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ASA-Pakistan

AusAID Scholarships Alumni-Pakistan

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Launch of Australia Pakistan Agriculture Scholarships (APAS) Short Course Awards Promotional Seminars

The APAS Short Course Awards were announced in April 2012 for the first time in Pakistan. The APAS Short Course Awards form a part of the increased assistance by Australia to Pakistan, announced by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs on 25 September 2009. These award opportunities are highly targeted and are offered to qualified Pakistani nationals working in agriculture sector. For 2012 the priority field is 'pro-poor market development in rural areas'.

The APAS Short Course Awards were announced throughout Pakistan using a targeted approach. Promotional seminars were held in Islamabad, Karachi and Faisalabad, and were attended by potential applicants from all provinces working in professions related to pro-poor market development in rural areas. Representatives from selected public, private and civil society organisations were invited to attend. These organisations are actively engaged in agricultural research, policy development and

application of improved agricultural practice and/or associated extension activities within the priority field.

Overall, a total of 107 participants from all provinces attended the promotional seminars. They included sector specialists, vice chancellors of agriculture universities, senior managers of civil society organisations, government representatives and other relevant stakeholders including independent progressive farmers. These participants, who represent 72 organisations / institutions working in the agricultural sector, now act as APAS ambassadors to promote the awards in the priority fields.

The promotional seminars have generated an overwhelming response in the agricultural and rural development sector, with the APAS team receiving 275 applications for the first Short Course Awards. 22 successful applicants will be travelling to Australia to commence their course in November 2012.





Farewell Mr. Timothy George

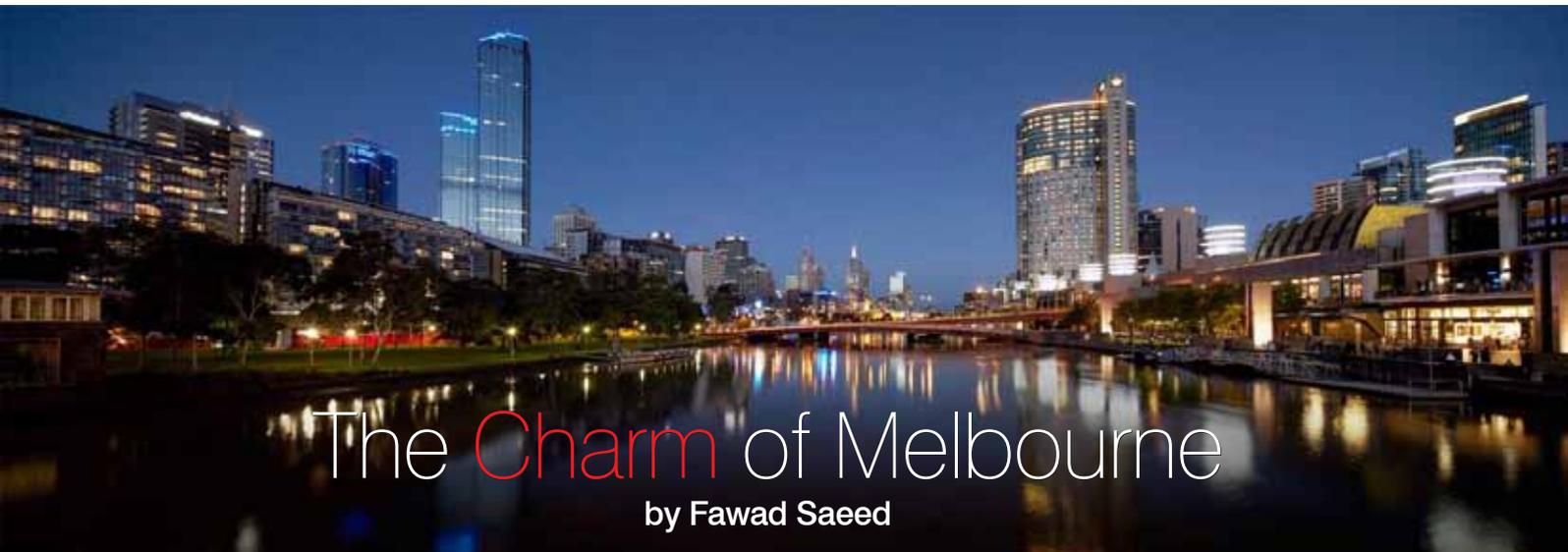
The Honorable Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Mr. Timothy Spencer George, returned to Australia in June 2012 after successfully completing three years of his assignment in Pakistan. During his time here, the High Commissioner made many friends in Pakistan and will be remembered as a strong supporter of the Pakistan- Australia friendship.

