

# Khabr-o-Nazar

(NEWS & VIEWS)

January 2008

Published by the U.S. Embassy Islamabad



● President Bush Offers Condolences

● USAID Donates Kits to Fight Bird Flu

● Makri Park Inaugurated



U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Anne W. Patterson called on the caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Nisar Memon, in Islamabad on December 12, 2007.



U.S. Embassy Cultural Attaché, Constance Colding Jones, during her visit to the National College of Arts (NCA) in Lahore on November 29, 2007.



U.S. Consul General Karachi Kay L. Anske inaugurated the new purification and filling unit of the Culligan water purification company in Karachi on November 20. Photo shows Consul General Anske talking to the workers of the plant. Chief Executive Officer Iqbal Shekhan is also seen in the picture.



The Editor-in-Chief of daily 'Pakistan Observer,' Zahid Malik, talking with Ambassador Anne W. Patterson at a function hosted in honor of former Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz (center) in Islamabad on November 25, 2007.

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U.S. Representative, Patrick Kennedy (center), and U.S. Senator, Arlen Specter (right), offering condolences to Pakistan People's Party representatives and presenting a floral tribute at PPP headquarters in Islamabad on December 27, 2007.



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# Letters to the Editor

## Regular Readers

I have no words to express my profound gratitude for your sincere efforts in bringing two friendly nations closer by publishing such a useful and informative magazine. I and some of my friends are regular readers of this beautiful magazine. I as a Pakistani feel satisfaction when I see that our students in FATA are being facilitated by the USAID with the grant of scholarships. Furthermore, the report on the lecture of Anna Chambers at the International Islamic University was very useful and thought provoking. Happy new year and best wishes for you and all the staff of "Khabr-o-Nazar."

Khawaja Jawed Iqbal  
Rawalpindi

## Impressed

I read the November 2007 issue of "Khabr-o-Nazar" for the first time and was quite impressed by its high standards. After reading this magazine one can easily make out how many wonderful things the United States is doing in Pakistan. I suggest that whatever the U.S. is doing in Pakistan should also be publicized in other newspapers and magazines so that the masses could know what good things the U.S. is doing in here.

Dr. Azeem Alam Khan  
Islamabad

## Good to See

It was good to see that the December issue of the magazine was almost completely dedicated to the media-related issues. Ambassador Patterson's remarks at the SAFMA conference were quite thought-provoking. Her saying that the U.S. supports press freedom worldwide must be a source of great encouragement for all those professional journalists who are fighting to uphold press freedom anywhere in the world. The write-up by an International Visitor program participant, which of late has become a regular feature of "Khabr-o-Nazar," provides the readers with an unbiased insight into the U.S. society. The USAID's support in the health and education sectors of Pakistan once again came to the fore with this issue of the magazine.

Danish Sattar  
Karachi



**On behalf of the people of the United States  
Pakistan Gets 19 Ambulances  
For Maternal Healthcare**

The United States of America, Pakistan Initiative for Mothers and Newborns (PAMAN), a USAID funded project working in support of improved maternal and newborn health, has donated 19 purpose-built ambulances worth 45 million rupees for maternal health care in Pakistan.

An agreement to this effect was signed in Islamabad on October 30 which was witnessed by the Federal Secretary for Health, Khushnood Akhtar Lashari, and USAID's Director Health, Mary Sakrie.

Thanking the U.S. government for extending this support, Secretary Lashari said that about 10 per cent mothers in Pakistan die on their way to a health facility due to lack of proper transport facility. These ambulances, fully equipped with medical supplies and communication systems, would provide the much needed transport facility to the expecting mothers, right from their homes to the hospital, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, USAID's Mary Sakrie said that the U.S. government would continue to support Pakistan in its efforts for strengthening healthcare delivery system.

Most of the ambulances have already been transferred to the various District Headquarters Hospitals in the country. Districts Dera Ghazi Khan, Bhawal, Upper Dir, Sukkur, Lashkari, and Jaffarabad have received two ambulances each while Isfahan, Khanewal, Dera, Gujrat Khan, Mandla, Kalotiani and Mianse have got one ambulance each.

On November 1, the U.S. Consul General in Karachi, Kay L. Anisko, presented three ambulances to the South Health Department to deliver emergency patients to district and tribal hospitals.

