

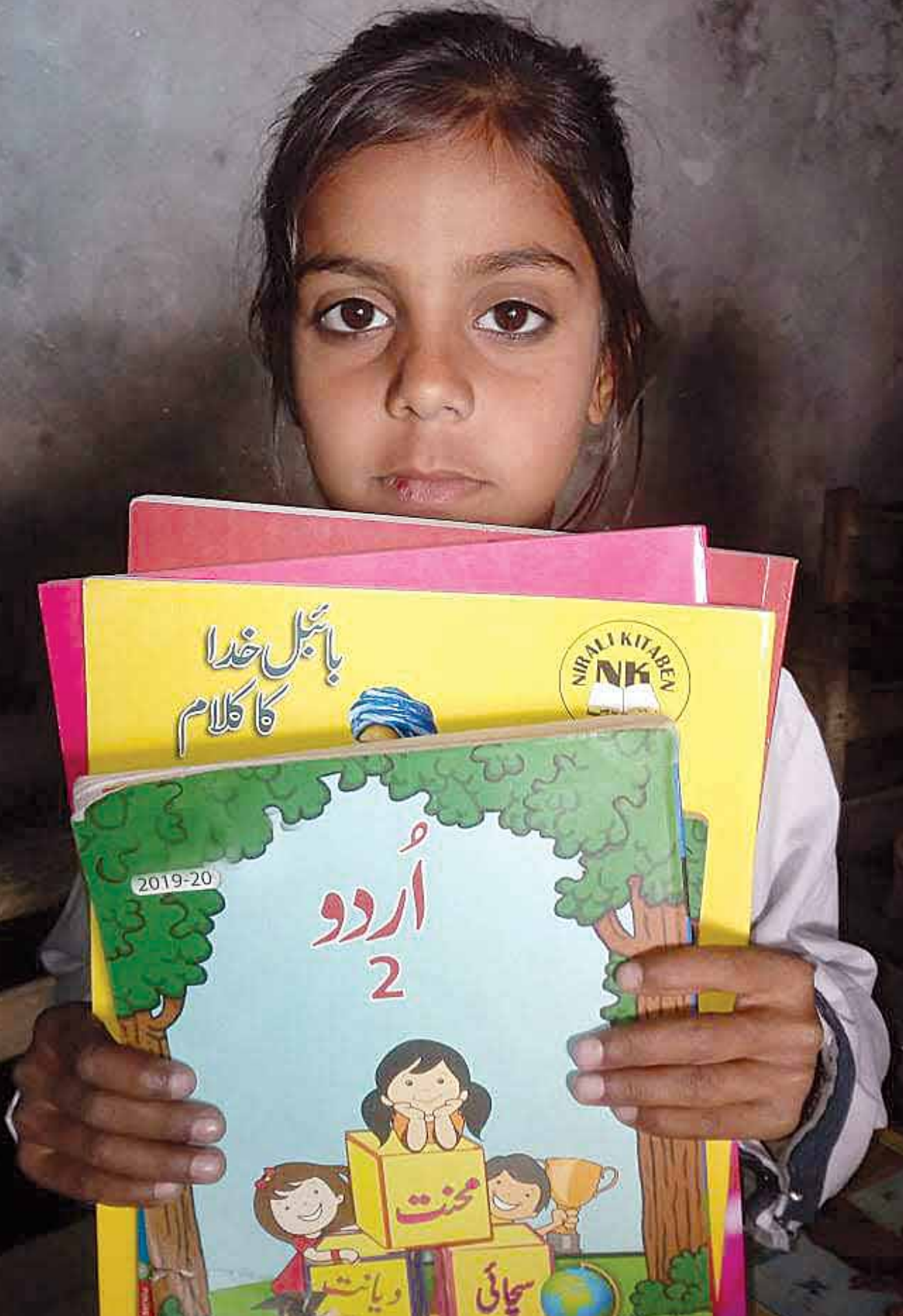


STARFISH
ASIA

giving hope to the children of Pakistan

60 ♦ June 2019

News



A picture speaks louder than a thousand words



Our cover photo — and this one — speak volumes about the aims and dreams of Starfish Asia. Our aim: to enable thousands of Pakistani Christian children to be freed from poverty and despair. Our dream: to watch them develop, grow up and begin to support their families and their community. Can they do this just with Maths, Urdu and Social Studies? *No — we want them to have much more:* confidence and faith as followers of Christ and pride in their identity and their country.

The Right Way School

Both these photos of children (*front page and above*) were taken at the Right Way School in the village of Kalokey. They have received the books they need for the coming school year. The Right Way School is run by a farmer's daughter with a passion for education for her rural Christian community.

We came to know the Right Way School as a result of the Christian Schools Survey. Anser visited the village and met Naseeb. She was the first girl from her village to gain a BA degree. She determined to open a school for local Christian children, appointed two teachers and paid them a small



salary from her own money. The school opened in 2015 with 25 children in a rented house. Naseeb now has more than 100 students — excited to receive books for the coming school year.

Books for the new school year

We face a financial and logistical mountain when we come to the start of the new school year. Generous donors have once again enabled us to provide books to many more schools. Without this help many children would have no books for the coming year. We have also been able to provide books to 43 schools in addition to those we support regularly.



School textbooks given in March 2019



11,720 sets of books
81 schools
58,000 books



Bible Curriculum books for primary classes

8,683 books
115 schools

Ambitious to aim higher

In July the results of this year's Matriculation exams will be declared. This is the leaving exam for Secondary School. Ten years of work goes into taking this exam; it should be the destination for every child entering school. But (as we keep reminding them) *Matric is more than a destination — it is a doorway to the future.* And this is why a small scholarship — an incentive to enable them to aim higher — is so important.