Mr. George was joined in Pakistan by his wife Geraldine. The High Commissioner has had an illustrious career as a seasoned diplomat spanning over 35 years. During this time he has been the Australian Ambassador in both Tel Aviv and Madrid, as well as Special Coordinator for the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Island (RAMSI). He has served as Deputy Head of Mission in Wellington, Kuala Lumpur and Suva. The early part of his career saw him serve in Moscow, Santiago and Bangkok.

The AusAID Scholarships Alumni – Pakistan (ASA-Pakistan) was created during Mr. George's tenure largely due to his keen desire to stay in touch with the alumni. In this respect, he was our great



sponsor who truly supported ASA-Pakistan. On behalf of all alumni members, the Executive Committee would like to sincerely thank Mr. George for his continued support and we wish him and his family all the best.



The Charm of Melbourne

by Fawad Saeed

I am a great follower of cricket irrespective of which two teams are battling in the field. When Pakistan won the 1992 Cricket World Cup in Australia, I wished I had been there to witness the moment and be part of the celebration. My wish of visiting Australia was granted in 2004, when I was selected as one of the AusAID scholars for Masters level study in a university of my choice. I was interested in studying Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Melbourne University was the obvious choice due to the excellence of the academic and research staff in its Engineering Faculty. I was very excited by the prospect of obtaining a degree from a university with a very proud history of engineering contribution to the Victorian and Australian people.

Australia is fun to travel because it is familiar enough to be easily navigated, but different enough to keep things interesting. The beauty of Melbourne is that although it is a big city in terms of its land area and its population of 3.5 million, it still has the feeling of a small city. It consists of a number of suburbs arranged together, but certainly not in an orderly way. However, within this disorderedly arrangement, the suburbs themselves are quite organised. For most Western tourists, the scariest thing in this city is the traffic, because to them Australians drive on the wrong side of the road (however this is not the case for me as we follow the same traffic system in Pakistan!). However the most impressive aspect of the city's transport system is the extensive yet reliable network of trams running every 30 minutes on average and



covering most of the city's suburbs without any significant delays in their schedules. Those locations which are not covered by trams are either serviced by trains or buses, which are equally organized and efficient. As trams run on electricity, this contributes to Melbourne's air being much cleaner than Sydney's. Sydney, like Karachi, did not fancy the idea of continuing with trams and now regrets it.

Melbourne expends more energy in a day than Sydney does in a week. My way of coping with the city's vigor was to start the day with an early-morning dose of caffeine at Lygon Street, situated five minutes' walk from Melbourne University. One large shot of espresso on the foot path outside Brunetti's not only greeted my taste buds, it also provided me a perfect lense through which to view the city: a bizarre fusion of the old and new world, a place of optimism, and, as reflected through Lygon Street's string of coffee shops, bars and restaurants, a place that's doing remarkable business.

Gradually Melbourne is transforming into a truly international metropolitan city whose economy is literally run by the activities of international students coming mostly from South and South East Asia. The large influx of Chinese students has provided Australians with a new definition of Asia, for whom Asian now means Chinese. Most Chinese students are attracted to Australia because it allows them to achieve English language proficiency and study a western degree at almost half the price compared to the USA or UK. Immigration opportunity is an added advantage. People say Melbourne is like London, but I do not agree as it has better weather. Greeks are also in large numbers in Melbourne (Melbourne has the largest population of Greeks outside of Greece). However their presence is not outwardly noticeable until they start speaking in a typical Greek accent.

