



Khabr-o-Nazar

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An Exclusive
Interview
with
**Ambassador
Crocker**

International
**Women's
Day**

Ambassador
Visits
**Various
Cities**





U.S. Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker meeting with the Sindh Governor, Dr. Ishrat-ul-Ibad, in Karachi on March 2. (PID Photo)



U.S. Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker meeting with the Punjab Governor, Lt. Gen. (ret'd), Khalid Maqbool, in Lahore on March 5. (PID Photo)



U.S. Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker meeting with the NWFP Governor, Mohammad Ali Jan Orakzai, in Peshawar on March 7. (PID Photo)



U.S. Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker meeting with the Balochistan Chief Minister, Jam Muhammad Yousaf, in Quetta on March 12. (PID Photo)

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U.S. Ambassador to
 Pakistan Ryan C. Crocker
 (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

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EMBASSY HIGHLIGHTS



Islamabad, March 15, 2007 - U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher speaking at a Press Conference at U.S. Embassy Islamabad on Thursday.

Remarks By U.S. Assistant Secretary Of State Richard Boucher At The Press Conference At U.S. Embassy Islamabad, Pakistan

It's a great pleasure for me to be back in Pakistan. As you know I'm a regular visitor and I always enjoy my trips - for the hospitality first of all. But I think it's very important to us as we try to work in Washington on things involving this region, especially Pakistan, that we understand from people here what the situation is on the ground. So it's a great pleasure for me to be back. It's also a great pleasure for me to be here with our Ambassador Ronald Neumann today who's done an excellent job representing the United States. It was an honor for me to be included last night with President

Musharraf in a dinner to honor our Ambassador. This may be the last time that we appear together at a press conference, so I want you to know that and let me pay my own little tribute in public to him. *(complete text)*

LATEST HEADLINES FROM THE EMBASSY



Female's Involvement Vital For Country's Stability: Ambassador Tahir Khell

Senior Adviser to the Secretary of State for Women's Empowerment, Ambassador Shirin Tahirova, and a faculty member of the Fatima Jinnah Women University, Islamabad, spoke at a press conference at the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad on Thursday.

"for a country to be stable, it must invest in the empowerment of women is vital for the economic development of a country," Ambassador Tahir Khell told the female audience and providing opportunities for women to play an important role in the country's economic development as well as social and political development. The Ambassador also highlighted the importance of U.S. policy towards Pakistan, Employment opportunities at U.S. Embassy

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President Musharraf

COMMITTED TO WINNING WAR ON TERRORISM

—White House



White House Spokesman Tony Snow told reporters at the daily White House press briefing on February 26, that the Vice President on his trip to Pakistan had talked to Pakistani officials "about the best way of working forward in the war on terror" and going after al Qaeda. He said that "the Taliban is trying to gear up for a spring offensive, and we intend to be working with the Pakistanis to become increasingly effective at dealing with those threats."

The spokesman reminded that, "when you have a meeting with a president like President Musharraf -- who absolutely understands the al Qaeda problem; he has been on multiple occasions a target of al Qaeda assassination attempts, and he understands that there have been an al Qaeda presence within his country -- that it's important to figure out how to be most effective in that. So they

continue to work on being more effective at going after the bad guys."

Responding to another question, whether the "White House is sending a tough message to the Musharraf government," the White House Spokesperson noted, "We have not been saying it's a 'tough message.' What we're saying is... the Vice President is meeting with President Musharraf because we do understand the importance of making even greater progress against al Qaeda, against the Taliban. It is important not only for the safety and security of people within Pakistan but obviously within Afghanistan as well, and it's an important element in the larger war on terror."

(NOTE: The full text of the transcript is available at www.whitehouse.gov)



U.S. Diplomat Lyngrid Smith Rawlings opening an exhibit at the Kinnaird College highlighting various aspects of the Civil Rights Movement. The exhibit and Ms Rawlings' lecture were held in connection with the U.S. commemoration of the "Black History Month." (KN Photo)

Education

Key To Women Empowerment:

U.S. Diplomat Says

U.S. Diplomat Lyngrid Smith Rawlings addressing the students of the International Islamic University Islamabad on "Women Empowerment in the U.S. - Choice & Challenges" on the occasion of the International Women's Day on March 8.

