

# Newsletter

## Voice Against Torture

*Voice Against Torture is an interdisciplinary human rights organization that condemns all forms of torture and aims to raise awareness about various human rights issues.*

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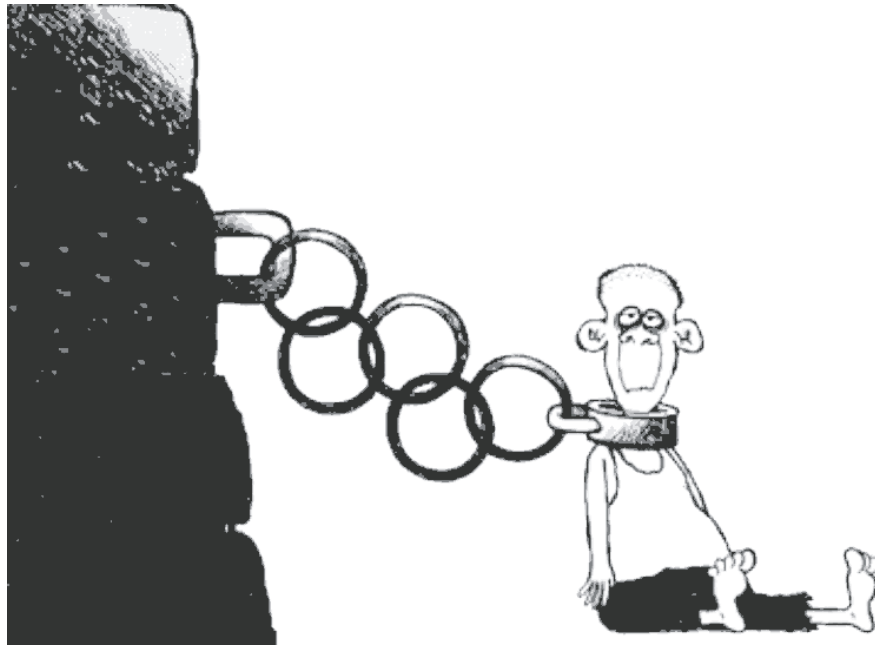
## ABSTRACT

The article '*NWFP through the Centuries*' starts with an outline of the ethogenesis of the Pashtuns that is the Pashto speaking people of the NWFP, a province of Pakistan. During the last two decades of the British rule over India, the Pashtuns united under the charismatic leadership of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and struggled for independent India. On the eve of independence, the Pashtuns, however, opted to join hands with the Muslim League, which aimed at achieving an independent country in the shape of Pakistan. Subsequently, some Pashtuns of the province wanted the province to merge with Afghanistan, a Pashtun majority country.

'*Torture of detainees and prisoners in Sudan*' discusses in general terms the poor human rights situation in Sudan, particularly with reference to detainees and prisoners. The situation worsened when the Sharia laws were introduced in 1983. The new laws allowed corporal punishments and stoning to death. People of Darfur area are the worst sufferers.

The article by Tehmeed Rizvi stresses the need for psychotherapy for the children who suffered during the tsunami of December 2004. According to the writer, the national as well as international aid agencies are not quite cognizant of the gravity of the situation, which carries long-term adverse consequences for the children. The number of traumatized children is 39% of the total figure. Children are in the formative stage of their emotional maturity. Lest the emotional scars of the tragedy should stunt their emotional growth, we should endeavour at providing succor to them at this stage.

Dr. Asya of the *Voice Against Torture* delivered a speech on the occasion of the International Women's Day. The speech is reproduced here. She tells us how the day came to be celebrated and how it signifies the struggle over the globe for the rights of the women. When we see how the women were treated during old times, we are reassured of the efficacy of the women's struggle over the last century.



A few days more, my dear, only a few days.  
We are compelled to draw breath in the shadows of tyranny;  
For a while longer let us bear oppression, and quiver, and weep:  
It is our ancestors' legacy, we are blameless!

*(Faiz Ahmed Faiz)*

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## North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) Through the Centuries

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*Mahboob Mehdi, B.Sc., M.B.B.S.  
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**P**ushtuns are the Pushto speaking people living over greater part of the North-West Frontier Province, sizeable parts of Baluchistan province and Afghanistan. Torture prevails everywhere in Pashtun society. The despotic character of socio-economic fabric uses torture as an essential instrument for its survival and for snuffing out any dissent. Starting from family on to schools, streets, work places, interrogation centres, police stations and prisons etc, our daily lives are replete with torture. The history of the Pushtun customs is as old as the history of the Pashtuns. Formation of the union of largely East-Iranian tribes, which became the initial ethnic stratum of the Pashtun ethnogenesis, dates from the middle of the first millennium AD and is connected with the dissolution of the Epthalite (White Huns) confederacy. In the areas north of the Hindu Kush some of the tribes of this confederacy participated in the formation of the nationalities that inhabit Middle Asia today, and, among other tribes, in the formation of the Turkmen and Uzbek nationalities. This is attested, among other things, in the records of genonimy which indicate that among the Turkmen and Uzbeks (as well as among the Lokai) there occurs the ethnonym Abdal descending from the name of an Epthalite tribal union (Abdals, Abdel). South of the Hindukush, another part of the Epthalite tribes lost their privileged status as the military stronghold of the ruling dynasty and was ousted into the thinly peopled areas of the Sulaiman Mountains, areas where there were not enough water supplies and grazing grounds. There they became a tribal union, which formed the basis of the Pashtuns ethnogenesis.

It is a large area, about 252,000 square miles, spanning parts of modern-day Pakistan and Afghanistan, dominated at the centre by the Hindukush Mountains. It is the gateway to oil-rich Central Asia now. Its four main cities are Herat in the west, which is also the gateway to Iran, Kandahar in the southeast linking it easily

to Quetta, and Mazar-e-Sharif in the north with roads to Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Kabul lies in the east at the western end of the road to the other great Pashtun city Peshawar, which runs through Jalalabad and the Khyber Pass. [11,14]

**NWFP & The British Rule in India:** The North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) has been a province of British India till 1947 when it became a province of Pakistan. It is a Pashtun-majority province. During the British rule, the political scene, changed almost overnight with the emergence in 1929 of a remarkable man, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who blended, like Gandhi, a charismatic leadership with a genius for organisation. He brought his Pathan (or, to be more precise, Pashtun) followers into the forefront of Gandhi's non-violent Satyagraha struggles, which astonished friends and foes alike. His Khudai Khidmatgars (servants of God) set an example of discipline and sacrifice, which put the other Indian provinces in the shade.

The outbreak of World War II in 1939 led to the resignation of the Congress ministers of British India leading to a clash with the British Raj and the quit India movement. The Congress and the Khudai Khidmatgars were banned and Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his followers again imprisoned. The field thus became clear during the wartime for the growth of the Muslim League. It was alleged that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was propagating non-violence to emasculate the brave and war-like people of the Frontier and the Congress was trying to bring about a Hindu Raj in collusion with the Axis powers. [15]

**NWFP & Pakistan:** Abdul Ghaffar Khan could have migrated to the newly liberated India but chose to stand by his people. He attended the first session of the Pakistan Parliament at Karachi in February 1948, and took the oath of allegiance to Pakistan. In June he was arrested

and charged with sedition and sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment. Between 1948 and 1965 he spent 15 years in Pakistani jails. In his autobiography he recounted the savage repression to which his followers were subjected. He contrasted the attitude of the government of Pakistan with that of the British rulers before 1947, "The British had never looted our homes, never stopped us from holding public meetings or publishing newspapers, but the Islamic government of Pakistan did both. The British never treated Pashtun women disrespectfully but the Islamic government of Pakistan did."

The Labour Party of Pakistan (LPP) on November 21, 2004 formally launched its Pashtoonkhwa (NWFP) chapter and vowed to achieve self-determination. The party's provincial congress, presided over by Salim Raz, chief of Aalmi Pukhtoon Congress, was organised at a local hotel in Peshawar. The LPP secretary-general, Tariq Farooq, along with Salim Raz and Farooq Ahmed Pohan introduced the discussions in the inaugural session. The first session on political discussions was followed by a session on organisation and party building. The congress was concluded with the election of office bearers and a 15-member provincial council. Seventy delegates and observers attended the congress from six NWFP districts. A 15-member delegation from LPP Punjab, observers from National Trade Union Federation and Afghanistan also participated. The congress adopted a document outlining its future line of action. It demanded immediate return of the army to barracks, implementation of agricultural reforms, end of the "decisive role" of the World Bank and IMF in the country's economic and political affairs and restoration of real democracy. The launch of the LPP Pakhtoonkhwa chapter, according to press reports, has revived the dead issue of the Afghan revolution and the Pukhtoon national question in the province. [15,18]

**Problem in FATA:** Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) are geographically linked to the NWFP and constitute seven tribal agencies, namely: South Waziristan, North Waziristan, Kurram, Orakzai, Khyber, Mohmand and Bajaur.