Evenings in Melbourne are splendid at the nearby Docklands and South gate. Both are fabulous newly developed areas highlighting three of Australia's purest resources: light, space and water, fusing them together with delicious cuisine and night life. A five-minute walk along Yarra river from South gate brings one to



Federation Square, the most daring and controversial Australian icon after the Sydney Opera House. My first reaction was shock as the square does not fit well with Melbourne's other classic European architecture. However once you become used to its presence, it does not disappoint: part space, part complex, part artwork, it's an enticing environment where the geometry is in free-fall and the energy is infectious. Maybe one of the reasons that I started liking it was my civil engineering background. Even on weekdays this place is simply a-buzz with people, especially at lunch hours, with meals served from around a dozen restaurants. It is a very good attempt to emulate the European tradition of having a big square in the middle of the city, which always remains filled with tourists relaxing and planning their next move. "Fed Square" houses a number of attractions including the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, the Ian Potter Centre (which houses a priceless collection of Australian art from indigenous to contemporary pieces) and the National Gallery of Victoria. But the most significant building from a tourist point of view is the glass Melbourne Visitor Centre where you can find heaps of pamphlets about different attractions and activities in and around Victoria. It also has a souvenir shop, but to my disappointment, things were more costly than in the famous Queen Victoria open market where you even can bargain to get the best deal.

There are daily excursions available to discover Melbourne's shopping, in which a specialist shopaholic shows other shopaholics the secrets of Melbourne's dense inner-city areas. If one is a cricket freak, there is a tour available to the Melbourne Cricket Ground (widely known as the MCG), where Pakistan won its one and only Cricket World Cup. If you are a soap drama fan, then perhaps instead of touring Bourke Street with its looming Victorian facades and jewelry-box arcades, you could visit Ramsay Street - home of Neighbours. I would rather recommend a self-guided tour in order to properly feel Melbourne's soul by getting lost in its renowned laneways.





At 5pm, I would change the pace and head to St Kilda, a beachside suburb made cheerful by blue skies, Brighton-esque buildings and a colourful fairground. I would take up a seat in one of the beachfront restaurants/clubs among crowds of people unwinding after work. Brighton is pure contemporary Australia - a place to have a chilled drink while the sun goes down taking in the beach, the ocean and a lively promenade of runners, cyclists, dog-walkers and romantic couples.

You can tell Melbourne is proud of its bar scene. Bookstores sell packs of cards delineating 52 different watering holes: "one for every week of the year". But yes, the city councils keep checks and controls to limit the number of bars on one street so that on weekends there should not be any law and order issues or noise problems. Latino Music is still a hot choice among dance floor DJs and on weekends it's almost impossible to gain entry into clubs without formal membership.

By 11pm at night, I would feel quite... blended with the state capital, although a little drained. So the only choice I would have left, and what most sensible Melbourne folk would go for, was to head back to Lygon Street for another shot of espresso before pressing on... !!



AusAID Scholarship – A Great Support

by Syed Shahzad Hussain Zaidy

Being a member of a native Hazara tribe of Balochistan, I never thought of living a nomadic life until I gained my Higher Secondary School Certificate from Federal Government Degree College in Quetta, and moved to Faisalabad to study my Bachelor of Science in Textile Engineering.

After four long years of studying in Faisalabad, I got a job in a textile exporting mill where I served for five years. During those five years, I had an opportunity to visit Germany for technical training. This training made me realise how badly we are harming our environment by discharging huge amounts of chemicals without proper effluent treatment. It was then that I decided to get an education in the environmental sector to help protect Pakistan's environment.

I applied for a Master of Environmental Engineering in Australia's top ranking institute, the University of Melbourne, and was lucky enough to gain admission. I was unable to finance my studies out of my own pocket, so the AusAID scholarship was a big ray of hope for me to achieve my goals. I cannot forget the day when I received the call from AusAID Pakistan to inform me that I had been shortlisted for testing and interviewing. Finally the day came that I had dreamt of: it was the day to fly to Australia.



At first I had to leave Pakistan alone as my spouse was still awaiting her visa. I still vividly remember those initial days in Melbourne when I once told my wife over the phone: "Hey! Can you imagine? One of my semester subjects, an intensive course, has ended in just one week". She replied, "I can not believe it". This brief education burst gave me a fair idea of what it takes to get an A grade in any subject at an Australian university.

The Australian education system has a great advantage that it promotes students' own ability to read and research, thus enhancing their learning capabilities further. What I was taught in the classroom environment was like the tip of the iceberg and the rest was to be explored by me independently.



However, teachers were always available, understanding and welcoming whenever a student needed guidance and discussion. In the Australian education system, there is absolutely zero tolerance for plagiarism. What I struggled with, especially in the first semester, was to write my assignments without being stigmatised by plagiarism. The Introductory Academic Program (IAP) for AusAID scholars at the University of Melbourne plays a key role in assisting AusAID students adapt to the Australian education system. Learning how to deal with plagiarism issues is one of the most important parts of the IAP.