She expressed the U.S. government's commitment to

The U.S. Consul General in Karachi, Kay L. Anisko, handing over the ambulances to the former Minister for Health, Govt. of Punjab, Fazal Karim Memon. Also seen in the picture is the former Chief of Party, PAMAN, USAID.

work with the Government "to provide health care services in the province that will ensure the well-being of women, infants and children."

Consul General Kay Anisko also handed over two ambulances to the Balochistan Health Department for the Lashkari district at a ceremony in Quetta on November 2. The ambulances are specially designed and equipped to assist pregnant women and newborns.

Meanwhile, the USAID Pakistan Mission Director, Anne Aamun, presented eight ambulances to the Punjab Health Department in Lahore on December 3 for the districts of Dera Ghazi Khan, Khanewal, Jhelum, and Rawalpindi which will deliver emergency patients to district and tribal hospitals.

"When a health emergency arises, every minute counts," said Ms. Aamun. "We want to be sure that trained staff can respond quickly to help a mother and baby who are in crisis and transport them right away to a hospital for further care."

Consul General Kay Anisko met Punjab's Minister for Health, Syed Anwar Hameed, from keys of ambulances to Khawaja Shady Ahmad, DDC, visited. Also seen in the picture (from left to right) are the former Chief of Party, PAMAN, Mary Sakrie of USAID and Govt. of Punjab, Fazal Karim Memon, Special Secretary (P) Health, Govt. of Punjab.



U.S. Senator Arlen Specter (left), U.S. Representative Patrick Kennedy (second from left), and U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Anne W. Patterson offering condolences to a representative of the Pakistan People's Party at party headquarters in Islamabad after the death of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

## U.S. Delegation Expresses Condolences For Lives Lost In Bombing Attack



U.S. Representative Patrick Kennedy presenting a floral tribute at PPP headquarters in Islamabad on December 27, 2007.

U.S. Senator Arlen Specter, U.S. Representative Patrick Kennedy, and U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Anne W. Patterson expressed their deepest condolences to the late Benazir Bhutto's family and to the people of Pakistan upon the death of the former Prime Minister and other victims of the December 27, 2007 bombing attack in Rawalpindi.

Senator Specter (Republican-Pennsylvania), Representative Kennedy (Democrat-Rhode Island), and Ambassador Patterson visited the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) headquarters in Islamabad on December 27 to deliver a floral tribute and to offer their sympathy for the tragic loss of Ms. Bhutto and other innocent victims of the attack.

The U.S. officials echoed President Bush's statement that the people of the United States "stand with the people of Pakistan in their struggle against the forces of terror and extremism. We urge them to honor Benazir Bhutto's memory by continuing with the democratic process for which she so bravely gave her life."

# President, Mrs. Bush Offer Condolences Condemn Violence



President George W. Bush speaks to the nation from the Bush Ranch in Crawford, Texas, on Thursday, Dec. 27, 2007 in response to the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, former Prime Minister of Pakistan. White House photo by Chris Greenberg.

Prairie Chapel Ranch  
Crawford, Texas  
December 27, 2007

THE PRESIDENT: Laura and I extend our deepest condolences to the family of Benazir Bhutto, to her friends, to her supporters. We send our condolences to the families of the others who were killed in today's violence. And we send our condolences to all the people of Pakistan on this tragic occasion.

The United States strongly condemns this cowardly act by murderous extremists who are trying to undermine Pakistan's democracy. Those who committed this crime must be brought to justice. Mrs. Bhutto served her nation twice as Prime Minister and she knew that her return to Pakistan earlier this year put her life at risk. Yet she refused to allow assassins to dictate the course of her country.

We stand with the people of Pakistan in their struggle against the forces of terror and extremism. We urge them to honor Benazir Bhutto's memory by continuing with the democratic process for which she so bravely gave her life.