Islamabad - U.S. Diplomat Lyngrid Smith Rawlings emphasized today the "critical role that education continues to play in empowering women" in a talk delivered at the International Islamic University, Islamabad, held in connection with the commemoration of "International Women's Day."

"Cognizant that the laws of the United States should apply equally to both males and females, American women educated themselves and then created organizations that pressured Congress to change the Constitution so that it created a more just society," Ms. Rawlings said.

Explaining how women were able to make rapid progress in the U.S. in the twentieth century, she said that during World War II, women replaced men in factories while the men went off to war. "The economic independence they experienced during World War made women reluctant to abandon their jobs and return to their homes as full time home-makers," she noted.

On the occasion of the talk titled "Women Empowerment in the U.S.: Choice and Challenges," the U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Section also displayed an exhibit entitled "Road to Equality - How American Women Won the Vote" depicting various aspects of women's nonviolent but determined political activism.



(KN Photo)

U.S. Diplomats Urge Women's Role in Economy, Need for Maternal Healthcare, Honor High Achievers

U.S. Consulate's Principal Officer Bryan Hunt stressed "women's active participation in the economy" and the "importance of safeguarding maternal health" at events in Lahore on March 8 marking the International Women's Day.

"Women play a vital role in shaping their societies," Principal Officer Bryan Hunt said during his visit to the Beaconhouse National University today highlighting the USAID-funded PISDAC (Pakistan Initiative for Strategic Development and Competitiveness) project on women's participation in the gems and jewelry sector. "Urban and rural poverty around the world often indicates a missed opportunity for

women's participation, as the failure to use human capital curbs economic development."

"The United States is proud to sponsor innovative partnerships to promote economic opportunities for women. I hope BNU's initiative in jewelry design training will promote entrepreneurship among women," remarked Mr. Hunt.

Speaking later at a play "Bohat Dair Kar Di" (Too Late), Principal Officer Bryan Hunt said, "The Pakistan Initiative for Mothers and Newborns (PAIMAN) is part of USAID's \$127 million investment in health in Pakistan through 2006, which also includes programs to provide clean water, and combat TB, polio and HIV/AIDS."

"The U.S. Government and USAID are proud to be partnering with the Government and the people of Punjab by funding the PAIMAN Project to work in Dera Ghazi Khan, Jhelum, Khanewal and Rawalpindi to improve the healthcare provided to mothers and newborns. On the occasion of International Women's Day, it is fitting that we recognize two groups of women critical to the health of all Pakistanis: mothers and Lady Health Workers."

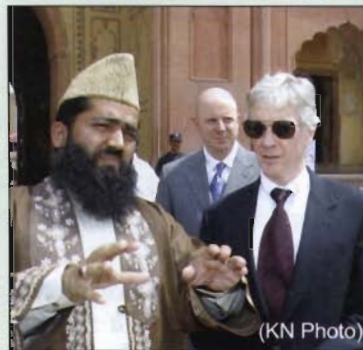
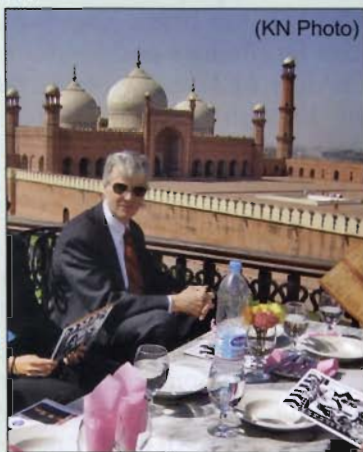
Consulate's Public Affairs Officer Kathleen Eagen underlined the need for awareness in timely treatment and care of breast cancer survivors at a meeting with Lahore's leading doctors and NGO representatives. "Valuable lives can be saved and families spared the suffering through increased awareness about breast cancer," she said.

The U.S. Consulate in Lahore celebrated the International Women's Day through a number of activities that included Political Officer Amanda Pilz's visit to a Women's Police Station, a luncheon for high-achieving women students, Principal Officer Hunt's visit to the Government Girls High School, Singhpura. The day's events were capped by a reception honoring accomplished Pakistani women in fields as diverse as media, politics, education and the arts.