AusAID makes every effort to help scholars perform at their best. The exclusive 'Skill Enhancement Programs' offered at the University of Melbourne are an excellent example of this. These programs are important in the professional grooming of scholars and were available to AusAID scholars at no cost.

While in Australia, one can enjoy cultural diversity at its best. This cultural diversity not only appears in Australian culture, but also in its educational institutions. Different food flavours can be relished in Melbourne, especially in Lygon Street in Carlton. Melbourne is famous for its assorted food from almost every culture. It does not matter if you are looking for desi Pakistani or Chinese food, you can find it in Lygon Street. Pizza lovers can enjoy pizza at ToTo's and Lebanese "hummus" is also easy to find. Name a food and it is most likely you will get it here. It was the street I enjoyed most during my year-long journey in Melbourne.

Another reason for loving Australia is that it is the land where my

spouse and I became parents and had our first baby.

I had mixed feelings about returning to Pakistan. I was happy that I had achieved what I wanted and had better knowledge to serve my country. On the other hand, I was a bit gloomy that I was leaving such a wonderful place. Anyhow, life goes on and one has to proceed with it.

After returning to Pakistan, I wanted to join the academic sector and the National Textile University in Faisalabad happened to be my choice. As an Assistant Professor, I have lectured on textile technology and environment related subjects such as "Environmental aspects of textile engineering", and have also supervised students in their undergraduate research projects. I have worked with SciPak, a European Union funded project to protect Pakistan's environment from textile processing mills and tanneries.

It gives me immense satisfaction when I transfer my knowledge to the future decision makers of Pakistan's textile industry. I am not only contributing to the education of engineers, but in forming responsible members of our society, who have empathy for our environment.

Australia and AusAID have not only upgraded my education, but also improved my personal skills, such as leadership, confidence and self-reliance to assist me in winning a Fulbright PhD scholarship in the US. After serving in Pakistan for about three years, I am now enrolled to study a PhD in the US with high aims of serving my country and above all, mankind.

Counseling Services at Australian Universities by Anonymous

It is said that counseling is an art as well as a science. It is a service to humanity. Going to counselors and availing this service is still considered a taboo in Pakistan despite the fact that anxiety disorders, different forms of mood disorders and suicide rates, are on the rise. It baffles me to think that lots of colleges and universities in Pakistan are producing a good number of qualified post graduates in the discipline of psychology or applied psychology, but we do not get to use their professional services at a societal level. Are these degree holders any good for society? Are they being trained in a way that they can be of any help to people?

I have been a student of counseling myself and I am the one who sought counseling services when I was a student in Australia. I can never forget my learning experiences during the initial preparatory course for all international students. I remember there was a



counselor of Indian origin who spoke to us and informed us about the counseling services. I listened to him keenly out of my own interest in counseling, but I could never imagine that I might have to use the same services at some point in my life.



It was when I was still in my first semester that I first used counseling services. My family was accompanying me and I soon realised that the rigors of full time study, together with family responsibilities, were really taxing me both physically and emotionally. I had to face such emotional stress and anxiety that I do not want to share or even think about. I did not have the luxury of having a close friend around me with whom I could share my problems, and at this time I badly missed my country and my close friends. I first shared my issues with my AusAID Coordinator as I really needed support. She referred me to the counseling center and advised me to visit there. I am pretty sure that if I were in Pakistan at that time, I would have never thought about visiting a counselor for assistance. It was only because of the freedom that I felt in the Australian culture that I agreed to go to the counseling center.

On my first visit I was given an initial form to complete that asked for my background information. I then saw my counselor. He was a decent middle aged man who was really compassionate and really made me talk. I was perhaps keen to talk and only really needed a 'listener'. A listener who was impartial, non-judgmental and empathised with me, and at the same time, did not try to enter

into my personal space. He did not ask me any questions that could threaten me or harm me emotionally. I was already extremely upset and did not have the stamina to take any more stress of any kind.

I used to get appointments fortnightly. That counseling service is an unforgettable experience for me. Academically, I knew how counseling should be done, but being counseled was a very revealing and soothing experience for me. Sometimes the counselor would raise a few questions which made me think more critically about my life and how I wanted to address the problems I was facing. This finally led to finding solutions to my problems on my own. I do not remember exactly how many sessions I had in total, but I just know I quit going there when I felt I was feeling better and able to handle my emotions independently.