# Benazir was a Champion for Democracy: Secretary Rice

*Remarks on Signing Condolence Book for Benazir Bhutto*



Secretary Rice signs condolence book for Benazir Bhutto at the Embassy of Pakistan in Washington on December 28, 2007.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited the Pakistan's Embassy in Washington on December 28, 2007 to sign the condolence book for Benazir Bhutto. Following are the excerpts from her remarks made after the signing of the condolence book:

“Let me just say that I wanted to come to express personally, and also on behalf, of course, of the American people, our deep sympathies with the Bhutto family, with her supporters and, of course, with the Pakistani people. This is a day of great tragedy, great mourning. She was a champion for democracy. She was a courageous woman. In my conversations with her, her commitment and her dedication came through very clearly, and most especially her love for her people and for her country. And I believe that her legacy will be one of being remembered for that dedication. And as the President said yesterday, the way to honor her memory is to continue the democratic process in Pakistan so that the democracy that she so hoped for can emerge.”

# “Save the Environment”

## Student Poster Exhibition At National Science Museum



An exhibit of student environmental posters at the National Museum of Science and Technology (NMST) was inaugurated in Lahore on December 7 by the Acting Public Affairs Officer of the U.S. Consulate, Antone Greubel.

“The U.S. Consulate regularly organizes programs underlining the importance of environment, but it is always exciting when such programs involve the youth and children,” the American diplomat remarked. “This exhibit is one way of getting children involved in thinking about environmental issues.”

In April 2007, the Consulate invited entries from schools participating in the Access English Micro-scholarship Program in Lahore and Multan, and recipients of the American Discovery Centers in Lahore. More than 60 children, ages 12-15, sent in posters done in water colors, oil paint, pastels and crayons. Pictures of the top five posters were printed in the May 2007 issue of the Embassy's monthly magazine Khabr-o-Nazar.

“It is a pleasure to host this wonderful exhibit here. It is one of the many examples of the continued collaboration between the Science Museum and the U.S. Consulate Lahore to increase awareness about issues that affect all of us,” Director NMST Sajid Anwar Malik remarked. The exhibit remained on display through December.

Posters by the following participants were awarded the top five prizes earlier this year: Ali Shafique, St. Anthony's College; Rida Ali, Pepperdine School; Iqra Jehangir, Pepperdine School; Arifa Latif, Qila Lakshman Singh CARE School; M.K Sherpao and M. Salman Ibraheem of Aitchison College shared the 5th prize.



School children enjoying one pro-environment posters exhibit.



Acting Public Affairs Officer of the U.S. Consulate Antone Greubel and NMST Director Sajid Anwar Malik talk with students at the inauguration of the poster exhibit.



# USAID Donates Equipment to Fight Spread Of Avian Influenza in Pakistan

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) donated more than \$72,000 worth of personal protective equipment, decontamination and laboratory tools, and poultry testing kits to help Pakistan respond to and contain outbreaks of Avian Influenza.

“Outbreaks of Avian Influenza represent a major public health threat and have huge economic consequences,” said Anne Aarnes, the Mission Director of USAID in Pakistan at a ceremony in Islamabad on December 18, 2007. “We are more than pleased to work with the people of Pakistan to diminish the threat Avian Influenza poses and to protect the brave men and women who are out there fighting the disease.”



Donated to the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock and the National Institute for Health, the protective suits, respirators, goggles and gloves will be distributed to workers who must come in direct contact with Avian Influenza-infected poultry. The equipment will limit the risk of animal-to-animal and animal-to-human infection during outbreak response activities such as disposing of infected poultry and decontaminating poultry-raising areas.

Pakistan is one of the twenty-four countries throughout Asia and the Near East that have experienced outbreaks of Avian Influenza. Forty-seven outbreaks of Avian Influenza were recorded in Pakistan in 2007.



The Senior Scientific Officer of the National Reference Lab for Poultry Zaheer Ahmed showing the contents of donated kits to the USAID Mission Director Pakistan, Anne Aarnes, and Joint Executive Director, National Institute for Health, Shahid Akhtar.

The equipment is part of the \$1.5 billion in aid that the U.S. Government is providing to Pakistan over five years to improve economic growth, education, health and governance and to assist with earthquake reconstruction.



Ms. Anne Aarnes, Mission Director USAID Pakistan along with Dr. R.H. Usmani, Animal Husbandry Commissioner, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock looking at the boxes of the donated kits.



Consul General Kay Anske welcomed by folk musicians at historic fort of Kotdiji in Upper Sindh.