According to tribal sources, the ground troops were closing in on the militants' positions after having pounded the area with artillery and mortar guns and from the air with helicopter gunships. In FATA, house-to-house search was being carried out to arrest suspects, flush out militants and seize weapons. Forty men arrested from the villages were brought to Wana in the presence of a group of foreign and Pakistani journalists who were flown from Islamabad. Sometimes the troops hit wrong targets, like a wagon that was reportedly transporting a family from Zha Ghundai to a safer place. A young, wailing lady sitting beside the charred remains of the vehicle told reporters that 13 members of her family were killed in the attack. They included two children aged three and five months. More than a dozen homes were hit in other village. Two Afghan refugees walking to safety in Karikot village were also fired at from a helicopter and injured. A woman walking with them escaped unhurt. Tribesmen complained that several vehicles carrying civilians had also been attacked on suspicion that militants were trying to escape. Hundreds of families were seen walking on foot to safety due to non-availability of vehicles or on account of their inability to pay the high fare demanded by the drivers.

Those who knew Malik Bakhan said he was against religious extremism and was critical of the tribal militants who had turned the Wana valley and rest of South Waziristan into a battleground. However, Malik Bakhan also wanted to uphold the honour and self-respect of the tribal people and was, therefore, in favour of a negotiated political solution of the conflict in South Waziristan. [25,26]

**End of Durand Line:** The British presented a signed document to the then King of Afghanistan Abdul Rahman Khan in 1893. The document outlined the borders between Afghanistan and British India. This document was in English and Abdul Rahman Khan did not understand the language, therefore, leading to the suspicious nature of the document. Amir Abdul Rahman Khan never signed the Dari or Pashto translation of this document or agreement. That obviously suggests that he never agreed to the stipulations contained therein. Researchers have provided arguments to the contrary that this document was signed and has expired. In either scenario, the Durand line does not exist today.

The line devised by the British was worked by a British colonial officer Durand and thus became known as the Durand Line. The document was to be ratified by the legislative body in Afghanistan. It was to remain in force for one hundred years. It has not been revived on the deadline, that is 1993. Pakistan government has been keen on the revival of the sanctification of the Durand Line. Legally the Durand Line remains as an imagined line dividing families on both sides. It has never been demarcated either, especially from Khyber Agency to Chitral in the north. This artificial and imaginary line has the potential to become an area of conflict between Pakistan and Afghanistan. A visit by an armed convoy of Taleban officials, during the period of Taleban government in Afghanistan, to Mohmand Agency touched many nerves in Pakistan and left it in shock. Friday Times of Pakistan reported the incident. [3]

**Repressive Measures by the Government**  
British government found it difficult to establish its writ over the freedom loving people of the province. As a halfway measure, the government allowed the existence of a tribal belt along the Afghan border. Here, there were

no police and no law courts. The Pashtuns lived according to their tribal customs. When the government considered itself wronged by the tribal people, it resorted to punitive military expeditions in the area, killing the people and demolishing their houses. At times aerial bombardment of the area was taken in hand. Military action by the present government in South Waziristan, in particular, on the pretext of flushing out militants reminds us of the British period of repressive military actions.

**Nature of Torture:** The methods of torture in NWFP. The methods of torture can be classified broadly into physical and psychological.

Physical torture comprises one or more of the following:

- 1 Beating and shoving.
- 2 Squeezing pressure technique
- 3 Beating with iron, leather strap etc.
- 4 Insertion of objects in bodily orifices.
- 5 Suffocation: Strangulation, obstruction of air (including nose / mouth), near drowning.
- 6 Exposure to chemicals: Corrosive, poisons, drugs.
- 7 Exposure to electricity.
- 8 Exposure to extremes of heat and cold.
- 9 Bright light torture.
- 10 Nose torture.
- 11 Sexual torture: Rape, homosexual assault.
- 12 Exposure to a place infested with insects etc.
- 13 Flogging.

Psychological methods of torture commonly employed are:

- 1 Humiliation by abuses.
- 2 Humiliation by stripping naked.
- 3 Imposition of blindfold / hood.
- 4 Solitary confinement.
- 5 Restricting movement by confinement in a small cell.

- 6 Confinement in a totally dark cell.
- 7 Confinement in a cell with cockroaches, rats, lizards, etc.
- 8 Sleep deprivation.
- 9 Restricting access to proper toilet facilities.
- 10 Restricting facilities for feminine hygiene during periods.
- 11 Restricting facilities for washing clothes etc.
- 12 Restricting access to food placed near by.
- 13 Restricting meetings with relatives and other visitors.
- 14 Restricting movement through fetters etc.
- 15 Restricting access to printed materials like newspapers and books.
- 16 Restricting access to electronic media like radio and television.
- 17 Restricting the practice of one's own belief like religion.
- 18 Compulsory hospitalisation in a psychiatric institution.
- 19 Witnessing others being tortured.
- 20 Threats of torture to self / relatives / friends.
- 21 Forcing to sign confession.
- 22 Sham execution.
- 23 Pharmacological torture.

**Effects of Torture:** Although feudal Pushto culture is not immune to practising this ghastly method on its 'rebels', the state happens to be the main practitioner and the perpetrator. Thousands of individuals and families suffer from the effects of torture in NWFP.

Scars of torture remain on the mind and body of victims long after the procedure has ended. The personality of the individuals is destroyed, which in fact is the basic purpose of inflicting torture. After-effects of torture include anxiety, depression, fear, irritability, introversion, lethargy, migraine attacks, disturbed memory, loss of concentration, headaches, frequency of epileptic fits, visual problems, psoriasis, and sexual disorders etc. Torture affects not only the individual but also other members of the family,

and ultimately the whole social fabric is permeated with fear and terror.

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## Consequences for the Children of Tsunami Disaster and Essential Psychotherapy

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*Tehmeed Razvi*

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The Tsunami of December 2004 played havoc with 13 nations, shook and shocked the world and wrecked the lives of generations of families. It left thousands of children orphaned, vulnerable and open to exploitation in countries where the social situation was already far from good. The world has united to provide immediate relief and aid of basic essentials to the victims of the earthquake. Providing psycho-social help to the hapless child survivors of this tragedy is being treated with less urgency than is necessary despite the long term consequences being inevitably, desperately bleak.

This article takes a look at some of those social problems and psychological consequences that children will face as an immediate result of this catastrophe as well as how this is likely to affect their future mental health. It also explores various psychotherapeutic interventions, which are required for the well being of these adults of tomorrow. Existing intervention level is miniscule when we consider the enormity of the tragedy.

UNICEF estimates the number of people affected by this catastrophe, including the children who have been orphaned, injured or traumatized as close to 1.5 million across the region with approximately 39% of them being children. In Asia already there has been unrest, civil war, rampant population growth, flourishing sex tourism due to porous frontiers and poverty. The situation will no doubt become exacerbated, with even more people now left homeless, orphaned, bereft of proper

sanitation, almost non-existent health facilities, a collapse in communication systems, lack of employment, disintegrated law and order besides crumbling education system. Such circumstances provide an unmitigated breeding ground for crimes such as trafficking, prostitution, slavery, rape and sexual abuse. Many people who lost their own children are tempted to take another persons child to fulfil their parental needs. Also, children willingly give and sell their bodies in return for basic essentials in order to survive. With swarms of people having been killed or else separated from family members, there are negligible or no community networks and support available nor are there extended families available to care for the separated or orphaned children of this calamity. For the children left behind, despite there being many families abroad who are willing to adopt, asylum laws and legislation are hindering the matter. This is partly due to a lack of registration of who these children are and whether their parents are really dead or still missing.

The baffled children feel shocked and perplexed at seeing personal possessions going adrift and washed away. Sharing refugee camps with strangers leaves them with an overwhelming awareness that they are alone, without support or comfort, abandoned and often feeling frozen and numb. The environment is chaotic and they witness situations where adults are also stressed, issues of food, water or access to healthcare may be cause for disagreements and quarrels. For very young children who are exposed to these kinds of scenes on a daily basis they may feel immense despair as well as may be overwhelmed with fear because they see adults alarmed and panic-stricken. For some, seeing adults mourning the loss of loved ones may

### *TIDES*

*Threatening tides that drag my soul away  
Cannot begin to comprehend such loss  
Can I go on to live and breathe each day  
When life consumed by grief is tempest toss'd?*

*Fierce waves contort my terror stricken face  
Lost life revived, resuscitate the grave  
My soul floats adrift; lost in this dark place  
Not even hope from death can virtue save.*

*I sail on black seas of disheartenment  
Tidal waves of melancholy flood my soul  
Haunting shadows of golden days my torment  
All love of living lost to this black hole.*

*Guided by the starry sky I sail upon the sea  
I drown in tears of life half-lived; a life of misery.*

*Carolyn Longman*

compound their own loss of family members leaving them feeling unstable and vulnerable. Children will often have difficulty in concentrating, be absent-minded and indecisive. In quite young children their imagination magnifies their irrational thoughts and fears portrayed through hallucinations and nightmares. Children will usually suffer immense fear and anxiety that: they will lose remaining members of the family, will be left alone, that they will get hurt or killed, that this kind of event will happen again. They are no longer left with meaningful kind of comfort and support. Routine of day to day life is disrupted - as they are no longer having regular meals or going to school.