I wish the educational institutions in Pakistan would also understand the importance of hiring counselors. Just like faculty members, counselors should be hired as a policy and with a pre-determined quota for providing services required not only to students, but anyone affiliated with these institutions.

In the Quest of Learning..... Learning with Fun!

by Naureen

We often hear people say that learning is a lifelong journey. One can just take this phrase as a common saying, but people like me actually believe in it. After finishing my Bachelor's Degree in Nursing, I was quite satisfied with my work as a Clinical Nurse Instructor, but the quest for doing something more, the thirst for knowing and learning more, made me look for a scholarship to pursue my education further. Having been interested in community health nursing since my student nursing days, I intended to study a Masters in Public Health and I found that when you really intend to do something; the universe helps you achieve it.

I did some research and found an AusAID scholarship program for post graduate degrees with a priority field of public health. I tried my luck while doing my day/night nursing shift duties. Finally after going through the aptitude and interview selection process, I received a call from my mum telling me she had a scholarship offer letter. I wanted to scream with joy and happiness, but then I looked around at my patients in the post anesthesia care unit and controlled my emotions.

My time in the University of Western Australia (UWA) began in January 2009 as a Master of Public Health student in the School of Population Health. When I accepted my application to go to Perth and study there as a full time student, many of my friends and relatives who had been to Australia discouraged me, describing Perth as a boring and slow city compared to the crowded cities of



Melbourne and Sydney. I made a brave decision and travelled there all alone with no friends' support. I am now lucky to have so many friends back in Perth and for that I feel fortunate. Perth has its distinct charm: quiet, peaceful and inviting. People there were also very supportive and helpful.

I had a wonderful learning experience in Perth, studying in a multi-cultural society and environment. Being an international student, I always received special attention from my teachers in a positive manner, not only in support of my studies, but also in terms of settling in. The concepts that I learnt in UWA about public



health were rich and diverse, and can be applied in any environment. Now I am an instructor at AKU, SONAM and apply those concepts in my teaching to undergraduate students of community health nursing. My quest for learning has now begun again, as I look forward to do conducting more research in my field and pursuing further studies to enhance more learning.

Now when I look back, I realise just what a wonderful experience I had in Western Australia as a student through all the new things I learnt and the diverse people I met. The sights and sounds of Perth continue to visit me as I recall its serene natural beauty, the adventures I enjoyed with my friends, my extremely cooperative and inspiring professors at UWA and perhaps, the feeling of leaving my home again when I graduated and left the city of Perth!

Soaring to New Heights

by Palwasha Sherin Khan

It has been barely over two months since I arrived in Brisbane, Australia, and already it feels like a home away from home! Being awarded the Australian Development Scholarship for postgraduate study was a long-cherished dream come true. The privilege of being able to come to this beautiful city and study at a world-class institution like University of Queensland (UQ) on such a generous scholarship is something I wake up grateful for each day. It encourages me to make the most of this opportunity, enjoying each moment and challenging myself to constantly perform better and aim higher. Obviously, living in a city with 265 days of sunshine a year, cheerfulness and optimism becomes second nature.

Prior to my arrival, the internet was my trusted tool for learning all about living, studying and recreation in Brisbane. The wealth of information available made it easy to adapt on arrival, since I was already familiar with the names of suburbs, accommodation costs, places to dine and shop. I had read about a program called 'Brisbane International Student Ambassadors' and made a mental note to look it up once I arrived. Luckily, just two weeks after my arrival, Brisbane Marketing advertised calling for applications for the next batch of international student ambassadors. An essential part of the criteria was a genuine love for Brisbane. And to be honest there could not be a person who was more thrilled to be in Brisbane than I was, and still am!

Long story short, I was delighted to pass the application and interview procedure, considering that I was so new to the city. March 20th found me being appointed by the Lord Mayor, Graham Quirk, in an official ceremony along with 27 other international student ambassadors representing 23 countries. I am honored to be the sole representative of Pakistan. Taking on the role for one year, I will be responsible for using a variety of social media and digital tools to communicate real life experiences, while also participating in a number of business and social events across the city.

"International education is our largest export industry and these keen, enthusiastic students are ideally placed to promote Brisbane



as a leading international student destination. Many will return to their home countries where they may become leaders in industry and government in the future, creating strong, long term connections for Brisbane", said the Lord Mayor.

