Mr. Shazad Dada, Chief Executive, Standard Chartered Bank Pakistan, Ms. Spenta Kandawala, Board of Director, SCB Pakistan, Ms. Shazia Syed, Chairperson Unilever Pakistan and Ms. Hajra Khan, Captain of the Pakistan's Women Football Team. The participants engaged in a discussion which highlighted contribution of women and to recognise challenges women face around the world.

Commenting on the discussion, Mr. Shazad Dada, Chief Executive, Standard Chartered Pakistan said: At Standard Chartered, we strive to be a market leader in the Diversity & Inclusion space by helping women realise their full potential through personal development and supportive workplace practices. In Pakistan I am proud that 25 percent of our workforce are women and growing. We not only value the contribution of our female workforce, but remain committed to be 'Here for good' in the communities where we operate, supporting and furthering the role of women in Pakistan.

The British Deputy High Commissioner, John Tucknott MBE said: Promoting the rights of women are at the centre of the UK Government's human rights work. By supporting projects that tackle violence against women, work to ensure equal representation of women in political and public life, and challenge discriminatory laws and practices, we make a difference for women and girls globally.

In his Women's Day message earlier this month, the UK Foreign Secretary stressed the crucial role played by women in resolving conflict and rebuilding societies. He also said on his recent visit to Islamabad that it was a privilege to meet Oscar winning filmmaker Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, who has challenged taboos on so-called honour killings in Pakistan.

Standard Chartered as a bank aspires to be a leader in gender diversity, supporting women in the workplace, as customers and in the community, Standard Chartered remains committed to be 'Here for good' in the markets where it operates, and is determined to make a difference not only to help women fulfil their potential as leaders in the Bank, but to also play a critical role with its customers and communities in supporting and furthering the role of women in every society, including Pakistan.

The forum discussed various organisational models for workplace enhancement to construct alternate promotional systems for women; career tracks that will complement work-life balance, mentoring and general development.

## **The UK's Chief of the General Staff visits Pakistan**

**22 April 2016**

The Chief of the General Staff, the Head of the British Army, General Sir Nicholas Carter, visited Pakistan last week to reinforce the close military relationship between the UK and Pakistan. General Carter and his wife Lady Carter were the personnel guests of General Raheel Sharif, the Chief of Army Staff, Pakistan. This is the fourth time General Raheel and General Carter have met in the last two years. They discussed UK-Pakistan military cooperation, the recent action taken by Pakistan's military to bring security to Pakistan, and regional security.

General Carter also visited the Army Museum in Rawalpindi and presented the First World War Centenary Fund Victoria Cross Plaque, a gift from the British people, which names the First World War Victoria Cross winners from what is now Pakistan. Accompanied by General Raheel Sharif, General Sir Nick also laid a wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada (the Martyr's Monument) in front of a guard of honour. General Raheel Sharif hosted a dinner at GHQ for General and Lady Carter, accompanied by GHQ's senior generals and their wives, and on Wednesday the generals and their wives had a private lunch together.

Accompanied by Thomas Drew, the British High Commissioner, and Brigadier Murray Whiteside, the British Defence Adviser, General Carter also met with the Minister of Defence, Mr Khawaja Asif, Secretary of Defence Lt Gen (R) Alam Khattak; the Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff Committee, General Rashad Mahood; and the National Security Adviser, Lt Gen (R) Naseer Khan Janjua. General Carter also addressed the National Security and War Course, Pakistan's senior military course at the National Defence University in Islamabad. He gave them a British view on the strategic context, the character of conflict and the implications for the British Army.

General Carter, at the GHQ dinner, spoke of his deep respect for the Pakistan Army's achievements in combating terrorism and paid tribute to the soldiers and officers who have lost their lives. The British and Pakistan Armies had strong historical ties and General Carter looked forward to further developing the cooperation between the Armies during his time as head of the British Army.

## **Pakistan - in-year update December 2015**

**21 April 2016**

This is an update to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2014 Human Rights and Democracy Report.

**Pakistan - in-year update December 2015**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pakistan-in-year-update-december-2015/pakistan-in-year-update-december-2015>

## **Pakistan - Human Rights Priority Country**

**21 April 2016**



Part of:

[Human rights internationally and Pakistan](#)

This is a Human Rights Priority Country report taken from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2015 Human Rights and Democracy Report.