Principal Officer of U.S. Consulate Lahore Bryan Hunt views an exhibition of work by Gem-Cutting Polishing Certificate Course students funded by USAID at Beaconhouse National University, Lahore. (KN Photo)

PAKISTANIS are WELCOMIN



Q: Mr. Ambassador, you have been considered a “real friend of Pakistan.” Now, as you arrive at the conclusion of your eventful stay in Pakistan, how do you look back at the last two-plus years of your stay here? What would you count as the ‘achievements’ of your tenure as U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan?

AMB CROCKER: I think the relationship between Pakistan and the U.S. has developed significantly during the last two-and-a-half years. I think that it is not really a question of credit to one particular individual. It is much more important than that. It has been the development of the institutions of our relationship, and I think we all know some of the key examples of that. Our military assistance recently marked the arrival of Cobra helicopters to support Pakistan’s efforts in War on Terror. We have done a great deal with the Pakistan Navy. The F-16 sale is now moving forward. Two F-16s have already arrived in country. We have done a tremendous amount on the economic side. Our assistance of three billion dollars over five years, split evenly between economic and security, is, I think, a concrete example of the strength and continuity of this relationship. But if I have to pick one single element in relationship which stands out for me, it would be the earthquake relief and reconstruction effort. The United States was Pakistan’s largest earthquake donor with over half a billion dollars committed. And both the size and

enormously G & HOSPITABLE

Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker



speed of the U.S. response was, I think, an indication of how deeply affected Americans were by what happened to people in Pakistan and the readiness on the part of our government and our people to stand up to that and do everything we could to help Pakistanis put their life back together.

Q: Mr. Ambassador, there are several misperceptions and reservations among the people of Pakistan about the United States. What have you done to remove those doubts and bridge the gap between the two societies? Do you see or predict a continued 'up-beat' trend in the Pak-U.S. relations in the years to come?

AMB CROCKER: This is a key point because relationships to endure obviously have to be strong between governments, but they also have to be strong between peoples. There are several things that we have done here that I think are quite important. One is, of course, we have dramatically expanded the Fulbright scholarship program to the extent that it is now the largest single Fulbright scholarship program in the entire world. This ensures that hundreds of Pakistan's most talented young people would have the opportunity to visit the United States over the next five years, developing their skills, but also developing an appreciation of American people and society, to bring back home with them. Equally important, from our point of view, during their time in the United States they are going to meet thousands of Americans who have never encountered a Pakistani, never been to Pakistan but will, from their interactions, derive a sense of what the Pakistani people are really like. So I think that is very important, that for the people to

people level. The other thing we have worked very hard on during my time here is to expand travel to the U.S. We have consistently sent the message through the Pakistani media that the U.S. welcomes legitimate visitors. And we have seen the results of that. The issuance of visas to Pakistanis in 2006 was thirty per cent higher than in 2005. The issuance of student visas increased fifty-five per cent in 2006 over 2005. So the word is getting out. More and more Pakistanis are traveling to the U.S., and as they do so, they experience the reality of what and who Americans are, and they return and communicate that to friends and family. I think you are going to see a progressive strengthening of understanding and, through understanding, friendship at a people to people level.

Q: Mr. Ambassador, there are many negative and often unfair stereotypes in the western media about Pakistan. You have been here for the last two-and-a-half years and met with different strata of society. What is your perception about ordinary Pakistanis and life in Pakistan?

AMB CROCKER: I found Pakistan and Pakistanis to be enormously welcoming and hospitable people. I find it noteworthy that during my two-and-a-half years here that, while clearly there are many Pakistanis who have been unhappy over various aspects of U.S. policy in the region, my American staff consistently report the same thing that I have seen for myself. Individualized anti-Americanism virtually does not exist here. When Americans, either from this embassy or the community, are out in the streets, the markets around the city, in the country, they encounter nothing but hospitality and generosity, and I think it is quite extraordinary. It is the same thing I remember from my first trip to Pakistan, which was as a university student in 1970--hitch-hiking from Peshawar to Wahgah. That Pakistan part of the trip stood out to me just because people were so very nice, and the people I was dealing with then did



(KN Photo)

not have very much of their own but they were always wanting to share it. So, again, what struck me most during this period (in Pakistan) was the hospitality, courtesy and generosity.