# Consul General Visits Sindh

The U.S. Consul General Karachi Kay L. Anske, visited several districts in upper Sindh from December 2-4, 2007, and met with a cross-section of politicians, academicians and public representatives.

The Consul General visited the historic archeological site Moenjodaro and met with the District Nazim for Qamber-Shahdadkot who briefed her on the various development projects initiated in recent years.

In Larkana, Consul General Anske met with the PPP leader and former Opposition Leader in the Sindh Assembly, Mr. Nisar Ahmad Khuhro and PML-Q Sindh leader Haji Altaf Hussain Unar.

After visiting Sukkur, she went to the Shah Abdul Latif University in Khairpur and met with Vice Chancellor Dr. Nilofer Shaikh. She planted a tree in the botanical research garden of the University. Ms. Anske then met with PPP Sindh Chief Syed Qaim Ali Shah at his residence. Former District Nazim Nafisa Shah was also present during the meeting. She also met with Gul Mastoi, Project Manager of Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) which is a partner on projects with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID.)

Leaving Khairpur, the Consul General toured the historic fort of Kot Diji. The Consul General was accompanied by Political Officer Matthew Bunt.



Consul General Kay Anske during her visit to historic 'Faiz Mahal of the Talpurs' in Khairpur.



U.S. Consul General Kay L. Anske planting a tree in Botanical Research Park of the Shah Latif University Khairpur along with VC Dr. Nelofer Shaikh.

# Toys for Tots



Members of the Mission at the U.S. Consulate Karachi participated in the annual "Toys for Tots" event. The primary goal of the 57-year-old Toys for Tots program sponsored by the U.S. Marine Corps is to deliver, through a shiny new toy, a message of hope to needy youngsters that will motivate them to grow into responsible, productive, patriotic citizens and community leaders.



# USAID Funded Birthing Center Inaugurated in Khanewal



Left to Right; Sardar Ahmad Yar Hiraj, District Nazim Khanewal, Rao Shakeel Ahmad, DCO Khanewal Dr. Qaiser Javed Project Coordinator PLYC and Ms. Mary Skarie inaugurating the birthing center in Khanewal.

A birthing center funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Pakistan was inaugurated in Khanewal on December 4, 2007. The center will provide skilled delivery services to pregnant women and infant care to newborn children.

“The USAID, on behalf of the American people, is committed to helping the Government of Pakistan improve health conditions,” said Mary. Skarie, Director of USAID Pakistan Health Office. “This birthing center will provide the mothers and babies of Khanewal access to the care they need to ensure healthier pregnancies, births and lives.”

Funded by USAID and implemented by John Snow Incorporated (JSI) in partnership with the Government



Ms. Mary Skarie Mr. William Conn with Dr. Nuzhat Gynecologist at BHU 58-10/R in Khanewal birthing center.

of Pakistan, the birthing center is part of the \$49.9 million Pakistan Initiative for Mothers and Newborns (PAIMAN) project to build the capacity of existing health systems and foster a community-based approach to ensure a continuum of care for mothers and newborns.

In Khanewal District, PAIMAN worked with the Pakistan Lions Youth Council to help organize the new birthing center and to hire a midwife for the underserved area. The Government of Pakistan provided the facility and medications and worked with the community to purchase an ambulance. The ambulance is especially designed for pregnant women and newborns ensuring they can reach a hospital during an emergency.

Support for this project is part of the \$1.5 billion in aid that the U.S. Government is providing to Pakistan over five years to improve economic growth, education, health and governance and to assist with earthquake reconstruction.



Ms. Mary Skarie with the CMW students at School of Nursing Khanewal.

# Makri Park Inaugurated

## Built On Earthquake Rubble

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission Director for Pakistan, Anne Aarnes, paid rich tribute to the “irrepressible spirit and continued support of the local community” at the inauguration of Makri Park in Muzaffarabad on November 28, The park was built over the rubble of the October 8, 2005 earthquake. The deputy chief of Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) Lt. General Nadeem Ahmed was also present on the occasion.

“USAID and its partners worked to design and implement an exciting vision to convert this landfill into an environment-friendly park that beautifies the area,” said USAID’s Aarnes. “What you see today is the result of a year’s efforts to realize that vision.”