Document

[Pakistan - Human Rights Priority Country](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pakistan-human-rights-priority-country/pakistan-human-rights-priority-country>

## **UK-Pakistan Enhanced Strategic Dialogue statement**

20 April 2016

Joint Statement between the UK and Pakistan following the Enhanced Strategic Dialogue of 18-20 April 2016

Mr Sartaj Aziz, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs, visited London on 18-20 April to take forward the UK-Pakistan Enhanced Strategic Dialogue (ESD). The dialogue is a valuable mechanism for Pakistan and the UK to reaffirm their commitment to a strong partnership to increase prosperity, development and security in both countries. This collaboration is underpinned by strong diaspora links, historical and cultural ties, and confidence in Pakistan continuing to develop as a prosperous, secure and stable friend of the UK.

Mr Aziz met Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond, Secretary of State for International Development Justine Greening, Minister of State for Trade and Investment Lord Mark Price, National Security Adviser Mark Lyall Grant and British Council Chief Executive Officer Ciaran Devane. The two sides reviewed progress made under the ESD on trade, development, culture and security. They agreed new roadmaps on trade and investment, culture and education, and security cooperation. Progress against the roadmaps would be reviewed by Ministers annually and next in 2017.

### **Trade and Investment**

Both partners welcomed the steady increase in bilateral trade. Acknowledging the considerable potential for continued growth, both sides agreed to make further progress in meeting and exceeding the bilateral trade target of £3 billion. Highlights of the economic partnership included the opening of British Business Centres in Lahore and Karachi, annual UK-Pakistan business summits and the appointment of UK-Pakistan trade champions. To boost trade and investment, the two countries will work together to further improve the business climate, raise awareness of business opportunities, share expertise and enhance business-to-business contacts. Both sides agreed to establish a joint

**Pakistan-UK Business Council comprising leading businessmen to be nominated by their respective governments.**

## **Development**

**The UK bilateral development programme for Pakistan works to support the country in realising its potential and meeting the aspirations of its fast-growing population. Since 2011, UK support has helped more than 6.8 million primary school children get an education, ensured that nearly a million mothers had medical assistance during childbirth and supported 1.54 million people to establish small businesses.**

## **Cultural and Education Cooperation**

**Under the cultural and education roadmap the UK and Pakistan will expand the opportunities for young British and Pakistani people to connect, collaborate and create a friendly understanding. Working with federal and provincial government partners across all of Pakistan, British Council will strengthen links and partnerships between the education systems of the two countries to support system reform and share best practice; continue to enable over 250,000 people to take UK qualifications in Pakistan each year, and train a third of a million Pakistani teachers and educators to improve the quality of teaching and use of English in the classroom by 2018. British Council will expand opportunities for collaboration in the arts, digital and research; developing partnerships between both countries to support heritage, museums and the creative industries. By 2017 100,000 young people will develop new skills through social enterprise initiatives, and 200,000 out of school young children will be supported to go to school. Ministers agreed the establishment of a new UK-Pakistan cultural forum.**

## **Security**

**Faced with the common threat of terrorism, the UK and Pakistan will continue to cooperate to ensure the safety of citizens in both countries. They will work to counter extremism and learn from each other in this area. Cooperation to limit organized crime and illegal migration will also continue. Over the past year, the ESD has continued to demonstrate the depth, breadth and strength of UK-Pakistan cooperation. It has played a valuable role in framing an ongoing, wide-ranging and candid conversation between the two countries on the issues that matter most. Throughout the visit, Mr Aziz and his hosts reiterated their commitment to a long-term partnership covering all areas of common interest.**

## **Further information**

**Follow the Foreign Secretary on Twitter [@PHammondMP](#)**

**Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#)**

Follow the Foreign Office on [Facebook](#) and [Google+](#)

## **Thomas Drew CMG, discusses scope for increasing business with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

20 April 2016

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG, met the President of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr Zulfiqar Ali Khan

He also met other prominent business leaders from the province to discuss potential trade opportunities for Pakistani and British companies.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the focus of much of the UK's development support. The UK has also been working closely with the government of KPK to make technical improvements to support growth in the region.

Speaking following his meeting, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew said: I enjoyed meeting Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's business leaders, and was impressed by their drive to boost the economy and trade links within Pakistan's borders and with the rest of the world. A strong economy is the best guarantor of Pakistan's stability. This is what will enable Pakistan to fulfil its considerable potential.