When disasters such as this tsunami strike so very suddenly people are left shaken and in shock which is a normal reaction but this can prove to be too taxing for young children in particular who do not have the knowledge or maturity to comprehend the loss of a parent. It can be extremely frightening as well as confusing leaving them bewildered and dumbfounded. When trauma of separation from parental loss occurs *"they create an inescapable paradox within which the youngster must seek vital comfort from the very source of his distress"* (Perry 1995a; Solomon and George 1999a; van der Kolk 1996d)

Inability to save other members of the family, even watching parents die, can lead to intense shock as well as immense feelings of hopelessness and guilt. Some children are left feeling insecure and often ashamed of their self; their self-image and self-esteem are damaged. For children, the loss of a parent can be the biggest loss to deal with. Even when babies are separated from the mother they display anxiety behaviour albeit different to that of older children. According to Bowlby, children's self and primary attachment figures are like Internal Working Models which may also be called 'road

maps' that provide the child with an internal framework of his world which is experience-dependent. Traumatization from loss of a parent/attachment figure leads to *"synaptic pruning"* (McEwen 2000; Schore 2001a, 2002). The child has ineffective self-regulatory capacities, weakened empathic attunement and poor cognitive functioning. There is also a lack of coherent sense of self both mentally and behaviourally.

Children suffering from emotional trauma can display symptoms similar to those of adults yet, also very different to them. Young children do not normally have the maturity from previous life experiences nor do they have deep religious beliefs like many adults have in Asia that tend to assist in the healing process. They may feel anger, frustration, sadness, tearfulness, emotional numbness, feeling empty, clinginess and regression - this may vary from time to time or all be felt at the same time. Children can become disorientated, may even suffer from memory loss or dissociate from the loss or tragedy as it is too overwhelming to comprehend at a conscious level. Because of this, their fears may transpire to cause panic attacks and anxiety/obsessive disorders. Baalberine 2001; Schore 1994; Siegel 1999 state that *"the traumatic experience is not stored within narrative memory but instead stored as sensori-motor and sensori affective data, or implicit procedural memories"* which Le Doux, Romanski and Xagoraris, 1991 state *"are highly immune to modification"*.

Some children can become emotionally and physically withdrawn, distrusting of everything and everyone, or else getting themselves into conflicts with frequent tantrums and crying. When there is no adult to console or comfort them, this contributes to feelings of insecurity and emotional withdrawal for fear of further rejection and abandonment. Likelihood is that if the child was already suffering from a traumatic

situation prior to the disaster he is likely to find another grievance difficult to overcome.

In severe cases youngsters may suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder when the grief continues for a prolonged period of time as well as if the trauma has been too severe. Studies show that as many as one in three disaster survivors have severe stress symptoms that put them at risk for a lasting post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Symptoms may include:

- Dissociation (depersonalization, de-realization, fugue, amnesia)
- Intrusive re-experiencing (terrifying memories, nightmares, or flashbacks)
- Extreme emotional numbing (completely unable to feel emotion, as if empty)
- Extreme attempts to avoid disturbing memories (such as through substance use)
- Hyper-arousal (panic attacks, rage, extreme irritability, intense agitation)
- Severe anxiety (debilitating worry, extreme helplessness, compulsions or obsessions)
- Severe depression (loss of the ability to feel hope, pleasure, or interest; feeling worthless)

Symptoms may last from days to weeks usually. What children think is variable dependent on their age and maturity level, previous losses and quality of relationships that they already held. Grief must take its natural course and even though for some recovery may be sooner than others the process remains the same. Even though there are many theories about the stages of grief; they seem to follow similar patterns. According to Kubler-Ross, E, there are six stages of grieving before one reaches the transitional stage:

- Numbness/Shock
- Denial
- Anger
- Depression

- Letting Go
- Test Reality
- Transitional Phase

It may be that a child becomes 'stuck' during one of the phases if he does not have the mental resources to move on or he/she may well keep going back and forth from one stage to the next.

Physically, youngsters may also be in a poor state of health due to lack of medical facilities and absence of medical professionals to provide the professional care required. They will be suffering from a number of water borne diseases such as typhoid and food borne diseases such as dysentery cholera and hepatitis. Children are especially vulnerable to diarrhea and cholera. Unfortunately only to intensify the problem of physical health when children are under stress they are even more likely to become ill and because their immune systems are at a low, they will contract diseases a lot more easily. Even if not suffering from physical ill health in the beginning, they will suffer psychosomatically with complaints such as, headache, fatigue, nausea, various aches and pains in the body, nightmares, insomnia, bedwetting, defecating and smearing, hair pulling, thumb sucking, nail biting, body tics and jerks.

Psychotherapy can be very beneficial in dealing with trauma and grief. It offers a variety of interventions - play therapy in particular can be appropriate for the children of this tragic and crippling convulsion. It is through play that their minds can be engaged at their level to deal with difficult or underlying deep feelings; this is the path to their minds and the window to their hearts.

Therapy with children can consist of various exercises including drawing, drama, modelling, sensory experiences, enactment and puppetry

and story telling. These activities enable and encourage thought processes as well as expression of feelings that are difficult for children to vocalize and channel in a healthy manner. It can be equally effective to use with a child who speaks a foreign language compared to that of the therapist and is also beneficial for children who do not have the linguistic maturity or even those who have become mute due to the shock of witnessing the disaster. Therapy for the child is about remembering and processing information to regain a part of themselves that they have lost, renewing and strengthening them. Making contact through the senses and intellect helps regain a sense and awareness of the inner self and the people in relation to him/her. Play therapy is a creative way to the evolving of experiences and feelings for the child.

A skilled therapist will allow the child to lead the therapy and *enable* the child to explore his feelings at his own pace. The therapist must not try to prematurely interpret or read into the drawings, his/her role is to *facilitate and empathize and be patient* to allow a gentle merging of disjointed and fragmented feelings, become more aware of the self, to make sense of relationships and the world around them. How the child approaches the task and handles it are all relevant, similar to looking through a window to the child's mind.

**Drawing:** Through free drawing children create a world of their own; it is not about creating pictures but may just consist of various colours, textures, lines, curves and shapes. It is about putting feelings to paper. The drawings may just consist of colours and curves or fantasy pictures that are representative of the self or others. Scribbling is often used with pre-adolescent children who are non-threatening and can free the children of feelings that are constricting. Squiggles and doodles are also used and this is where a random mark is made

on a paper usually with a black marker and the child then tells a story or incident or describes a feeling associated with it.

**Finger/Hand/Foot Painting and Painting** also has the benefits of drawings and can be used similarly except that this is a more tactile activity and therefore has kinaesthetic qualities.

**Modelling:** There are many materials that can be used in modelling including clay, play-dough, ooblik (corn flour & water), water, wet sand, woodwork and collage. Oaklander 1988 says: *"It promotes the working through of the most primal of internal processes. It affords an opportunity for flow between itself and the user; it is easy to become one with the clay".*

Modelling can give a sense of control to the child who is feeling insecure, angry and fearful - which is commonplace in children following natural disasters. Children who have become emotionally withdrawn or 'numb' may find this very lucrative as the experience is very tactile and brings the child into awareness of his senses. There are no right and wrong ways of using it, manipulatively it is variable, and it is not necessary to have a finished product. It can be particularly beneficial to children who are parentless and have a low self-esteem as well as to those with poor hand-eye coordination as is often the case in young, angry or anxious children.

**Puppetry and Story-Telling:** Puppetry is often used to symbolize people and help extend the thought of stories and deal with difficult emotions that are otherwise difficult to display or communicate verbally. Puppets and other props can be used to stimulate feelings and serve as buffers between recognition of difficult innermost feelings and expression of them. Stories, poems and writings are all means of self-expression. In places like Asia there may be many children who do not have the basic

written skills or verbal felicity to write and, therefore, props can assist expression in a very non-threatening and non-embarrassing way.

**Sensory Experiences:** Children's first experiences are through their senses right from the time they are in the womb. If the senses discontinue to be utilized or one of the senses has suffered a shock the child is likely to become less and less self-aware. In order to function healthily people need to make use not just of their mind but their senses too. *"It is through these modalities that we experience ourselves and make contact with the world"*. In order for the children of disaster-struck lives to understand and rationalize the events and situation they also need to become aware of how they are feeling. Different experiences are given to the child through the senses including massage, relaxation/imagery therapy, and music therapy, all of which stimulate the senses. According to Rudolph Dreikurs in reference to music,

*"It stimulates participation, permits an increase in a child's attention span and raises frustration tolerance...external and internal tensions disappear"*. This is particularly useful for children who cannot speak or do not speak due to the shock they have suffered.

**Enactment:** This can involve all kinds of movement games, drama and role-play that allow for suppressed emotions to emerge. Again it allows for self-awareness but it also gives permission to act out difficult and negative feelings without being judged. Children can play the part of themselves or others and initiate communication with someone that they still need to convey something to. For example, a child who has lost his mother in the earthquake may wish to have been able to say goodbye and role-play can give this opportunity. Not being able to say goodbye is likened to 'unfinished business' - this may serve as a stumbling block in the road to recovery.

Therapy can provide essential power to children to heal from this disaster. Recreational areas, religious, cultural, education facilities and rehabilitation centres and further security measures are also necessary segments to aid recovery and give protection to these wounded children. In close-knit communities usually a form of counseling is provided within that circle but in such extreme circumstances as this devastating calamity, family and community support is sparse. The destruction of communities, extinction of families and therefore lack of support is all the more reason why these children are in need of therapeutic intervention.