In April 2006, USAID funded a \$1.7 million Rubble Removal project to remove debris from the city of Muzaffarabad. Implemented by International Organization for Migration (IOM), the project cleared 8.5 million cubic feet of rubble from the town center and deposited it at the government-designated landfill of Makri, a ravine on the banks of River Neelum.

“Under the guidance and leadership of ERRA, the USAID and its partners took up the challenge of helping the city to regain its former glory and to build back better,” the American diplomat said.



Children enjoying swings at the newly-inaugurated Makri Park in Muzaffarabad.



Two little girls presenting flowers to USAID Mission Director Anne Aarnese and Deputy Chief of the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority Lt. General Nadeem Ahmad as they arrived at Makri Park in Muzaffarabad.

Consistent with an environmental plan, Makri Park is now a new city landmark covering 40,000 square feet of extensively landscaped land that offers scenic picnic spots overlooking the river and city.

Support for Makri Park is part of USAID’s four-year \$200 million Earthquake Reconstruction Program that is building hundreds of schools and health facilities, supporting better quality health and education services, and improving economic activities in the quake-affected areas of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and the North-West Frontier Province.



USAID Mission Director for Pakistan Anne Aarnes together with the Deputy Chief of the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority Lt. General Nadeem Ahmed inaugurating Makri Park in Muzaffarabad on the banks of the Neelum River.

# A TRANSFORMATIONAL YEAR

By Zahir Khan



Zahir with his host family.

As a student at the Government Boys Secondary School, Nazimabad Number 2 in Karachi, I didn't see any doors to big opportunities coming my way. I was just going to concentrate on cricket and someday play for Pakistan. I didn't know that one phone call from my teacher would give my life a huge turn. He nominated me for exchange program interviews with the International Education and Resource Network-Pakistan (i-EARN).

I was convinced I wouldn't be selected from the hundreds of kids applying. But I got through the tests and interviews, and by God's grace I was selected as one of 45 Youth Exchange Scholarship (YES) finalists from Pakistan.

I remember the look in the eyes of my mom and dad that said, "Son, we are proud of you." I felt happy and I thanked God for this chance. In Pakistan, for a guy like me it's just a dream to go to America. I had this dream, but never had the tools to make it come true. God made the miracle happen. I was about to face a totally different culture and life.

In August 2005, I stood at the airport with my parents and relatives. I could see tears of happiness shining in my mother's eyes. She knew her son was leaving her for a long time, something she never had experienced before.

After a 20-hour journey, my feet touched the ground in Washington D.C. My heart was still denying that I was in

America. I stayed in Washington with the whole exchange group from Pakistan for three days and finally said goodbye on the fourth day and headed to Rapid City, South Dakota.

"O God! This place is small," I thought as the plane flew over Rapid City. A few minutes later, my host family was greeting me and waiting to give a new life a joyful and loving start. Tired and apprehensive, I arrived at my new home. It took a little while for me to settle in, but I made it. The first thing I discovered were my new house chores, such as mowing the lawn, doing dishes, dusting, and vacuuming. These were some of the little things that made me feel like part of the family.



All geared up for Halloween.

Betty, my host mom, sometimes got mad at me, but she did it with love. I realized that all moms are same. We were like a typical family: fun times, then arguments. I love my host dad, Bob, who has a handicap. I think I took good care of him, but that was just because of the love I got in return. I had a host brother, Frank, who lived with his own family at another place. We had a good time, and I will miss them a lot.

I had a younger exchange brother, Dennis, from Germany. We were just like brothers, helping each other, playing pool, playing jokes. We also had arguments over stupid little things, like any brothers. We shoveled snow together, went to school, and did volunteer work. He left before I did and it was hard to see him off because I thought of him as my younger brother. We will see each other again someday, I am sure.

I felt nervous but strong as I arrived for my first day at Douglas High School. It was my first time in a co-educational school. I prayed the first day would pass quickly, and it did. I made a couple of friends who showed me the “inside story” of the school. The first quarter was tough. There were so many strange faces, no one to really talk to. In the second quarter things started to get better when I got used to going up and saying “hello” to a stranger. A lot of things were completely new to me, like Homecoming. I have never danced like that in my entire life! Another big event was the Prom. Everyone was excited, worrying about dates, dresses, and restaurants. By the end of school, I had a lot of unforgettable friends.