The UK is the fifth largest exporter to Pakistan, with many British companies operating here. We have recently opened the British Business Centre in Karachi to facilitate trade links between the UK and Pakistan and to enable British and Pakistani businesses to grow. We plan to open an office in Lahore shortly.

We want to see more British companies working across Pakistan, including in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and its capital Peshawar. The province, with a long and proud history of trade and a wealth of natural resources, has great potential, especially given the increased access to EU and UK markets under the GSP+ agreement.

## **New agreement promotes trade between UK and Pakistan**

20 April 2016

MOU signed between British Business Centre and Karachi Chambers of Commerce and Industry to encourage trade between UK and Pakistan.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the **British Business Centre** and the **Karachi Chambers of Commerce and Industry** on Tuesday 19th April 2016. The British Business Centre is a new body set up to assist British and Pakistani businesses develop closer links.

The signing took place at the British Deputy High Commission in Karachi. It was witnessed by:  
H.E. Dr. Ishrat-ul-Ebad Khan, Governor of Sindh  
John Tucknott MBE, British Deputy High Commissioner  
Siraj Kassim Teli, Chairman Businessmen Group and former President of Karachi Chambers of Commerce and Industry (KCCI)

Speaking at the ceremony as Chief Guest, Governor of Sindh – H.E. Dr. Ishrat-ul-Ebad Khan said:  
The bi-lateral trade and investment relationship between our 2 countries holds great significance for the Government of Pakistan.

The UK Prime Minister – David Cameron has underlined the UK Government's full support for a democratic Pakistan and has offered assistance along the democratic path the Pakistani people have chosen.

We want this relationship to flourish in the coming years and we hope such initiatives continue to take place in order to build the relationship between our 2 countries.

The British Deputy High Commissioner, John Tucknott MBE said:  
The UK already enjoys a strong relationship with Pakistan in the key area of prosperity. The British Business Centre's goal is to contribute to an increase in bilateral trade and investment, in line with the commitments made by Prime Ministers David Cameron and Nawaz Sharif when they met in London in April 2014.

We welcome the support that the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry is extending towards the Centre in order to help achieve this goal.

#### **Aims of MoU**

The MoU was signed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the British Business Centre, Malahat Awan, and the President of KCCI, Younus Bashir. It will facilitate and expand trade and investment cooperation between the United Kingdom and the Province of Sindh through:  
the exchange of information on economic, commercial and industrial matters  
specific business opportunities available in Sindh and the United Kingdom

At the ceremony, Chairman Businessmen Group and Former President of KCCI, Siraj Kassim Teli said: I am honoured and delighted to come here today and witness the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the British Business Centre and Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Karachi as a city has much to offer in the development of Pakistan, being the country's financial capital and largest city, the opportunities are numerous.

We already see a strong British trade and investment presence in Karachi and in Sindh and with this agreement we hope more British businesses and investors will come and see firsthand the opportunities that Sindh and Pakistan overall has to offer.

**British Business Centre in Pakistan**

The **British Business Centre** will provide a base for visiting UK companies and offer access to a number of services to UK and Pakistani member companies including:

market research

business opportunity promotion

event management

networking opportunities

bespoke professional and sector specific services

## **British High Commissioner says the Literature has special place in Pakistan's national psyche**

19 April 2016

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG, spoke at the Islamabad Literature Festival at Lok Virsa Islamabad.

The Islamabad Literature Festival is in its fourth year, and the speakers this weekend include Quaisra Shahraz and Anatol Lieven.

British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG, said:

The Islamabad Literature Festival – like its sister festivals in Karachi and Lahore – is a celebration of literature, of art and of culture. Literature shows the depth and variety and colour and texture that anyone visiting this country can see, but is too often invisible to those outside.

You might say that I could make comments like this at arts festivals in many countries. Perhaps. But, to an outsider at least, literature seems here to have a special place in the national psyche. Back in the UK, we are this year celebrating 400 years since the death of William Shakespeare. But we don't

have a public holiday around it; and we certainly have no literary figure playing such a prominent role in the national consciousness as Allama Iqbal.

As British High Commissioner, I should also mention the many joint British and Pakistani authors or British authors of Pakistani descent – from Tariq Ali and Mohsin Hamid to Qaisra Shahraz. Qaisra too will also be appearing at the Festival. They are making a mark in both of our countries.

