



Prime Minister Gilani meets President Obama

Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani met with the US President Barack Obama on the sidelines of the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, South Korea on 27 March 2012, in a bid to rebuild the Pakistan-US ties. The meeting came at a crucial time, when the relations between the two countries have been damaged by a NATO strike that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers. Prime Minister Gilani told President Obama that Pakistan was committed to fighting against extremism and wanted stability in the region. President Obama said he hoped the parliamentary review of Pakistan-US relations would be balanced that respects Pakistan's sovereignty, but also respects US security needs. He said the Pakistan-US relations were important to achieve success in war on terror. Both the leaders expressed their desire for a secure and stable region.

Pakistan High Commission celebrates National Day

The 72nd anniversary of Pakistan Day Resolution was commemorated with traditional fervour and enthusiasm at the Pakistan High Commission, London on 23rd March 2012. The High Commission, in line with established tradition, hosted two events: the Flag Hoisting ceremony and the National Day Reception.



The ceremony began with the hoisting of national flag by the High Commissioner and playing of the National Anthem. It was followed by reading out the Messages of the President and the Prime Minister. The High Commissioner greeted the audience on this historic day. Thereafter, Pakistani children presented national songs and a cake was cut to mark the occasion. The event was attended by a large number of Pakistani Diaspora besides members of the High Commission and their families.

In the evening, a grand reception was hosted at a local hotel. Rt. Hon. Alan Duncan, Minister of State for Development and Rt. Hon Lord Howell of Guildford, Minister of State for Commonwealth and International Energy Cooperation and Lady Howell, were the guests of honour from the UK side while Dr. Asim Hussain, Federal Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources, was the guest of honour from Pakistan side.

Alan Duncan said that he had visited Pakistan over 40 times and what struck him most was enormous potential of Pakistan. It is this potential that should be front and centre of our minds as we celebrate the National Day of Pakistan, he said. He assured that UK would stand by Pakistan as a firm and enduring friend as both the countries have a unique relationship, based on a shared history, family and business ties.

While speaking on the occasion, Lord Howell said that the Government and the people of the UK looked forward to continuing and strengthening their relationship with Pakistan to ensure that Pakistan successfully faces the challenges ahead.

The reception was attended by over 600 people including Ministers, Shadow Ministers, cross-section of parliamentarians, British officials, members of diplomatic corps, Mayors, Councillors, representatives of think tanks, media, business community and prominent members of Diaspora. Both the events received extensive coverage in the media.

Strengthening mental health education in Pakistan

Mrs Lisa Rodrigues Chief Executive Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Dr Shakil Malik Clinical Director and Consultant Psychiatrist at the Trust visited Pakistan earlier this month to assess the possibilities of assisting Pakistan in capacity building and transfer of technology in the field of mental health. They offered assistance for capacity building and transfer of technology in the field of mental health through school health programs.

Pakistan has a history of multiple traumas, disasters (earthquake, floods), displacement of populations, poverty and fear of terrorism and this situation has the potential to directly affect the productivity of the country. Timely intervention with primary, secondary and tertiary prevention programs aimed at developing emotionally resilient population is our need. Sussex partnership has offered assistance in developing such mental health prevention programs.

Pakistan: melting pot of cultures, influences and traditions

An amazing geography makes Pakistan a true melting pot of cultures, influences and traditions. This fusion of thoughts and philosophies comes to life in the fashion industry, which has amazed audiences all over the world, showcasing the enormous talent and potential that makes Pakistan a country waiting to be discovered.

Pakistan has been a cultural and artistic hub since times immemorial. This is best reflected in the Pakistani society of today that is multilingual, multi-ethnic and multicultural. The country is home to the archeological remains of an urban civilization dating back 4,500 years.