Psychiatric and psychotherapeutic aid should be readily available, perhaps even through mobile clinics. These are available for vaccinations etc; trauma management must be given as much importance as a preventative measure to avoid further calamities. Assistance is required from individuals, social workers and medical professionals to pacify their crying hearts, extinguish the fear and fiery minds, restore a portion of their childhood and soothe their pains before the wounds have become too deep to heal.

Whilst it is recognized that physical health and practical aid is of utmost importance for survival, mental health aid is pivotal in order to avoid irreparable damage. It is a frightening thought, that these very children that we as adults have a duty to protect, may well become dysfunctional, vulnerable, and promiscuous or even depressed adults and parents.

Children cannot be protected from every kind of pain or trauma, and not all can be assuaged. If childhood is fragmented, distorted and insecure, their cognition, behaviour, emotion and social skills are all blemished and disfigured. A warm, secure and comforting childhood is an essential component of the foundation for children's development and this is what will build strong walls for a home.

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## WTO Regime and National Food Safety and Quality Imperatives: A Consumer Rights' perspective

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*Dr. Wajid H. Pirzada*

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**T**he Uruguay Round (UR) of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, which ended in 1994, established WTO to replace the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT).

The UR negotiations were the first to deal with the liberalization of trade in agricultural products, an area earlier excluded from previous rounds of negotiations. The UR also included negotiation on reducing non-tariff barriers to international trade in agricultural products and led to two binding agreements:

1. The Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement).
2. The Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT Agreement).

Both these Agreements recognize the standards, guidelines and other recommendations of Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) as the specially identified baseline for consumer protection. This paper, therefore, seeks to address the issues related to SPS and TBT, including CAC standards and their implications for Pakistan, as these agreements are to be applied by all WTO members including Pakistan.

These are even applicable to countries that are not WTO members. With this background, we would like to discuss CAC standards and their application in relation to SPS and TBT Agreements.

### **The SPS Agreement**

The SPS Agreement confirms the right of WTO member countries to apply measures necessary to protect human, animal and plant life and health.

Notwithstanding the need for application of national measures to protect human, animal

and plant life and health, the national SPS measures had become, by design or accident, effective trade-barriers.

And as the UR negotiations address the issue of non-tariff barriers, as such, the SPS Agreement sets new rules to ensure that national SPS measures are consistent with obligations prohibiting arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination on trade between countries. The SPS Agreement requires that, with regard to food safety measures, WTO Members base (as discussed above) their national measures as adopted by FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission where they exist. Furthermore, the SPS Agreement calls for programme of harmonization of national requirements based on CAC standards. This work is guided by WTO Committee on SPS measures, to which the representative of CAC, the International Office of Epizootics (OIE) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) are invited.

The SPS covers all food-hygiene measures and food-safety measures, such as control of veterinary residues, pesticide residues and other chemical/food additives used in food production.

### **The TBT Agreement**

The objective of the Agreement is to prevent the Member countries using national or regional technical requirements, or standards in general, as unjustified technical barriers to trade. The TBT Agreement basically provides that all technical standards and regulations must have a legitimate purpose and that the impact or cost of implementing the standard must be proportional to the purpose of the standard. It provides that:

If there are two or more ways to achieving the same objectives, the least trade-restrictive alternative should be followed.

The TBT Agreement places emphasis on

international standards, the WTO Members being obliged to use international standards, or parts of them, except where the international standards would be ineffective or inappropriate in the national situation.

The Agreement covers standards relating to all types of products, including industrial and agricultural products, with the exception of aspects of food-standards relating to SPS measures, such as products contents-requirements quality packaging and labeling, etc. this Agreement includes numerous measures to protect the consumers against deception and economic fraud.

#### **The CAC**

In the aforementioned context, the CAC standards, guidelines and other recommendations take on unprecedented prominence and importance, with respect to both consumer protection and international food-trade. It is therefore, advisable to understand both the CAC's working and its standards, guidelines and recommendations in greater detail. The CAC is an intergovernmental body established by FAO in 1961. Since 1962, it has been responsible for implementing the joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, whose primary aims are to protect the health of consumers and to ensure fair practices in the food trade. It has 158 Member Governments, as on August 31, 1997.

#### **The Codex**

The Codex Alimentarius (a Latin word meaning "Food Code" or "Food Law") is a collection of food standards, codes of practice and other recommendations, presented in a uniform way. Codex standards, guidelines and other recommendations ensure that food products are not harmful to consumers and can be traded safely between countries or, in world; it facilitates international trade in food.

As discussed above the food safety standards are defined in SPS Agreement as those relating to food additives, microbiological norms, veterinary drugs and pesticide residues, contaminants, hygienic practices. Codex food-safety standards are to be used by WTO as the reference point for the WTO in this area.

There are more than 300 codex standards, guidelines and other recommendations relating to food, whether processed, semi-processed or raw, quality, composition and safety. It evaluates the safety of over 760 food-additives and contaminants, setting more than 2,500 maximum limits for pesticide-residues and more than 150 veterinary drug residues. In addition, CAC has established a number of guideline levels for a number of environmental and industrial contaminants in food. The first Codex was published in 1981 and the 2nd in 1998. The 2nd edition is now being revised and updated to take into account decisions made by the 21st session of CAC, July 1995.

The standards and maximum limits for residues of pesticides and veterinary drugs in food and feeds: IT has taken a number of years to develop the Codex. Maximum Residue Limits (MRL) and Extraneous Maximum Residue Limits (EMRL) are generally consistent with the recommendations of the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR). The JMPR is composed of independent scientists who serve in their individual capacities as experts, but not as representatives of their governments or organizations. The standards and maximum limits for residues of pesticides and veterinary drugs in foods and feeds, accompanied by an appropriate communication, are sent for action to Ministries of Agriculture or Ministries of Foreign Affairs, as appropriate, of Member Nations of FAO and the Ministries of Health of Member States of WHO. These standards and maximum limits of CAC for residues of pesticides and veterinary drugs in food and feeds are the product of a wide



measure of co-operation and international agreements. Moreover, they are compatible with the norms considered by FAO and WHO as best guaranteeing the protection of the health of consumers as well as facilitation of international trade in food. It, therefore, would be in the fitness of things that Pakistan builds its capacity and ability to not only apply the international standards adopted by CAC, but also harmonize its national standards with international standards, which shall help facilitate her trade with the countries of the region and globally.

#### **The Basis for Establishment of Codex MRL:**

The codex MRLs are established only where there is supporting evidence concerning the safety/danger to humans of the resulting residues, as determined by the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues and this implies that Codex MRLs represent residue-levels, which are toxicologically acceptable. The Codex MRLs are recommended on the basis of appropriate residue data obtained mainly from supervised trials. The residue-data, thus obtained, reflect registered or approved usage of the pesticide in accordance with "good agricultural practices".

As Codex MRLs cover a wide spectrum of use-patterns and "good agricultural practices" and need to reflect residue-levels closely following harvest, they may occasionally be higher than the levels of residues found in national surveillance programmes.

#### **Basis for Establishment of Codex EMRLs:**

The MRL refers to residues of compounds, which were used as pesticides, arising from environmental contamination (including former use of agricultural pesticides or uses of these compounds for other than agricultural uses). These residues are treated as contaminants. Codex MRLs need to cover widely varying

residue-levels in food, reflecting differing situations in respect of contamination of food by environmental and persistent pesticide-residues. For this reason, Codex EMRLs cannot always reflect strictly the actual situation of residue existing in given countries or regions. Codex EMRLs, therefore, represent acceptable residue levels, which are intended to facilitate trade in food while protecting the health of the consumers. They are established only when there is supporting evidence concerning the safety to humans of the residues, as determined by the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues.

#### **Codex MRLs/EMRLs and Consumer Protection - Determination of Total Daily Intake of Pesticide Residues:**

The primary purpose of setting maximum limits for pesticide-residues in or on food and (in some cases) in animal feeds, is to protect the health of consumers. Codex MRLs and EMRLs serve that purpose, as they help to ensure that the maximum amount of pesticide applied to food is consistent with real pest-control needs. Codex MRLs are based on residue-data from supervised trials and not directly derived from Acceptable Daily Intakes (ADIs). Which are quantitative expressions of acceptable daily amounts of residues which persons may ingest on a long-term basis and which are established on the basis of appropriate toxicological data, mainly from animal studies.

#### **Codex MRLs/EMRLs for Milk and Milk Products:**

Codex MRLs/EMRLs for fat-soluble pesticide-residues in milk and milk products are expressed on whole-product basis.

For a "milk product" with a fat-content less than 2%, the MRL applied should be half those specified for milk. The MRL for "Milk products"

with a fat-content of 2% or more should be 2.5 times the MRL specified for milk, expressed on a fat basis.

#### **Codex MRLs/EMRLs for Processed Foods:**

As a rule, Codex MRLs and EMRLs are established for new agricultural commodities. However, where it is considered necessary of consumer protection and facilitation of trade, MRLs and EMRLs are established for certain processed foods on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration information on the influence of processing on residues.

#### **Residue Data and the Developing Countries:**

JMPR in its meeting held at FAO, Rome recognized the limitation in expertise and resources prevailing in many developing countries. It concluded that, within a relatively short period of time, reliable residue data could be generated in several developing countries having appropriate laboratory capacity, by providing assistance for the introduction and implementation of quality control and quality-assurance principles in their laboratories, and for execution of supervised field trials, in compliance with Good Laboratory Practices (GLP).