This role provides me with the opportunity of sharing this wonderful journey with current and prospective international students, inspiring others to choose Brisbane as their study destination and experience for themselves how exciting it can be. I also understand that arriving in a new country/city can be a daunting challenge for Pakistani students, and hope to be able to provide them with guidance on their queries that would enable them to make informed decisions and settle down well. Making new friends, networking, sharing and learning about new cultures while exploring this beautiful city and all it has to offer- what more could I ask for?

As an AusAID scholar, I look forward to making the most of my international student experience in Australia – soaring to new heights, not only learning more, but also being able to play a small part in giving back.



Australia-Pakistan Linkages

by Saira Rehan

One of the main aims of the Australian Development Scholarships is to develop and maintain relationships and links with Australia: this is the story of my daughter who went with us to Australia in 2010 and who has established these links.

Humna Rehan went to Australia with her father in 2010 when she was six years old. She has fond memories of the one year she spent in Canberra. Humna was given an opportunity to give a speech on her annual day about her time spent in Australia. On Friday 27th April 2012 to an audience of around two hundred parents and students, she shared her experience of living and studying in Australia. She informed the audience about her admission in North Ainslie Primary School in Canberra. She affectionately recalled that her class name was Blue Whales and spoke of her first day when she was very nervous while surrounded by mostly friendly Australian students. She said that she really enjoyed her time and was awarded the Principal's Award towards the end of the year. She also said that her premier English standard education from her School in Islamabad played an important part in getting her admission directly into mainstream Australian education and also in making local friends. At the end



she thanked her Australian and Pakistani teachers for their efforts in teaching.

Humna made us proud thanks to the Australian experience she gained through my husband's AusAID scholarship. Links developed by accompanying children through the AusAID scholarship program will create tolerance among children and help them become global citizens. It will also increase Australia's visibility in Pakistani children.

Ten Tips for Studying in Australia

by Zarrin S Siddiqui

1. Learn basic computer skills, especially preparing and giving presentations, and if possible basic data analysis. If you are doing a coursework degree you may be required to work in groups and give presentations. It is not an efficient use of your time if you have to learn these skills at university. Similarly read and adhere to the policies of your institution especially issues related to copyright, plagiarism and academic conduct. Ignorance of these policies is not tolerated.
2. Get an international driving license, this will enable you to drive for a limited time period.
3. The two problematic issues for students are punctuality and waiting for their turn in queues. Remember if you are meeting your supervisor at 8:15 it means 8:15 and not 8:25, so plan your travel accordingly, and if for any reason you might be late for the meeting send an SMS or call immediately.
4. Cross the road only at pedestrian crossings.
5. If you are doing multiple units there may be clashes with assignment deadlines. Ask for an extension if you are having difficulty juggling multiple deadlines. Most of the unit coordinators take this into consideration and will give you an extension if required.





6. With the advent of technology you do not need to spend time in libraries, but this in itself is a valuable learning experience. Spend time in libraries, read journals in your area and study what has been published and what the topics are that you can investigate. If you can achieve one publication during your studies, it is a credit to your curriculum vitae. I always tell people that if there are two candidates for a position, I will favour one who has published over someone who may have only achieved high marks.
7. Take the opportunity for cross institutional enrolment if you can find something more interesting and beneficial in another institution.
8. The student union is the best avenue to get involved with extra-curricular activities. Get involved and enrich your learning experience. You may even go beyond the course and institution. Volunteering is another positive aspect of being in Australia. Even if you can only spare an hour a week try something that interests you. You can explore volunteering opportunities through your local library.
9. Culturally get used to barbecues and experiment with different spices and salads. "Bring a plate" means that you share a dish, not just a plate. Learn about local club footy. Australians love to talk about their footy club.
10. Australia is a beautiful place with lovely people who will greet you with a friendly smile. Use your time to explore the beauty of Australia's beaches and landscape.

Pakistan Australia - Trade Relationship 2012

by Sadia Tariq

Australia and Pakistan have a long-standing friendship since 1948 when Australia strengthened diplomatic relations with Pakistan soon after partition, by establishing a resident mission in the country. Australia and Pakistan, being members of Commonwealth of Nations, have built their relationship on the basis of common interest in the fields of security and stability, collaboration in defense studies, economic reforms and development, building capacity and improving democratic governance. As part of Australia's long term commitment to Pakistan, as reflected in an increased level of bilateral engagement in recent years, Australia has always shown inclination to play a supportive role in helping Pakistan meet its current challenges especially on economic and trade relations.