Finally... I should add that this is one of those areas of my work that is as pleasurable as it is critical to our interests. Some of you will know about the British Government's education work in Pakistan: this is the biggest single element of the biggest development programme we have in any country in the world. There is no literature without literacy. But we are doing a lot more too.

This year alone we are re-opening the British Council Libraries in Lahore and Karachi – with brand new modern buildings, facilities – and books. For those who can't reach them, the British Council is also launching a Digital Library, which will offer access to over 5,000 journals, 30,000 books, films, discussions as well as a poem of the day, book of the week and film of the month. And, of course, we are delighted to support this weekend's activities.

## **British High Commissioner's speech at a high achievers' awards ceremony of the Roots Millennium Schools**

**Delivered on:**

**13 April 2016 (Transcript of the speech, exactly as it was delivered)**

The British High Commissioner to Pakistan Thomas Drew spoke at a high achievers' awards ceremony of the Roots Millennium Schools in Islamabad. Following is the full text of his speech:

Ladies and gentlemen, can I start by thanking the Roots Millennium Schools, and in particular Faisal Mushtaq, for inviting me here as your guest. It is a great honour. When you are invited as a foreigner to a school, you really are being invited to the heart of a country. Even more so on such an important day for everyone here.

I should probably confess to two things before I speak:

First, I always find speaking to students more daunting than pretty much any other audience. I am always kept on my toes, there is a great sense of challenge, the questions are more open. Perhaps I should be grateful today that there is no Q and A.

Second is that I have always had a particular interest in schools and education. And that is not just because of the work the British Government does on education in Pakistan. By far the biggest thing

we do here is support Pakistan's education system – and that is right. But it is also because of my background. I am, on my mother's side at least, from a long line of educationalists.

You don't, however, have to be an educationalist to know that after 2 hours of ceremony, no student wants to hear an Ambassador drone on for more than a couple of minutes. So I will restrict myself to two things:

First is to congratulate you. You have all achieved fantastic things.

I remember well my own graduation ceremony and the sense of relief of getting over the months of hard work and angst. I confess that it took me a good few years to stop having dreams about exams after my university finals.

The second – and more important point – is to make the most of it. I can now speak as a diplomat. This is a country of fantastic potential. I have only been in Pakistan for 6 weeks, but this is coming back after an 8-year gap. I see how it has developed. I feel hugely more optimistic. Admittedly, I left Pakistan in 2008 – a difficult year – and a time when the outside world looked at Pakistan mostly in the context of risk.

Now, risks of course remain, but I and the British Government see also a country of hope and potential. We have the Governor of Punjab here. How many people know that if Punjab were a country, it would be the 11th largest in the world? Karachi is the world's 6th biggest city; we don't yet view it in the same way as we do Shanghai or Sao Paolo. This is a country buzzing with potential. Pakistan's main task is to realise it – and you will find the British Government right behind you. But in the end, the key to making all this happen – and realising Pakistan's potential - is you. You are Pakistan's future. You should grab it.

## **British High Commissioner seeks to improve trade links between the UK and Pakistan**

**14 April 2016**

The new British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG, met members of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ICCI) at his residence.

During the meeting, the British High Commissioner discussed ways to improve the existing trade links between the UK and Pakistan. The delegation was headed by ICCI President Mr Atif Ikram Sheikh and included other high profile figures from the Islamabad business community.

Speaking after the meeting, the British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Thomas Drew CMG said:

**Strengthening the trade and investment ties between the UK and Pakistan is one of my top priorities. During my short time in Pakistan, I have already seen good examples from Karachi to Islamabad of British investment in a variety of sectors.**

**The business relationship between the UK and Pakistan is important to the prosperity of both our countries. I want it to continue to grow. There are already a large number of British companies operating in Pakistan today, with many more working here through Pakistani agents and distributors. Part of my role is to stimulate more business in both directions. The newly launched British Business Centre will be a great asset in doing so.**

**These are exciting times for Pakistan and for our trade relationship. Increased levels of security, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects and growing UK-Pakistan business links are all laying the foundations for a transformation within Pakistan's business sector. This will be the cornerstone for economic growth across the country.**

## **British High Commissioner optimistic about Pakistan's future**

**7 April 2016**

**British High Commissioner, Mr. Thomas Drew CMG met political, business and senior media figures to discuss the current situation in Punjab during his visit to Lahore.**

