

UK Minister for South Asia Lord Ahmad concludes 2-day visit to Pakistan

During his visit, Lord Ahmad met with the Prime Minister Imran Khan and other government Ministers and Provincial leaders, including the Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed, the Human Rights Minister Shireen Mazari, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar and Governor Punjab Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar.

The visit covered Islamabad and Lahore and was focused on the UK and Pakistan's friendship to build back greener to protect our world against climate change, build back better with more prosperity for both countries, build back safer to protect communities from COVID-19, and to build back for all ensuring that girls get the education they deserve.

During his visit, Lord Ahmad launched a new programme in Lahore to promote cleaner brick production practices which will help improve air quality, reduce smog and fight climate change. The UK will support a targeted training programme on Zig Zag Technology for the brick industry to substitute coal and reduce emissions. This programme will be implemented in collaboration with Government of Punjab, Brick Kiln Owners Association of Pakistan (BKAOP) and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

Lord Ahmad and Prime Minister's Special Assistant on Climate Change Amin Aslam planted a tree at the British High Commission residence garden in Islamabad to make the UK and Pakistan's joint commitment to tackling climate change, and recognise Prime Minister Imran Khan's ambitious Ten Billion Tree Tsunami.

The Minister also met young climate action leaders and discussed the importance of high ambition by global leaders at COP26 to protect our environment for future generations. The Minister hosted a roundtable for business leaders in Pakistan to discuss the UK's support for the trade potential in Pakistan. This visit also included a meeting with prominent interfaith leaders in Pakistan to exchange perspectives on achieving Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) and interfaith harmony.

Lord Ahmad said:

My visit to Pakistan has reinforced just how important it is to work together to tackle the threat of climate change, to prevent a pandemic like Covid-19 from happening again, and to help our children catch up with lost learning, especially girls. No country can work in isolation. Global challenges do not respect borders.

I look forward to even more ambition in our relationship in the future, including on commitments to tackle climate change and ensuring that we leave no one behind as we build back from the

pandemic.

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