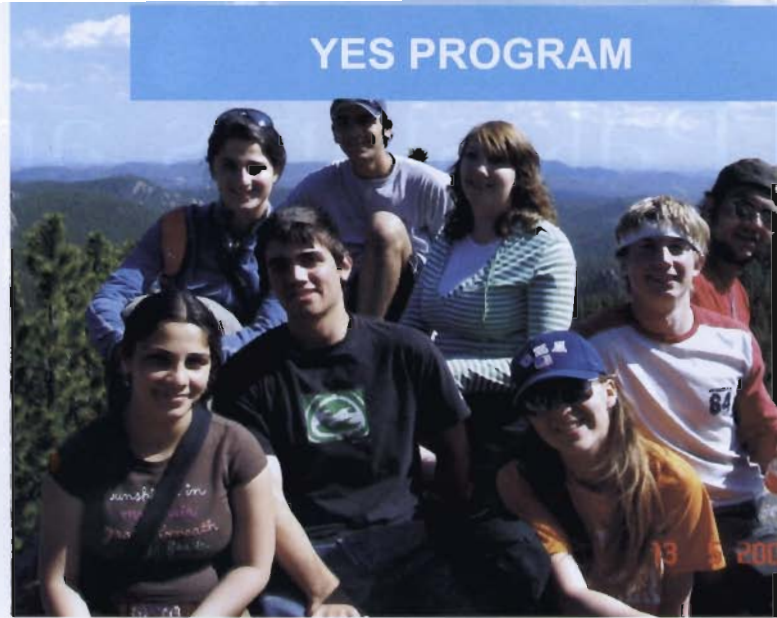
My friends and I hung out on weekends, stayed overnight at each other's houses, and went to movies. I tried not to think about how much we would miss each other when I had to leave. These friends were a kind of exchange for the friends I had left back home, not as many but enough to make my time pass happily.

My host mom took us to a multi-cultural festival in Minnesota and to see friends and family in Nebraska. Those people gave me such a warm welcome and did all they could to make us feel comfortable. It was really easy to make friends. I would walk down the streets and people would just wave. It was easy to get into conversations with anyone.

A new but satisfying experience for me was community



With friends outside his school, Douglas High School in Rapid City, South Dakota.



Zahir with a group of other exchange students.

service. It feels really good when you give to your community without expecting anything in return. I mostly volunteered at the Boys' Club. It's awesome working with those little angels and seeing how innocent they are, unaware of bad things in the world.

We had a four-day Thanksgiving holiday and a Christmas vacation along with the winter vacation. I got a whole lot of Christmas presents. I also attended churches. I went most often to a Catholic church with my host family, and a few times to a Baptist church with my buddy Richard. I got to know some similarities between Islam and Christianity.

I had a mentor I interviewed every month about my future. I interviewed people about engineering and learned a lot from them. They became good friends. Since some of them were Muslims and we were in the same community, I occasionally visited to offer prayers and celebrate moments like Eid and Ramadan.

My year in the United States was a chance to see the world from another angle and learn a different lifestyle. I experienced the differences between life in Pakistan and life in the United States. I discovered my inner confidence, and I became more mature. I thank God for giving me such a time in life.



The author, who attended grade 12 in the U.S. for one academic year celebrates his graduation with classmates.

# Pakistanis and Americans Share Similar Values

## People to People Contact Essential



Our group with State Department officials in Washington D.C.

I recently participated the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) on Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Management from June 25 to July 14, 2007. The program was held in Washington DC Geneseo, Illinois; Jackson, Mississippi; and Santa Fe, New Mexico. The whole program was full of learning. I will describe some of the broader experiences, learning and inspirations I had during my three week visit:

I found the IVLP program to be very strong in the following areas: program design, selection of the pertinent organizations/institutes for meetings and mechanisms for reinforcing learning. The Program and schedule was designed in a manner, not only to ensure exposure of the delegates to all dimensions of American life, but also enable the delegates to understand many levels of thinking, approaches and ways of viewing life from the local and national policy making level to the working level. The program also offered many opportunities to

increase our understanding of the American society and enabled the visitors to change the stereotypical perceptions built by media and other sources.