**They discussed security, the economy and the UK's relationship with Pakistan. He also visited the new Nishat Emporium Mall and the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women to see the Gender Management Information System at work. His visit reinforced his sense of a vibrant city, despite Sunday's bomb attack, on the up.**

**In addition he toured the site of the new British Council library and met staff from the British Council and the Department for International Development. He heard further examples from them of the UK's work in Punjab.**

**Commenting on the final day of his visit the British High Commissioner, Mr. Thomas Drew CMG said: Despite last Sunday's tragic attack, my visit to Lahore has reinforced my sense of optimism for Pakistan's future.**

**Yesterday, the Chief Minister and I discussed the strength of the UK and Pakistan's relationship. Today, I have seen evidence of our partnership first hand. I was impressed to hear about UK-Pakistan collaboration in the construction of the Emporium Mall, where the architect and project manager are British.**



Touring the site of the new British Council Library, I saw the plans for a new 21st century facility on the site of the old British Council library. This library, I know, is well remembered in Punjab for its learning and cultural opportunities. I am delighted that the new library will open shortly to be enjoyed by the next generation of Pakistanis.

At the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women I had the opportunity to hear more about the challenges facing women in Punjab. The work the Punjab Government is undertaking to enact new laws for the protection of women, implement existing legislation, and bring more women into the workforce will have a real impact, not only on women, but on Punjab's wider economic potential. Only by investing in its people, including women and girls, can Pakistan achieve its full potential. I look forward to working with the people and Government of Punjab to continue to develop Britain's strong relationship with the province.

## **British High Commissioner expresses solidarity with the people of Lahore**

**1 April 2016**

Thomas Drew CMG, underlined the strength of the UK's commitment to Punjab and used his visit to learn more about the province from a wide range of sections of society.

The British High Commissioner, Mr. Thomas Drew CMG, visited Lahore for his first official visit since taking post. He in particular underlined his solidarity with the people of Lahore following the tragic events at Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park.

Expressing his condolences on behalf of the British Government to the Chief Minister, the British High Commissioner said:

I am in Lahore shortly after the appalling terrorist attack that claimed so many innocent lives and left many more injured.

The UK stands shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan in tackling terrorism. As Prime Minister David Cameron said in his message of condolence to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, our thoughts are with the victims and their families. We will continue to provide support and assistance to the Government of Pakistan as it works to defeat those who plan and carry out these acts of terror.

The British High Commissioner also met leading figures from Lahore's academic, political, development and business sectors. He sought their views on the issues, opportunities and challenges facing Pakistan.

Mr. Drew visited the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) where he was hosted by

Syed Babar Ali, Pro-Chancellor of LUMS, Prof. Dr. Sohail H. Naqvi, Vice Chancellor of LUMS and student representatives from various departments of the University. He also met the Chairman of Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), Mr. Shaharyar M. Khan, with whom he discussed the Pakistan cricket team's upcoming tour of the UK.

Finally he visited the Kashf Foundation's training and small business incubation centre for women in the Walton Cantonment area of Lahore. Mr. Drew was impressed to see how the social and economic position of women involved had been strengthened through the acquisition of new skills and facilitated access to finance. These are key elements of the UK's Department for International Development economic growth portfolio.

## **The objectives and Why Bridge-Europa?**

- Create awareness in general public about the EU/Western support and lifesaving efforts in Pakistan.
- Promote more cooperation and harmony among citizens of Pakistan and EU/Western through awareness and public diplomacy.
- Connect donors and people for the maximum usage of funds and eliminate corruption
- Aware Pakistani youths/ professionals and general public about scholarships, professional/ career development opportunities and exchange programs.
- Withstand against increasing hate crimes and xenophobia

## **Why Bridge-Europa?**

Despite the colossal and continuing EU aid, sacrifices of the NATO troops and journalists, EU role to save lives in disaster and help Pakistan from toys to advanced technology, anti-western sentiments are all time high. This is because people do not know about all of it and EU media campaigns worth millions of dollars seem to achieve no results. Bridge-Europa reaches to the underprivileged people where poverty and fanaticism is preying on youth to radicalism. Bridge-Europa is free and our demographic research and email access will deliver BridgeEuropa where it's really needed and also to the places with public access to send out a message of harmony, acceptance and dialogue. A safer Pakistan is a step towards a better world. As long as animosities exist we cannot work together and freely work to reduce poverty, disease, corruption and improve human rights, democratic values, climate, Iced Himalaya and wild life in Pakistan.

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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