Pakistan's economic and trade policy has adopted a 'trade led growth' strategy and there is an increased focus on fostering trade relationships with other countries. In the wake of worldwide economic integration, Pakistan's Government has taken measures to liberalise its trade thereby helping the business regime to unleash the full potential of Pakistan's economy. Due to its strategic location, vast market, liberal investment policy, untapped natural resources and developing agro-dairy sectors, Pakistan offers lucrative investment opportunities to corporate entities in the agriculture and mining fields.

The Government of Pakistan has established a policy to seek better market access for Pakistani products through tariff preferences and reduction of non-tariff barriers in international markets. In January 2010 textile tariffs came down further making it advantageous for Pakistani businessmen to import textile products. Australia is an attractive trading partner as it is a low tariff country. Moreover, confidence building measures such as the



revival of the Pakistan-Australia Business Forum (PABF) in 2010 and launching of the PABF website will definitely assist streamlining the process of bilateral trade between Australia and Pakistan.

Australia has also significantly increased its development assistance to Pakistan in recent years. In 2011-12 Australia's total Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) for Pakistan is estimated at \$92.8 million. Increasing cooperation in the education sector, especially the granting of a higher number of scholarships, is a sign of expanding people to people links between the two countries.

The Pakistan-Australia Joint Trade Committee was held in March 2012 to identify numerous methods and means for cooperation expansion in multifaceted areas. This included granting greater access of Pakistani products to the Australian market; promotion of Australian joint ventures and enhanced investment in Pakistan and; capacity building of Pakistani professionals in diverse sectors with a particular emphasis on the agricultural sector including post-harvest value addition, dairy products, livestock,



water management and the training of trainers. The Australian Government has recently initiated the Australia Pakistan Agriculture Scholarship (APAS) Short Courses Awards as a step towards the Pakistan-Australia agricultural sector linkages program.

The table below outlines Australia's merchandise trade with Pakistan during the 2010-11 financial year.

Sr. No.	Description	Currency AUS\$ (in millions)
1.	Australian exports to Pakistan	382
2.	Australian imports from Pakistan	175
3.	Total (exports + imports)	557

Developing a healthy trade relationship with Australia would be beneficial for Pakistan as Australian trade is competitive on commercial basis. Australia can contribute to increasing breed varieties, improving dairy processing technology, coal exploration and infrastructure development. The agricultural industry is the backbone of Pakistan's economy and needs to be developed to produce competitive products, similarly the energy sector in Pakistan needs support to explore alternative sources of energy. Pakistan's natural resources are an area of mutual interest for Australia and Pakistan. Australian expertise in coal mining and clean energy technologies could be used to assist Pakistan in exploring its natural resources. Pakistan has the fourth-largest coal reserves in the world and strong prospects to use hydropower to meet emergency energy needs.

Another area of mutual interest is the complementary nature of Australia and Pakistan's export trade industries. Pakistan can export agricultural products, in particular rice, as well as textile products to Australia. Australia on the other hand is a major exporter of coal, among other products, and a major importer of

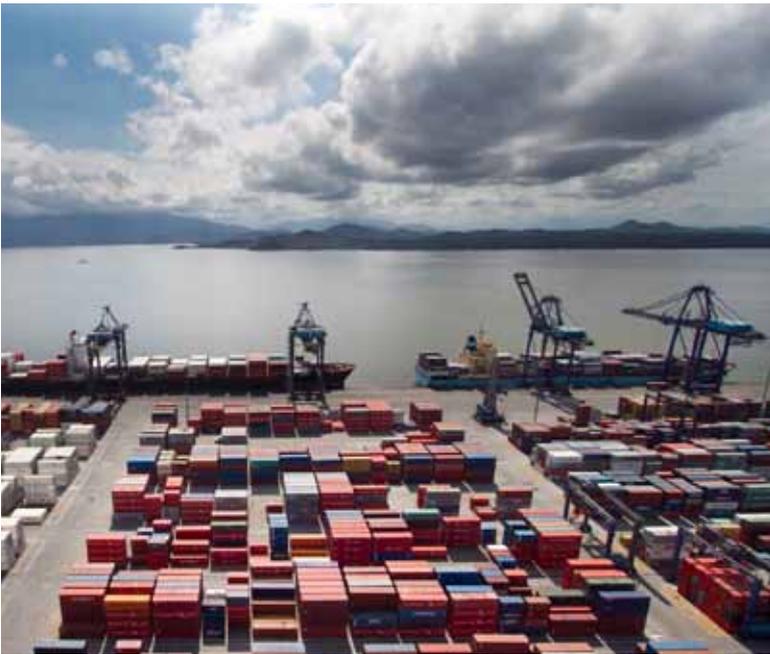
bed, table and kitchen linen, clothing, rice, cotton and woven fabrics. These comparative advantages in exports, as well as mutual interest in the exploration of energy resources seem conducive to a strong Pak-Aus Trade relationship. In addition, Australia has recently completed the risk assessment processes for importing Pakistani mangoes and would be considering similar processes for Pakistan's apples, citrus fruit and fisheries. This would open up a new market of perishable goods for Pakistan's export industry.