One of the inspiring and important aspects was the selection of the pertinent organizations to visit to maximize interaction and exchange of views. Institutions such as Maryland University and other universities gave a broad perspective, while organizations such as Mercy Corps and the Federalist Society gave perspective on professionalism and scale of work. Churches, Mosques and day care centers allowed perspective on grassroots initiatives and the energy brought from volunteerism, while an oil company emphasized the role of corporate social responsibility. Local town mayors and pueblo community leaders taught us about local ownership, responsibility and the concept of self-reliance, while the home hospitality give a sense that how people have faith, trust and ownership in the processes of government.



Enjoying home hospitality in Geneseo, IL.



Meeting with Chamber of Commerce of Geneseo, IL.



First and foremost in the result of the program was the change in the perceptions of the delegates towards Americans. It has been engraved in the minds of many ordinary Pakistanis that American Society is a capitalist and self-absorbed society with no interest in others. We learnt that was merely propaganda, the ordinary American is not so different from the ordinary person in Pakistan. During our home hospitality visit in Geneseo, IL, we learned that Americans not only have very strong family unit and social relationships but also ethics, values and high standards of morality. Hence it is very important that “people to people contact” and “soft diplomacy” has to be continued so the problems between states do not affect the relationships between people. The opportunity to be part of the rural family through home hospitality was the key element in deepening our understanding, because the delegates were able to see American life very closely. If we were given only the opportunity to meet at State Department, and big NGOs, we would have never been exposed to the real picture of American life.

The second major insight was just as unexpected. The vast majority in Pakistan, particularly those who are in NGOs, think that USA is perfect in all spheres of life. No doubt to a large extent they are, but there are weaknesses, there are imbalances in power relationships, there are conflicts between black and white, immigrants, Native-Americans in pueblos etc. The reason why American NGOs are successful and this perception emerges is because they do not close their eyes and allow a feeling of perfection to tranquilize them, they always develop strategies for improvement. We NGO workers in particular and our countrymen in general must learn that there is no such thing as “perfect”. We must work hard, improve our system, enhance our capacity to analyze the situation objectively and craft strategy to overcome the issues. We must also learn two things from the USA's civil society, first how to develop systems and implement them rigorously and secondly how to promote self-reliance and volunteerism.

Another inspiring and replicable thing was the “rule of law” in the country -each and every individual was respecting the law, no matter if a law enforcement official was visible or not. In my opinion this is one of the reasons they are progressing and we as a nation need to learn it.

Civil society organizations, including NGOs are the cream of the society, the more they are sensitive, visionary, empowered and self-reliant the more they contribute in the productivity and progress of the society. The U.S. government is particularly nurturing,



Meeting at the Rape Crisis Center in Santa Fe, NM.

facilitating and supporting of their efforts not only in terms of financial support but also in terms of their linkages, building political support even if they are working outside of the boundaries of the USA. In contrast in Pakistan, there is little thought about provision of any financial resource to civil society organizations, and sometimes there are efforts to subjugate civil society organizations and NGOs so the independent voice can not be heard.

I look forward to maintaining contact with the U.S. Consulate Karachi, and all the individuals and organizations with whom I interacted during my visit to the U.S. I have invited my home hospitality hosts to visit me as I think it is important for ordinary Americans to visit Pakistan and enjoy a positive experience. I would also like to join other IVLP Alumni in establishing a forum and organizing a grassroots effort to maximize our learning and experiences and promote a positive image of both American and Pakistan.

*Mr. Abdul Wadood Khan is the Executive Director of the Society for Empowering Human Resources (SEHER) in Quetta, Balochistan. He attended the International Visitor Leadership Program on Non-Governmental Organization Management in the U.S. from June 25 to July 14, 2007.*



Meeting with the former Governor of Tesuque Pueblo in Santa-Fe, NM. New Mexico is the home of the third largest community of Native Americans in the country.

# Application Fees for Immigrant, Non-Immigrant Visas Revised

Effective January 1, 2008, the application fee for a U.S. nonimmigrant visa will increase from \$100 to \$131. The fee for immigrant visas will increase from \$335 to \$355. These increases will allow the State Department to recover the costs of security and other enhancements to the visa application process.