The major part of this assistance would be related to the transfer of accumulated knowledge and experience, and interested countries should explore their possibilities of obtaining the necessary support. For theoretical and practical training in this subject, the JMPR recommended the use of recently established FAO/IAEA Training and Reference Center, for which FAO and other organizations could provide the necessary assistance, if interested countries so request.

#### **Veterinary Residues:**

Veterinary residues that remain in the tissues of food-producing animals, after treatment, create on the major problems associated with the veterinary use of such drugs. This problem stems from the difficulty of defining "safe concentration" of the agents in meat or milk for human consumption, and is compounded by the increasing sensitivity of detecting methods. In addition, milk for processing to cheese and similar products must not contain drugs that inhibit bacterial growth.

#### **Public Health/Consumer Protection:**

The human-health risks from the ingestion of small quantities of antibiotics are hypersensitivity reactions, other toxic effects, and possible effects on microflora. According to a report, even in a developed country like USA, it was estimated that 14% of all meat and poultry samples, tested over a two years period, contained illegal and potentially harmful residues of pesticides and other drugs.

About 4% to 7% of the human population is hypersensitive to penicillin; about 0.04% develops acute anaphylactic shock when the drug is encountered and there are reports of hypersensitivity reactions after the ingestion of penicillin-contaminated milk. Nondose-related aplastic anemia caused by chloramphenicol in humans is another potential hazard of antibiotic contamination.

The effect of low concentration of antibiotic ingested in contaminated meat on the resistance and composition of human microbial flora is probably negligible. Whereas certain antibiotics are degraded by freezing, cooking or storage, such degradation is not completed, and for some antibiotics it is minimal. The toxic effects of antibiotics it is minimal. The toxic

effects of antibiotics in humans increases with the concentration and duration of exposure; the small quantities likely to be consumed by the average person over the course of a year, as a result of ingesting animal products contaminated with antibiotics, are unlikely to have any significance, with rare possible exceptions, as discussed above, of penicillin and chloramphenicol. Nevertheless, it is difficult to define these risks because antibiotics and their degradation products may have carcinogenic, mutagenic and teratogenic, or other effects.

#### **Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF):**

In response to a growing concern about mass-medication of food producing animals and the implications, as discussed above, for human health and international trade, a Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on Residues of Veterinary Drugs was convened in Rome, in Nov. 1984. This led to establishment of a specialized CCRVDF, which at its first session in Washington, DC, in November 1986, made a number of recommendations and suggestions for consideration by Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JEFCA). Consequently, the 32nd JEFCA meeting was entirely devoted to the evaluation of residues of veterinary drugs in foods; subsequently a series of nine meetings of JEFCA were also dedicated to evaluation of veterinary drugs.

#### **Methods of Detecting Veterinary Residues:**

The methods used for detection of antibiotic residues are mainly microbiologic, with confirmation by electrophoresis and chemical methods (mainly high-performance liquid chromatography). Such methods employ sensitive bacterial strains (e.g. *Sarcina lutea*, *Bacillus subtilis*). The 10th session of the CCRVDF held in San Jose, Costa Rica (Oct-

Nov, 1996) revised the priority list of veterinary drugs requiring evaluation. The drugs evaluated during the 48th meeting of JEFCA included these compounds except Gentamicin. The evaluation appraisals take into account the results of pharmacokinetics, metabolism and tissue residue depletion studies.

**Coping Strategies:** Coping strategies will rely heavily on judicious and rational use of agricultural pesticides and veterinary drugs. This, in turn, warrants regulatory interventions, on the one hand, and institutional arrangements for monitoring and testing, on the other.

For instance, USA established a computerized Residue-Avoidance Data (FARAD) Bank for food-animals. The Pharmacokinetics data is available to veterinarians on inquiry. Rational therapeutic decisions by veterinarians offer a key to control veterinary residues in food and safeguard public health and thus protect consumers.

#### **Recommendations**

- i. Capacity building in the area of testing and monitoring of pesticides and veterinary drugs.
- ii. Development of core human-resource in the area of food-safety and quality control/Veterinary Public Health.
- iii. Rational policy for import and use of agricultural pesticides and veterinary drugs.
- iv. Training/advocacy in the area of rational therapeutics for veterinarians and good agricultural practices for agronomists.
- v. Institutionalizing the optimization of drug, therapy, through Therapeutic Drug Monitoring (TDM) service in veterinary medicine. TDM laboratories require:
  - Understanding of the pharmacology of the drug being administered.
  - Some information on the Pharmacokinetics of the drug in the normal animal.

- / The effect of various clinical conditions on drug-disposition. TDM is a complex service and several individuals, including clinical chemist, veterinary clinical pharmacologist and veterinary clinician/practitioner, need to be involved in the proper collection and interpretation of data.
- vi. Research studies on pesticide/veterinary drug residues.
- vii. Consumers protection associations.
- viii. Consumers educating programme.
- ix. Harmonization of standards with international standards/CAC.
- x. GO-NGO-Private sector partnership in the area of food-safety and quality control.
- xi. Structural adjustments in agriculture, in the context of WTO regime.

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## Impact of Development Activities on *Kihal* Women

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Wasim Wagha & Amra Khan

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*The most notorious thing about modern-development is that it benefits corporate and influential groups e.g. banks, traders, industrialists and corporate farmers, while it deprives majority of the population from their sustenance base e.g. the indigenous minorities of Indus valley. This micro level research study focuses on one such group of indigenous minorities known as Kihals. The main purpose of this study was to observe and comprehend effects of development activities and modern market system on the lives of Kihal women, their social and economic status, and to assess level of their contribution in earning family's livelihood, both in past and present. Kihals are an indigenous group of riverine people which live along river Indus and depend on river food and forests for their livelihood. Once they used to travel up and down the river according to their livelihood and cultural needs. The river kept them as a group and connected upstream with downstream and vice versa. They had a distinct culture and used to create and celebrate with pride. This group of indigenous minority has, however, suffered the administrative and development policies of the British as well as their successors in Pakistan. A series of water development projects, dams and canals cut down river Indus, and so the forest and river food by two-third. So far, the Kihals living downstream Chashma Barrage have lost almost sixty-to-seventy percent of their livelihood base in terms of river food, forest, barter trade and land to set kulees (huts). Now they need permission from local landlords for setting their kulees on the lands which were previously in their use as commons. They live with hope that the government will allot them some lands in Indus delta for their shelter and livelihood.*

British policy of grading local resources and population, distributing lands and waters to their favourites, and continuation of the same policy by the Government of Pakistan (GOP) after

partition (1947), caused disappearance, dislocation and marginalization of one-time happy and visible indigenous communities of Indus. The influx of immigrants in Pakistan, after partition, and subsequent politics of 'property claims' and gifting lands to immigrants in the name of brotherhood, in fact, provided the state with an excuse to write-off the existing systems of rights over lands and livelihood and re-define it. In this process, if few population groups received loin's share, the resource base of majority population was reduced to minimum; various indigenous minorities were not even considered in this documentation and distribution drive. *Kihals* are one such minority group.

### Who are *Kihals*

*Kihals* are an indigenous group of riverine people which live along river Indus, and used to travel up and down the river according to their livelihood and cultural needs. The river kept them as a group and connected upstream *kihals* with downstream and vice versa. They had a distinct culture and used to create and celebrate with pride. They once believed themselves as children of the Indus and so their rights on Indus were based on a sustainable relationship of livelihood and cultural needs.

### Indo-Pak Water Conflict

The water conflict between India and Pakistan, soon after partition, was a direct blow to the livelihoods of these indigenous communities. The conflict over water resources was resolved through the Indus Basin Treaty in 1960s which precipitated into Indus Basin Project (IBP). Pakistan built three water storage reservoirs and one canal under this project, followed by a series of canals:

- i The Mangla Dam Project, completed in 1968.

- ii Construction of Chashma Barrage around the same period.
- iii Chashma-Jhelum Link Canal, from Chashma Barrage, 1971.
- iv Construction of Tarbela Dam in 1974.
- v Chashma Right Bank Canal from the Chashma Barrage.
- vi Greater Thal Canal, from Chashma Jhelum Link Canal, February 2002.
- vii Kachhi Canal from Taunsa Barrage, started in October 2002.

This series of water development projects, dams and canals, thus, cut down river Indus by two-third and so the forest and river food (fish, wild duck, etc). So far, the *Kihals* living downstream Chashma Barrage have lost almost sixty-to-seventy percent of their livelihood base in terms of river food, forest, barter trade and land to set *kulkis* (huts). Now they need permission from local landlords for setting their *kulkis* on the lands which were previously in their use as commons.

## METHODOLOGY

### Study's Objective

The main objective of this study was to find out effects of development activities and modern market system on the lives of *Kihal* women, their social and economic status, and to assess level of their contribution in earning family's livelihood, both in past and present. The study also aimed at reflecting into the possible measure so that indigenous minorities:

- i Benefit the development (in housing, health, sanitation and education sector) on equal with the rest of the population.
- ii Enjoy their right and control over their sustenance base;
- iii Enjoy their right to identity and freedom of religion; and
- iv Enjoy their right to participate in development around.