Capitalizing on the rich culture of Pakistan, the platform of *Riwayat* is bringing Pakistan's best fashion to the European market. To promote the rich diversity of Pakistani art and culture to the European market, *Riwayat* has selected the crème de la crème of each industry to exhibit their talent at Pakistan Fashion Week LONDON in May this year. Such endeavours can present the real and positive image of the Pakistani culture to the UK audiences.



Rt. Hon. Alan Duncan, Minister of State for Development addressing at the Pakistan Day reception



Dr Asim Hussain, Minister for Petroleum addressing at the Pakistan Day reception

Three British Pakistanis acknowledged with Pakistan Civil Awards



Ms Rabia Bhatti, the youngest British Pakistani Councillor receives Tamgha-i-Pakistan



Dr. Jawad Sarwar Naqvi Syed receives Sitara-i-Imtiaz

Three British Pakistanis have been conferred with Civil Awards this year by the President of Pakistan for their outstanding work. Dr. Muhammad Farqad Alamgir received his award from the President of Pakistan in Islamabad. Dr. Jawad Sarwar Naqvi Syed and Councillor Rabia Bhatti received their awards from the High Commissioner at the National Day Reception held in London on 23rd March 2012. Dr. Alamgir has been conferred with Sitara-i-Pakistan for his achievements in the field of medicine and heart surgery. He was the first cardiologist in the UK to repair a heart valve through pin-hole surgery, an achievement which has been recognized worldwide. He has also trained many doctors from Pakistan in this technique.

Dr. Naqvi Syed has been conferred with Sitara-i-Imtiaz for his achievements in the field of academics and human resource management. He is a senior lecturer at the University of Kent, having done his PhD in human resource management from Macquarie University Australia. He has also widely written on issues related to business, gender equality and organizational management.

Ms Rabia Bhatti, the youngest British Pakistani Councillor has been conferred with Tamgha-i-Pakistan for her services to the British Pakistani community and as a role model for the youth. She is actively involved with the charity 'Mosaic'.

Industrial Relations Bill 2012

The Industrial Relations Bill 2012 has now been enacted. This is a landmark achievement of the Government of Pakistan for developing national laws on labour, social security and related human rights. The Bill seeks to consolidate and rationalize the law relating to formation of trade unions, federations of trade unions,

determining the collective bargaining agents, regulation of relations between employers and workers, the avoidance and settlement of any differences or disputes arising between them or matters connected therewith and ancillary thereto. The Bill also covers Pakistan's commitments to the international community.

SOS Children host reception at Pakistan High Commission

SOS Children hosted a reception and information evening on Mount Toubkal Challenge at the Pakistan High Commission. The evening was designed to promote the event SOS Mount Toubkal Challenge and encourage people to take part on this 8 day adventure.

SOS Children began working in Pakistan in 1977 with the first SOS Children's Village built in Lahore. Today, SOS Children's Village is considered a model for modern child care in Pakistan.

SOS Children are inviting individuals to sign up and embark on this eight day trek to the summit of Mount Toubkal. Mount Toubkal is the highest peak in North Africa and stands at an impressive height of 4167m above sea level. Located in Morocco this journey will commence in September 2012.

Pakistan fully committed to MDGs on health: President

President Asif Ali Zardari has said polio eradication was amongst the top priorities of the Government of Pakistan. Talking to Chair of Rotary's International Polio Plus Committee Dr. Robert S. Scott at Aiwan-e-Sadr, the President said Pakistan was fully committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) relating to the protection of mother and child health and reducing the rate of infant, child and maternal mortality. The President said he had himself written letters to all the governors and chief ministers recently urging them to personally oversee the polio eradication campaign and programme in order to ensure its effective implementation.



Pakistani children singing national songs on Pakistan Day at Pakistan High Commission

Third Pakistan Young Leaders Conference

The third Pakistan Young Leaders Conference (PYLC) was held in London from 09-11 March 2012. The event was organized by National Union of Pakistani Students and Alumni (NUPSA) in collaboration with Pakistan High Commission and Goodenough College, London. The opening ceremony of the conference was held at the House of Commons attended by over 120 conference delegates. The dignitaries in attendance included Ms Kashmala Tariq MNA, Dr Khalid Ranjha (former Senator and Law Minister), Mr Najam Sethi (renowned political and defense analyst), Lord Nazir Ahmed and Mr. Wajid Shamsul Hasan, Pakistan High Commissioner for UK.