Applicants who paid the prior non-immigrant \$100 application fee before January 1 will be processed only if they are scheduled and appear for a visa interview before January 31. Applicants who paid the prior \$100 application fee and appear for visa interviews after January 31, 2008 must pay the difference -- \$31 -- before they will be interviewed.

The State Department is required by law to recover the cost of processing visas through the collection of the Machine-Readable Visa application fee. Because of new security-related costs, new information technology systems, and inflation, the \$100 Machine-Readable Visa fee was lower than the actual cost of processing non-immigrant visas.



An applicant demonstrates how digital fingerprints are captured.



U.S. Consul General Islamabad Michael B. Chang

There have been many security enhancements to the visa process which have added to its cost. Some of these enhancements, such as the collection of biometrics, are congressionally mandated. The State Department is now collecting 10 fingerprints from each applicant and the FBI charges a fee to review those fingerprints. Until now the State Department has been absorbing the additional cost. The application fee has increased twice since 9/11, the last time in 2002.

# FOUR LIFE-SAVING AMBULANCES DONATED TO UPPER DIR, BUNER



The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission Director Anne Aarnes donated four ambulances to the districts of Upper Dir and Buner in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP).

This donation is part of the 45 million rupees project under which 19 purposely-built ambulances have been donated for maternal healthcare in Pakistan.

“When a health emergency arises, every minute counts,” said Ms. Aarnes while speaking at a ceremony in Islamabad on December 13, 2007. “We want to be sure that trained staff can respond quickly to help a mother and baby who are in crisis, and transport them right away to a hospital for further care.”

The ambulances, donated under the USAID-funded Pakistan Initiative for Mothers and Newborns

(PAIMAN) project, are specially designed and equipped to assist pregnant women and newborns. Two of the ambulances are equipped with four-wheel drive to deal with the difficult terrain of Upper Dir.

Funded by USAID and implemented by John Snow Incorporated (JSI) in partnership with the Government of Pakistan, the \$49.9 million PAIMAN project builds the capacity of existing health systems and fosters a community-based approach to ensure a continuum of care for mothers and newborns in 10 districts across all four provinces of Pakistan.

Support for this project is part of the \$1.5 billion in aid that the U.S. Government is providing to Pakistan over five years to improve economic growth, education, health and governance and to assist with earthquake reconstruction.



The USAID Mission Director Anne Aarnes and provincial Health Secretary, NWFP, Abdus Samad Khan, having an inside view of one of the four fully-equipped life saving ambulances donated by the U.S. Government for the districts of Upper Dir and Buner in the Frontier province. Also seen in the picture is District Nazim Upper Dir Sahibzada Tariqullah.

# U.S. Ambassador Hosts Reception for Media



Hamid Mir of Geo TV carefully listening to the point being made by the Ambassador.



Rana Tahir Mehmood and Mughees Ashraf Beg of Jang with Ambassador Patterson.



An overview of the guests present at the reception.



Ambassador Patterson speaking to journalists.



Ambassador Patterson and Press Attach Elizabeth Colton (center) listens as Shahid-ur-Rehman of Kyodo news agency puts his point across.

# صحافیوں کے اعزاز میں امریکی سفیر کا استقبال



اسے آروائی ٹی وی کی عاصمہ شیرازی نیویارک ٹائمز کی کارلونا گال سے تبادلہ خیال کر رہی ہیں۔



رائیٹرز ٹی وی کی شیریں سردار، اے پی کے مصحفی ہینٹنگٹن، این این آئی کے ایڈیٹر طاہر خان اور ایف ایم 99 کے شیخ وسیم احمد امریکی سفیر پیٹریک سن سے چٹو گفتگو ہیں۔



نیویارک ٹائمز کی کارلونا (دائیں) اور جین پرلیز (بائیں) امریکی سفیر پیٹریک سن کے ساتھ۔



امریکی سفیر پیٹریک سن وائس آف امریکہ کے ایاز گل اور ڈیمتھیل شریف کا خیر مقدم کر رہی ہیں۔



ریڈیو پاکستان کی سیمہ صدیقی امریکی سفیر پیٹریک سن سے چٹو گفتگو ہیں۔



امریکی سفیر ڈان ٹی وی کے ہمشرزیدی اور فائٹیل ٹائمز کے فرحان بخاری سے باتیں کر رہی ہیں۔