### Target Population

*Kihals* living downstream Chashma Barrage, roughly ten to fifteen thousand in number were the target population. While this study included all age groups, the women have been the extra focus. *Kihals*, age group 50-60, were helpful in telling their past and comparing it with present, while the stories of young *Kihals*, 20-30 yrs of age, provided an understanding of their present day problems.

### Locale of the project

Following four clusters between District D I Khan and Teh. Taunsa Sharif were selected as locale for the study:

- I Balo Ram Aala Thala, (D I Khan).
- ii Mai Di Vasti, (Darya Khan).
- iii Pul Daria Khan, (near D I Khan city).
- iv Basirey Aala Patann, Moza Kulach (Teh. Taunsa).

### Data Collection

- i Field visits.
- ii Informal interaction and talks with *Kihal* women and men, both elders and youth, at their homes, during their routine work.
- iii Group discussion. At the designing stage we decided to hold group discussions with men and women together. But, in field we realized that young *Kihal* women were reluctant to discuss their issues and problems in front of their men. On their request, a woman researcher from the vicinity was engaged for separate group discussions.
- iv Interviews with *Kihals* about their past and present.
- v Informal talk with the neighbouring population - to see their opinion about *Kihals* and their women.
- vi Collecting information on their past, both

from old citizens as well as government record.

### Findings

The findings during this micro research study were intended, and therefore, reflected into an assessment of *Kihals*/women's quality of rights - right to livelihood and culture.

### *Kihals'* Right to Livelihood in Times of Development

Fishing, basket weaving and agricultural labour are major sources of livelihood for *Kihals*. All the three sources entirely come from on river Indus. Due to decrease in these traditional livelihood sources, *Kihals* are swiftly switching to an other source i.e. begging alms.

### Past - An Experience of Abundance and Security

While speaking about their past and present livelihood, the *Kihals* told that original water potential of the river was once spread over 20 km, stretched from D I Khan city on the west to Darya Khan on its east. There were *bbeits* (delta) and *lai* (Tamarez dioca) forests on both sides of the river as well as other sea food like fish, *wild duck*, *sisar* (crocodile) and *kumi* (tortoise). They used to get *Kanb* (a type of Tamarez dioca) and *koondre* (a grass that grows in still water near some water channel) from these forests to make baskets, cages and ropes, and sell these household items for good price. Everything was in abundance to use, preserve for next season and share with the neighbouring communities. *Kihals* were very well positioned in the traditional system of barter trade with the mainstream. This livelihood abundance, however, swiftly turned into scarcity by the cut on river Indus to construct dams and canals.

*Kihals* feel forlorn when they talk about there good old days. Below is a tale of abundance and prosperity, as told by an elderly *Kihal*, Muhammad Hussain:

"There was a *Thala* (an abode of *faqirs*/dervish), called *Baloo Ram Aala Thala*, on the riverside near D I Khan where people used to gather for rejoicing and entertainment. Originally it was established and run by Seith Baloo Ram, one among the seven rich *Seiths* or merchants of Hindustan (Indo-Pak subcontinent), to serve as an abode for *faqirs*/dervish regardless of their religious background. There are some proverbs which report *Seth Baloo Ram* a rich and generous *seth* e.g. '*Balo Ram di maddi*', which means something too abundant to come to an end. *Kihals* still miss that generosity. There was enough to eat, drink and smoke. There used to be a huge fair on the riverside each year, participated and benefitted by *Kihals* and other indigenous groups as well as neighbouring communities".

Muhammad Hussain further said that land, forests, fish and other sea food, every thing was too abundant to be claimed. Scarcity, if at all, was matter of a season or two. Even during these troubled seasons they had alternatives.

### Present - Experience of Development and Disappearance

The development of dams, barrages and canals since Indus Basin Treaty in 1960s, would have benefitted some sections of the mainstream communities but not the indigenous minorities of Indus delta, the *Kihals*; the water development projects have rather deprived them of their livelihood. If the dams and canals have cut the river flow by two-third, it actually cut down *Kihals'* livelihood by two-third i.e. sixty to seventy percent. For *Kihals*, these

developments are an experience of disappearance of livelihood and culture.

In order to better assess the present status of *Kihals'* livelihood and the degree of damage done so far, we divide their major sources of livelihood in two: if fishing and other sea food is an all time source, the basket weaving and agriculture labour (harvesting) are seasonal.

#### Sea Food - an all-time source

Compared to mainstream societies, *Kihals* had wider food diversity and choices; apart from fish and wild duck, they used to eat some riverine food that was prohibited in mainstream societies e.g. *sisar* (crocodile) and *kumi* (tortoise). This diverse food base which helps them sustain life is, however, continuously shrinking mainly for four reasons:

- i Construction of dams, canal and barrages is drying up the river in the downstream areas and abating the fish and other river food.
- ii Licensing the fishing to contractors has directly deprived *Kihals* of their right over fish and other riverine food.
- iii Contamination of the river near urban centres further reduces the fish population. For example the effluent discharge of D I Khan city falls into the river through four big drains just before *Kihals* population. Chashma Sugar Mill, near D I Khan city, is another potential source of river contamination.
- iv Introduction of exotic fish species in river Indus is another reason behind reduction of fish. For example, in late eighties the Department of fisheries introduced an exotic fish in the Indus waters. This fish of Chinese origin was chosen for its huge size to satisfy inflated business needs. These were the last years of dictatorial regime of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq. Because the new fish

lives on local fish, people named it as *Mujahid Machhi* or *Muju machhi* (Soldier fish). Many local fish species fell prey to this exotic species and are at the verge of extinction.

#### Seasonal Labour

In early summer i.e. April-May, *Kihals* go for harvesting to the *kutchra* (the low-lying areas). This seasonal agriculture labour was once so rewarding that, in addition to the instant wages, landlords obliged them through vegetables, fruits and other such products round the year. In late summer i.e. June-August they cut, clean and dry *Kanb* (a type of *lai* plant or Tamarez dioca) from deltas (*bbeits*) and make baskets (*tokarey*), cages and ropes for the markets. *Kanb* forests in the deltas are lifeline for *Kihals*. They equate the forests with the wheat - "***Kanb* for *Kihals* is what wheat is for farmers**", said Khandi, an elderly *Kihal* of *bbeit* Baloo Ram. By sharing their produce (fish, boats, baskets etc) with the neighbouring communities, they had once successfully positioned themselves in the traditional kind-for-kind trade.

These forests are nevertheless disappearing frequently, mainly due to water cuts on Indus while the rest is taken over by the neighbouring landlords who claim the riverine land and forests as their ancestral right. These so-called new right holders are more interested in cultivation of market crops, and so take no time in clearing these forests as weeds.

#### Begging Alms

Although begging alms has existed in *Kihal* community since long but not as a full livelihood source. However, due to decrease in traditional livelihood sources, *Kihals* are increasingly depending on begging alms as major 'livelihood source'. Previously, begging was not fixed for women, neither was it spread over the whole



year, rather limited to those season when there were no forests, no harvesting, no work. But now it is purely women's job and spread over the whole year.

### Right to Land

Right to land is a primary human right in terms of shelter, gathering natural products for livelihood, burying the dead and cultural activities. In modern times, however, land is becoming a commodity, which comes into conflict with traditional concepts of land as common property. So is the case with the land abandoned by river Indus.

The river Indus had a wide bed for its floods; spread over 5-10 kilometers till early seventies. These lands were commons not exclusively occupied by *Kihals*, or any other community, but to which *Kihals* had access for their subsistence. These commons provided *Kihals* with fuel wood, wild food and shelter. However, since the construction of Tarbela Dam, Chashma Barrage and other canals under Indus Basin Development program in 1960s, the Indus lost two-third of its water, and abandoned much of its bed or side-lands by the same degree. The land abandoned by the river is now claimed by the neighboring landlords as their ancestral property. Now *Kihals* have to take permission from these encroachers (the land lords) for setting up their huts on this land.

For *Kihals*, land is a source of livelihood and identity, which they pass to their next generations. During this study, the *Kihals*, irrespective of their age and sex, demanded allotment of some land along the river Indus where they can set up their *kulkies* (huts or homes made of *Kanh* - a local plant) and get *Kanb* (Tameraz Dioca) for livelihood making.

### Right to Culture and Identity

*Kihals* had a distinct livelihood and food patterns and, hence, equally distinct social organization and cultural value system. Their social organization and culture is more gender equal. For example, they exchange their men and women for the stability of marriage institution. Although they used to enjoy equality in their gender relations, the situation is, however, changing over time. Water diversions from Indus have destroyed their sustenance base to the level that challenges their survival as a distinct indigenous group. Their increasing dependence on mainstream communities is twisting them to abandon their culture and adapt to the mainstream culture and belief systems.

### Self Image

People identify this indigenous minority as *Kihals*, those who live on riversides. But *Kihals* look more interested in introducing themselves as Sheikhs (the converts) and Khokhar (a sub-caste of Muslims). When asked who they were, Muhammad Hussain, an elderly *Kihal* said, "People call us *Kihals* because we live near river. In fact, we are Khokhar. Some of our families, living near Karor city (Distt Layyah in Southern Punjab), are called Sheikhs". When it comes to belief system, *Kihal* claim they are Muslims and insist that their elders were also Muslims. This strategic insistence on acquired religious identity speaks of their economic vulnerability and increasing dependence on mainstream communities.