Q: Mr. Ambassador, Pakistan society is also as diverse as that of your American society. What do you see as the major differences between the way of life and outlook in the United States and here in Pakistan?

AMB CROCKER: I see more similarities than I do differences. I see in Pakistanis and Pakistan a tremendous sense of individual freedom. Pakistanis are never afraid to speak their mind or write their opinion in the press, say what they think on television or radio. There is a tremendous attachment to be free, to move your life the way you want to. I find Pakistanis passionately interested in education. Just about everywhere I go in the country, if people want anything from the U.S., that (education) is always the first thing they mention. They want their kids to have better opportunities than they had, better education than they have, and that's also very much a part of American society and culture. Like Americans, Pakistanis are very mobile people--both within the country and in their travel abroad.

If I had to note a particular difference as I have seen, it would be that Pakistanis are more strongly family-oriented than Americans are. Pakistanis I have come to know and befriend, the family and the whole extended family is really at the center of their lives, and that includes not just their parents and children, brothers and sisters, but cousins of several ramose and uncles and aunts. That Pakistanis traveling abroad would expect to spend weeks with the relative in another country that here she has never seen before. So very, very strong family attachments exist in Pakistan, and I find those very admirable.

Q: Mr. Ambassador, as a foreigner and senior American diplomat, you have watched the customs and traditions of Pakistani society. What are the characteristics of Pakistani civilization and culture that have most impressed you?



(AP Photo/Shakil Adil)



(KN Photo)

AMB CROCKER: The dominant impression that I have of Pakistani civilization as an American is how very, very old, and very rich it is. We are young country, a young civilization. Pakistan has very ancient one. And whenever I visit museums around the country or archeological sites, I have been to a fair number now; I am impressed by just how far back civilization extends in this country and how important those civilizations have been for all of us in the world community. You know, from the earliest efforts of the Stone Age man in Balochistan up through Mohenjo-Daro, the Gandhara civilization, on into local times. What has happened in Pakistan has affected the world. In that sense I was extremely happy to be able to preside over the return of those priceless artifacts of Gandhara that were illegally exported from Pakistan back to Pakistani authorities. There was more historical richness in that single collection of stolen artifacts than you find in many U.S. museums and in the entire region.

Q: *Mr. Ambassador, you have also traveled all over Pakistan. Which places have you found most interesting and why?*

AMB CROCKER: Well, I found them all interesting. Pakistan, like the U.S., is an incredibly diverse country and society. And like the U.S., if you hope to understand Pakistan, you have to travel. One can no more sit in Islamabad and think that he or she understands the country then you can do that in Washington and have the same experience. So visiting as often as I could all of Pakistan's provinces, trying to get out not only to provincial capitals but to smaller towns and cities, I found one of the more valuable things I did here just for my own education. And you know, from Gwadar to Peshawar and all the places in between and visiting again towns like say Badin in Sindh or Bhawalpur in Punjab, you get a sense of what life is like away from the great cities of Pakistan. And again I found that enormously educative. I have had the chance to visit most of the tribal agencies during my time here and there again seen the difference between reality and stereotypes -- talking to tribal representatives in Bajaur agency, hearing that they want the same things for their kids that other Pakistanis and Americans want--health, education and employment opportunities. So the time I have spent out of this office traveling around the country is actually the best times I have had.

Q: *Mr. Ambassador, is there any other thing you would like to say to the people of Pakistan?*

AMB CROCKER: I am leaving with a sense of sadness that I am not going to be able to remain longer here, but with a very good sense about where we are going in this relationship. I have enormous confidence in the future of this country, the capacities and the intentions of its people. Pakistan in the years to come is going to be a regional leader, and we look forward to being a partner, as the full resources and capacities of this country continue to be developed, and a partner as a world leader with again an absolutely vital regional state and a good friend and ally.



(KN Photo)



(KN Photo)