Governments at both ends are making efforts to improve collaboration. Governments of both countries are exploring avenues for two way trade and investment. The areas that are under consideration and promising for growth in future investments include education (tertiary, vocational and corporate training); agribusiness (dairy, crop production, quality issues, storage and handling); mining (oil and gas exploration and development); processed foods and; IT and communications products and services.

As Australia is committed to supporting Pakistan as a partner in its efforts to build economic prosperity and enhance development, there is an essential need to take prudent steps to gain benefit from having Australian support in trade and investment. There are some structural changes that are required to promote a trade environment in the country, as well as the need for implementation of trade policy in its true letter and spirit, in order to gain from foreign interests. Pakistan has to work hard to improve the performance and competitiveness of it's exports by diversifying its product and market mix, increasing the sophistication level of Pakistan's exports products and enhancing the level of export competitiveness.

To achieve sophistication in Pakistani products and increase their competitiveness, there is a need to integrate local productive capacity with globally integrated supply chains; coordinate skills





development programs in priority sectors and strengthen the institutions entrusted to implement these programs; rationalise tariff policy and; acquire and upgrade technology so that Pakistan can move away from traditional and low value export products. To diversify Pakistan's exports, a holistic approach is required to

provide incentives and support the export of selected industries that have the potential to grow and attract foreign investors. These include the following industries and sectors: chemical, leather, gems and jewelry, meat and meat products, light engineering, agro based exports, minerals and export of services.

To strengthen Pakistan's economic position, efforts should be made to develop a sound macro-economic framework for the trade environment; invest in human resources; promote the private sector as an engine of growth; increase the focus on small scale sectors particularly agriculture and; provide greater opportunities for employment. In this case, the role of the private sector has become all the more important. The Pakistani private sector must be a driving force in building trade ties with Australian counterparts, as the role of the Government will be limited to that of a facilitator in providing opportunities to Pakistani businesses.

Australia and Pakistan can be strong trading partners and can help each other to transform challenges into opportunities. They can collaborate on areas of mutual interest which would help both the countries in strengthening their relationship in years to come.

The more trade that can be built between our countries, the greater will be the economic impact and the more jobs will be created in Australia and in Pakistan.

Editor's Note

To start with, let me sincerely thank all those friends who have sent their write-ups for the newsletter, or their suggestions for improving its content and style. The fourth edition of the newsletter has a lot to offer especially the inspiring stories of some of our alumni friends.

It is really gratifying to note that with the passage of time, the interest of members in alumni activities, particularly in the ASA-Pakistan Newsletter, has increased substantially. I hope this momentum remains steady and strong. We are presently tossing around the idea of issuing theme based newsletters in the future and will share the decision with you via email once it is made.

It is also time we thanked our great supporter and the first patron of ASA- Pakistan, the Honorable Mr. Timothy George, who encouraged and inspired us to build this fantastic network. At the same time, we are delighted to have Mr. Peter Heyward as the new Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan and we hope that he will be equally kind and supportive to our alumni body.



Alumni Executive Committee and Australian Awards team regularly meet to discuss alumni related matters. They were joined by AusAID during a meeting on 4th May 2012, Lahore.

As you may have noticed, the executive committee of ASA-Pakistan has stepped up their activities with regional networking alumni events in the cities of Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar. There are other exciting alumni events in the pipeline, which will be shared with you in the coming months.

I look forward to receiving your ongoing support and contribution.



Australian Government
AusAID



Australia Awards



Contact Us

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