### Distribution of Work Among *Kihal* Women and Men

Reportedly, distribution of work and its benefits between *Kihal* women and men had been quite fair. The major livelihood making activities were done by women and men together, namely

harvesting of *Kanb* and *Kanh*, weaving of baskets, cages and ropes, and hut making. If men did fishing, boating in extra, women took care child rearing and house hold. However, in the changing economic conditions, women had to leave the creative work and switch to begging alms.

### Shift in Belief System

Instead of following one single religion in strict, they kept to a flexible system of believes. For example, they believe in Imam Shaafi, founder of Shaafi sect which, in case of prolonged hunger, consent their believers to eat that sea food which is prohibited in routine. They adore river Indus because they believe there lives prophet Khawja Khizer in the river. They believe in Indus as sacred and pure and never thought of polluting its waters. They are, thus, shocked and annoyed over the disposal of sanitation waste of D I Khan city into river Indus.

But due to their increasing dependence on neighboring Muslim population, they are fast turning into Muslims and adapting to Muslim life styles and traditions. They now call themselves as Sheikhs (new Muslims), and loudly admit that their ignorance from Islamic codes of life was a main reason behind their poverty. Some of them say prayer while other wish if their children could learn this new life style. This shift to muslim code of life has significantly influenced their food and cultural patterns.

### Acquired Nomenclature

*Kihals'* names also reflect the shift in their belief system. They are fast adapting to Muslim names. Earlier, they had different names consisting of one word, with no affix or prefix; for example, *Waziraan*, *Malookaan*, *Sadaan*, *Langra*, *Khandi*, *Rehmtaan*, *Phaphul*, *Jhoki*, *Pathana* etc. But now their names consist of two words, of which at least one is directly

attributed to new identity as Muslim e.g. *Muhammad Hussain*, *Riaz Ahmed*, *Ghulam Fatima*, *Saif Ullah* etc.

### Marriage and Dowry

Although *Kihals* are swiftly adapting to Muslim codes of life and traditions, they still practice their own traditions in important life affairs e.g. marriage. *Kihals* are among those indigenous groups who exchange their women and men in the marriage. If the bride-groom side does not have a girl/women, the bride-groom has to live with his in-laws. After 3-5 years, or when newly-wed couple have their own children to feed, they are considered as separate family are given consent to live separately.

This tradition looks similar to another marriage tradition of mainstream communités, locally known as vata-sata (give and take). But there is a difference: vata-sata is not a compulsory tradition while the *Kihals'* tradition of exchange is compulsory, though it has some alternatives as well. Also, vata-sata is mainly a contract between two families, influenced by honour and pride, while *Kihals'* exchange is more linked with families' livelihood earning.

Marriage is the only social event left in *Kihals* lives which provides them an opportunity to celebrate together. So they celebrate their marriages a lot. They even call some local singers and eunuchs for dancing. Mai Rehmataan, 40, very proudly stated that they celebrate their marriages with grandeur. But at the same time she condemned the price-hike and told that they had to beg alms the whole summer and winter, and then they were able to celebrate a marriage. Now, some times they can not afford celebration. Decrease in income is affecting their culture of celebration.

They do give **dowry** but that is too little to be called dowry. Parents give 3-4 dresses and 1-

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women in neighbouring Muslim communities, *Kihals* women enjoyed equal status with their men. Their relationship and status was based purely on their contribution in family's livelihood. Livelihood dependence on neighbouring communities is, however, swiftly influencing *Kihal* women's relationship with their men. While begging alms, on the other hand, has exposed them to discrimination and violence in the market and streets.

### Discrimination and Violence

Under the influence of neighbouring communities, *Kihals* have adopted some traditions which discriminate against women. For example, now *Kihals* also give their women away in dispute settlements, a discriminatory tradition for women, called *Vani* in Southern Punjab and *Swara* in NWFP (A Case of *Vani*, below).

### *Kihal* Women in the Downstream

Compared to upstream areas, *Kihals* in the downstream look more dependent on neighbouring communities and, therefore, more adapted to Islamic codes of life. This reveals that *Kihal* in the downstream are more affected by these developments compared to women in the upstream. Over a period of time, *Kihal* men have attached value of 'honour' with their women and becoming stricter in keeping their women at homes (huts). They ask their women to put scarf and do not come in front of stranger. This situation reduces women's mobility and, therefore, cuts their income generation activities and opportunities at this crucial time of influences and adaptation.

### Vani - Violence Against Women

[*Vani is a discriminatory tradition in Southern Punjab (Seraiki area) in which girls/women are given away in dispute settlements.*]

Zainab is a *Kihal* woman, in her mid twenties with two kids. She lives in Thala Baloo Ram, Dera Ismail Khan city, with her husband Mukhtar, cousin from maternal side, who does fishing for fish-contractors. Her relatives told that her mother, Malookan, was a known singer, popular not only among their own community but also in the neighbouring mainstream communities. Her audio cassettes are still available in the local markets.

When asked if she aspired to become a singer like her mother, her reply was a definite 'NO'. On further probing, she revealed her true story. She told that her parents were a besotted couple. Her mother, Malookan, used to sing at marriages and local festivals, while her father, Riaz, used to play *thal* (an alternate for Tabla). However, the relationship between her parents became sour when her mother became more popular and started earning more money as well as admiration. Her father then remarried and his demands for extra money increased day by day, leading to physical violence. One morning Malookan was found dead. The city learnt that the *Kihal* singer was drowned in the river; while within the *Kihal* community her maternal uncle accused Riaz of poisoning her to death. The community turned against her father and asked him to compensate the blood or face the courts. Her father took her and two younger sisters to Karachi. Zainab was fifteen at that time.

They spent next ten years on run / escape, away from relatives in isolation. A slow but consistent community pressure and burden of three grownup daughters, however, led her father into a settlement. Her uncle demanded *vani* and asked her father to marry eldest daughter with his son; he also demanded some cash in compensation. Her father obliged, and so Zainab became daughter-in-law of her uncle in compensation for her mother.

Although she enjoys singing, but at the same

time she learned that singing in the public is immoral and creates problem for women. She believes that shameful stories cooked-up and spread about her mother aggravated the conflict between her parents. Therefore, she does not aspire to become a singer.

She told that she did not go for alms either, just to avoid violent men from the neighboring communities. But how can she prevent the landlords, on whose land they have set up *kulki* (hut), from harassing her physically and sexually? She and her husband face this violence everyday and fight it together. Her husband decided to work for fish-contractors for the only reason that they are powerful and can help him and his family in times of trouble.

During this micro study, women were found shy and hesitant to sing, though they still enjoy music as silent listeners. They are increasingly learning that singing reflects a bad character in women. There may be many reasons behind this behavioural shift in *Kihals*; religious influence from neighbouring Muslim communities, for example. Interestingly, *Kihals* women look more interested in adapting to Muslim codes of practice and morality. Perhaps it adds to their social status, and perhaps it is what they learned during alms begging when they face various forms of discrimination and harassment from men in the town.

#### From Artisan to Beggars

Although begging alms has existed in *Kihal* community since long but not as a full livelihood source. However, due to decrease in traditional livelihood sources, *Kihals* are increasingly depending on begging alms as major 'livelihood source'. Previously, begging was not fixed for women, neither it was spread over the whole year but limited to season when there were no forests, no harvesting, no work. But now it is purely women's job and spread over the whole year.

Increase in begging alms has affected women in three ways. One, begging replaced the traditional 'creative' work (weaving baskets, cages and ropes) and so turned the women from artisans to beggars. Now that creative work is done by men. Two, it has exposed women to harassment and violence in the mainstream societies. Harassment has become an everyday issue. Third, children are the immediate victim of this shift in livelihood source. Women have to leave their children back in huts when they go for begging, for at least 4-5 hours a day. "When we go to beg alms, we keep our babies and children at the home (*kulkis*) with our men or young sisters/daughters. We switched to begging alms just 20-25 years back only because of reduced livelihood options", said Kalsum, a *Kihal* women in her twenties.

Mostly the older *Kihal* women go to beg alms, while the young ones stay at home. Sometimes they get money in alms and sometimes they get flour or vegetables. While sharing their experiences, *Kihal* women told that now people do not give alms with generosity. They told that men in the mainstream communities discourage their women for giving alms.

#### Water Fetching - Recent Workload for *Kihal* Women

Whether it is availability or quality, drinking water was never a problem for *Kihals*. For them river may drop and rise again, it may even change its course and back yet again but it does not dry and is always pure. People of Indus valley have a centuries old belief that flowing water is always pure and healthy. There are proverbs and couplet in local languages which depict this belief; for example, '*Vahnda Panni PaK*', a line of Seraiki poet Ashu Lal, which exactly means that flowing water is pure. Modern engineering has nevertheless made possible what the indigenous people learned and believed as impossible.

Effluent and solid waste from adjacent cities is contaminating the flowing Indus. For example, the total effluent of D I Khan city goes into the river through four big drains, as does hundreds of tons of untreated solid waste from Chashma Sugar Mill on the southern entrance of D I Khan city. This waste falls into river just where *Kihals* set their huts. Water near river banks has become unhygienic, rather stinky, and so not-for-drinking. *Kihal* women and girls now have to fetch water from the water-pumps in the neighborhood.