Asif Khursheed

Anser was walking down the road when a stranger approached him. "Last year," he said, "I was appointed as educator in a Government school." He had received a 5-year Starfish Pakistan scholarship in 2011 to complete his Bachelors degree in science — a gift that had changed his life. He recognised Anser when he saw him in the street.



Funding scholarships

Our scholarship fund is helping about 250 young people every month with their further studies.

It is your gifts that make this possible. Thank you.

Elishba Liaquat: a role model

Fifteen years ago Starfish Asia saved the Ananias Home for Blind Girls from closure. Elishba Liaquat was one of the girls in the Home at that time. In 2013 she received a scholarship from Starfish Pakistan for her college studies. In 2017 she gained a BA Honours degree in Urdu Literature with a Gold medal from Kinnaird College for Women. Last year she was appointed as a lecturer in the prestigious Queen Mary College for Women on a very good monthly salary. She is now pursuing her MPhil. She spoke at the Speech Competition to encourage the students to pursue their dreams.



Starfish Pakistan's annual Inter-school Speech Competition

The confidence and skill of Pakistan's Christian young people was on full display in Lahore's Renewal Centre on Saturday 4th May. It was the Day of the annual Speech Competition, arranged by Starfish Pakistan to give 25 schools the opportunity to enjoy a celebration of their abilities. It was a *Day to Remember* for the teachers, students and proud parents who were privileged to attend.

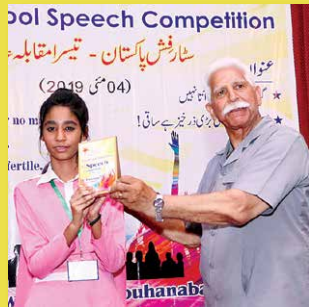
33 students were given three minutes each to give a speech on a set topic — and were judged on their content, style and presentation by a 4-person panel. In between the speeches there were colourful performances of drama and dance from other schools, including a moving drama from the blind girls of Ananias Home and a dance from the CGA young people with special needs.



First Prize Seniors:
Arooj Patris from Ghauri Wisdom School
First Prize Juniors:
Noman Marcus from St. Peters School

"I just came to learn"

Jaweria Alizar, came from New Life School in Bahawalpur. "I cannot compete with the students from the big city schools," she said. "I just came to get experience." However, the judges liked her speech and gave her the Second Prize.



Determined to succeed

Anmol Asif is a student at the Kingdom of Heaven School. This was the third time she gave a speech at the Inter-schools Event. Last year she came fourth — but she was not satisfied with that, so she came again. Determined to win, she gave everything she had in her presentation —

and she took the Third prize. She broke down in disbelief as she came to the stage to receive her Award.



Anmol is a model of commitment, dedication and hard work, an inspiration never to give up. Maybe we will see her again next year...



“ Learning from books is not enough. This Speech Competition has enabled us to develop character and confidence... ”

“ We are very grateful to Starfish Pakistan for giving this beautiful platform to our Christian community, so that we can show the hidden talents of our Christian children. ”



Kashi's "School Services Team"

Three months ago Kashi called together a meeting of teachers from Starfish Pakistan schools in Lahore, and invited them to join her to form a service team for Christian schools.

These are the ones who now form that team: Razaqat, Shazia, Benish and Bushra. Three are full-time teachers and Benish works with Kashi in the office. They meet weekly to plan, share and dream.

They organised the programme and decorated the stage for the recent Speech Competition, which contributed in great measure to its success.

Now they are working on curriculum revision and planning a singing competition. They would also like to pull schools together to arrange a science exhibition for Lahore Christian schools. *Ideas ... ideas ...*



In grateful memory

Ashley Arshad (1950 - 2019)

Twenty years ago Ashley said to Mike, "If you really want to help our community, help us with education." It was advice that led to the founding of Starfish Asia. In 2000 we began to support the Lahore Christian High School led by Ashley and his wife Seema. They became major partners in our work in Pakistan. Ashley was Chairman of the Starfish Pakistan Board for some time and a respected leader of the Christian community. We continued to support the school and his ladies team under the name of the Fellowship of Christ. Ashley had heart problems for many years and sadly died of a heart attack on 20th March. *Pray for his widow, Seema, and family — and for the ongoing work of the Lahore Christian High School.*



Kashif Sabir (1989 - 2019)

Kashif was one of the first students to join the Holy Shepherd School in 2001. After graduation he received a Starfish Pakistan scholarship to study computing, and then became Principal of the Vocational Training Centre. He was launching a new project to make school uniforms when he died, aged 30. *Pray for his widow and young son.*

The Holy Shepherd School *in crisis*

The school building in Karachi known as the Holy Shepherd School was built in 2001. Starfish Asia began support in 2004. We have known for a long time that it was a low-cost and structurally unsound building, and have strengthened it many times with extra pillars and supports.

Now however, during bad weather in January, some of the cracks in the walls widened to the extent that two classrooms had to be vacated, out of fear that the roof might collapse.

We are now launching an Appeal for a new Holy Shepherd School building that is safe and fit for purpose. Today 610 Christian students are dependent on the school.

For more details, write: mike@starfishasia.com

See short video at:

<https://www.facebook.com/StarfishAsia/>



Uraan magazine revived

Kashi writes: "We are asking teachers to share their classroom experiences. We also want children to write some poems or stories for the magazine. We still need final permission from the deputy commissioner to print the magazine which will now be called "NEW Uraan".



www.facebook.com/starfishasia

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