

Pakistan launches \$500 million projects for Afghanistan

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Islamabad: Minister for Planning, Development and Reforms Ahsan Iqbal announced that Pakistan has launched \$500 million worth of projects for Afghanistan's education, health and infrastructure sectors, the media reported on Friday.

Iqbal on Thursday said that 3,000 scholarships had been offered to Afghan students in different universities of Pakistan and 100 Afghan students would study in the Lahore University of Management Sciences, Dawn online reported.

Talking to an Afghan delegation comprising academicians, lawmakers, students and civil society members here, the minister said that Pakistan had desired to forge friendly relations with all its neighbours, including Afghanistan.

He underlined the need for greater exchanges of scholars, artists, businessmen and others to boost cooperation and friendly and brotherly relations between the two countries.

"We have to start a new chapter in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations by focussing on social and economic dimensions of the friendship," Iqbal said, adding that two countries shared hundreds of years of history.

He said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor would play an important role in bringing people of the region closer besides improving economy of the entire region.

"If an untoward incident happens in Afghanistan, Pakistan will be the first country to feel its heat and it will affect the rest of the world later on," he added.

- IANS