The conference provided a good opportunity for the Pakistani youth studying in UK to discuss the challenges confronting Pakistan and to come up with practical solutions as well as to inculcate forbearance to accommodate competing views.



Ms Kashmala Tariq MNA addressing the third Pakistan Young Leaders Conference in London

Top British company to source home textiles from Pakistan

Expo Pakistan 2011 attracted around forty-five leading British companies to Karachi in October 2011. The companies were from various sectors, e.g. textiles, engineering, retail, fast food and financial services. The companies included Fielding group, Cleland Mclver Limited, Deluxe Beds, Altman Smith & Co, KBM Consultants, Glenfield International, A.R. Paper Converter Ltd, Fogarty Ltd, which is UK's premier company for filled products, also participated in Expo Pakistan 2011. Fogarty Limited deals in synthetics, feather & down and natural fibres, and has placed orders worth US\$1.50 million with Pakistani suppliers which the company sourced during Expo 2011.

Doing Business with Pakistan Conference in Birmingham Chamber of Commerce & Industry

The UK Department of Trade & Investment, the Commercial Wing of Pakistan High Commission London, the Pakistan Britain Trade & Investment Forum, and the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce & Industry will hold a Pakistan-UK business promotion conference on 19 June 2012 in Birmingham. The conference will have senior level speakers from both governments and specific breakout sessions will be arranged. For further information please contact, saira.ahmed@phclondon.org

President urges regional leaders to curb drug trafficking

Speaking at the fifth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan at Dushanbe on 26 March 2012, President Asif Ali Zardari urged the regional leaders to join hands against drug-trafficking. He termed drug trafficking a major source of funding for militancy and terrorism. Talking separately to Afghan President Hamid Karzai and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad, the President discussed bilateral relations, regional situation and global issues.

He said that Pakistan had excellent political relations with Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Iran and other nations of the region and was working strenuously to translate these political relations into economic and commercial ties. He further said, "Our revised transit trade agreement with Afghanistan is functional since last year and we would like to extend it to Central Asian countries."

Dr Asim Hussain discusses energy issues with Alan Duncan

Dr Asim Hussain, Pakistan's Federal Minister for Petroleum & Natural Resources had a meeting with Rt Hon Alan Duncan MP, Minister of State, DFID and made substantive deliberations on Pakistan's energy, health and education sectors. Additionally, Dr Hussain had an exchange of views with the energy sector business leaders and briefed them on the scope and prospects of foreign investment in the energy sector of Pakistan. He urged the business men to take advantage of the liberal investment regime of Pakistan and invest their capital for the benefit of both the countries



Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani shaking hand with British Chief of Defense Staff, General Sir David Richards

Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff visits the UK

Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani came to London in the third week of March on an official visit and held several important meetings with the senior civil and military leaders here. He called on the Chief of General Staff of United Kingdom, General Sir Peter Wall and discussed issues of professional interest, highlight of which was the briefing on the Transformation of United Kingdom Army. General Kayani also called on the Secretary of State for Defence, Rt Honourable Philip Hammond and Secretary of State for International Development, Rt Honourable Andrew Mitchell.

Additionally, he held detailed meetings with Minister of State for Defense Mr. Nick Harvey, National Security Advisor Sir Kim Darroch, Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Mr. Mark Sedwill and Chief of Defense Staff, General Sir David Richards.

The meetings provided an opportunity for an exchange of views on a wide range of issues including bilateral defense cooperation, current situation in Afghanistan, regional security issues and Britain's role in development and education projects in Pakistan.

Feedback

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