Women are the worst victims. Contamination of river has not only added to their unpaid workload but also reduced their share in paid work or in livelihood earning.

#### Health

Shift in food and work patterns, lack of enough nutrition, and in some areas the contamination of river create a range of health problems for *Kihals*. Young women and children suffer the most. Since the disposal of city effluent in the river near Bbeit Baloo Ram, D I Khan in 1995, the *Kihals* increasingly complain of stomach diseases which they never suffered before.

Malkaan, an elderly *Kihal* women, told that there were no diseases and no medicines in their times.

"We lived healthy lives. But now our children fell ill more frequently and suffer diseases which we never heard before. This is all due to the contamination of river from which we drink water. Stomach problems have become very common since then. We never went to doctors before. Our elders used to keep own medicines, made from fish, *rati booti* (red plant) and crocodiles oil for little health problems. But since we have lost our elders, we have lost fish, crocodiles, Wild duck etc., and no more our own medicines". [ Malkaan lives on Bbeit Baloo Ram near D I Khan city].

#### Reproductive Health

*Kihals* women face the same reproductive health problems which the women of mainstream communities do. But the lack of reproductive health services and family planning information make them more vulnerable.

*Kihals* women usually give birth to 4-7 babies on average, while their survival rate is 3-5. When asked whether they plan interval (*vaqfa*) between conceiving babies, Begum, 18 yrs, smiled and said, "*Vaqfa*, don't ask about *vaqfa*. Men take women as if they are machines. They just want more children, and don't bother how women and their whole systems suffer during each pregnancy. I gave birth to six babies, none is alive. I also consulted many doctors but no good".

#### The Price Hike

Price hike is an everyday issue for larger section of our population. The most vulnerable, however, are those population groups who lost their original sources of income and whose produce does not value in modern market. *Kihals* are the worst example in this regards for three reasons: One, cut on river Indus has deprived *Kihals* of their income generation opportunities e.g. basket making and fishing; Two, their produce (baskets, cages and ropes) is loosing its value day by day in the modern market; Three, dried river routes have cut off their access to main trade centres in the area. Now, *Kihals* have to sell their produce in the nearby market which does not pay enough. Muhammad Hussain, 50 years, while comparing the present with the past, said, "Here we sell one basket for 50-60 rupees. But if we sell the same in big cities like Multan, Sargodha, Lahore, Rawalpindi, we will get more money. Our elders used to go in these cities to sell baskets and cages. We don't go there. In fact, now we can not go there because our river

routes lie dry due to less water in the river. We do not have boats any more. Going by roads cost more money than we earn. But, now price hike is one of major problem". The elderly *Kihals*, contacted during this micro study, claimed that things were very cheap in their times.

#### Consumer-based Market and Women

By producing useful household items like basket, cages and ropes etc, women were well established in the barter trade with the mainstream communities. Their products had a value and space in the local market. They had a balanced relation with the market as producer and consumer.

However, the modern household technology, particularly the plastic industry, is fast encroaching their space as producer. Their handmade products now find less demand in the market, and less profit as compared to cheap industrial items. Modern consumer based market is limiting their space as producer. When in the market, women are either beggars or consumers.

#### Education

*Kihals* do not have anything called education facility. From their increasing dependence on neighbouring communities, they have learned that education is a must for any socio-political improvement in their lives. *Kihals* in all the four clusters, visited during this study, expressed their aspirations and desire about their children's education. Some *Kihals* families tried to send their children to schools, but it did not do well, for the reasons that children from mainstream communities humiliate and beat *Kihal* children. "*We do send our children to nearby schools, but the children of the neighbouring communities bully them*", said Vazir, 45, a resident of Pul Darya Khan. Alternately, some of them send their children for

religious education in the nearby mosques. Because the religious education does not pay in terms of income generation, the *Kihals* engage their boys in livelihood work and send their girls for religious education.

#### Conclusion

The *Kihals* are left with little to survive on but a lot to hope for. They believe and hope that the government can do some good for them in terms of their right to shelter and livelihood. *Kihals* in general, and their women in particular, think that the best solution to their problems is that the government acknowledge their right over fish and forest and allot them some land on riversides where they live for centuries.

They understand the problems, the reasons behind them, the solutions, and the strategies required. They learned from their experience that in order to claim a right and request a service, one must be a registered citizen of a union council, tehsil and district. Some of the *Kihals*, mostly men, are pursuing the registration of their National Identity Cards and votes in nearby union council. They are learning to participate in the political and electoral system and get their rights registered and acknowledged. What they need is a well-defined national policy for indigenous communities of Indus at government level which state their right over riverine lands, waters, fish and forests. For this they look for political support from civil society, human rights and women's rights organizations and networks which can advocate their rights.

#### Limitations of Study

The study was carried on small scale focusing only women. Men should also have been included in the study as factors affecting women have impact on the whole population.

The data was compiled using qualitative methods. Although qualitative methods give rich data but there is always a chance of overgeneralization of findings based on small sample.

### Recommendations

- i *Kihals* should be registered as citizens and voters.
- ii Indigenous minorities of Indus delta should be given representation in district government system.
- iii Indigenous minorities should be considered for development in housing, health, sanitation and education sector.
- iv The government should spare the riverine area for *Kihals*, and allot some land for their huts.
- v Existing environmental laws should be implemented, or a separate law should be enacted, to prevent the contamination of river Indus. For example, the four huge sanitation drains, falling into river Indus near D I Khan city, should be closed immediately.
- vi Alternate drinking water facility should be provided for *Kihals* living near Dera Ismail Khan where four sanitation drains, carrying effluent of the city, fall into river and has contaminated the river.
- vii A comprehensive policy should be devised for indigenous minorities.
- viii The government should ensure that minorities and indigenous people participate in decision-making that affects their lives through consultative bodies at national and local level.
- ix *Kihals* products and crafts should be promoted in exhibitions and crafts festivals at local, provincial and national level.



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## HE TORTURED MY MIND

Tehmeed Razvi

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The small pool of water, staring at me, shaking beside me...

Dejected, vaulted and tumbled from the firmaments,  
my reflection cringing from me.

Where time has frozen so still, numbing,  
paralysed yet palpitating

Having escaped from the boudoir, from his hunger one more time,  
my only retreat,

As if I were palatable to his gluttonous lust, hankering for my porcelain body,  
ransacked and raided,



Collapsed on the cold bathroom floor in the midst of night,  
Icily staring...

Tears like grating glass in my bloody brown eyes,  
Transparent pain.

Voice Against Torture

Perplexed and puzzled how did I reach here?  
Who am I?

Callow enough to have such a capacious delusion,  
My vulnerability at his mercy.

I had sought asylum beneath the awning of his eyes,  
Instead - a captured prisoner.

Drenched in the cascade of coquette caprice, crippled,  
Awed before his grandeur, terrified in the solace,

Not knowing when the next ambush would be,  
Another dulcet entrapment,

Will I survive the phantoms feeble, delusive clutches?  
Possessed and bewitched,

Almighty one, punishing, commanding, a sagacious captor,  
A God, sacrosanct,

No clemency from my Lord, no laxness, no justice for me,  
Guilty victim,

Powerless, impotent, defenceless and mute,  
Imprisoned, reprimanded.

Submissive, obedient, fulfilling Him, myself, empty and hollow,  
Reneged on all his promises?

As if the aftermath of some explosive torrential disaster,  
Torture in my mind,

The blow to my skull, my empty head supporting,  
Fragmented and winnowing.

Incapacitated in my mind surrounded by the deadly blackness,  
Even death rejecting me.

Tired and disenchanted from his truncate soft words, his turgid gestures,  
Flouted promises,

Muffling at me, lacerating my body and soul with his words,  
Pierced, punctured, persecuted,

Cadences of his ruthless obscene words, undressing me to the bareness,  
Blemished and besmirched,

How much more to endure for a few fanciful words of enchantment,  
revelling in the tranquillising trance.

Ridicule embedded and enmeshed in my mind, whirling round and round,  
A skewer rotating within,

As if in a spiral, each moment swallowing me till I'm gone,  
Life ebbing away,

All traces of colour erased and washed away from my subsiding mind,  
Like scattered confetti,

In the deep fuggy forest enmeshed in frenetic obligations,  
Dormant and unkempt,

Segregating me from all that was mine and those who had cushioned me,  
Now quarantined and staccato,

His scoffing voice, his cacophonous laughter pollutes the air,  
My every breath smothered by his

Stratum by stratum he erased each layer of me with his elusive ways,  
Resolute, tenacious he stands.

Like a hard, obtrusive and bulbous pus - filled abscess,  
Septic, contagious, toxic,

Taking me out of sanity into a volition of deep slumber,  
Suppressed, dumb and stifled.

Disillusioned that the gentleness of my touch may soften and warm his heart,  
turned my heart into molten.

A thirsty mosquito slowly sucking every drop of blood from me,  
Contaminating my being,

Like a sparkling cascade of dazzling diamonds upon my brooch,  
Stabbing, piercing, deluding,

Nights illuminated with sweat, shivers, screaming nightmares...  
the nights he let me alone.

My head is buzzing, hurting; my hair amiss, the world is spinning around me,  
How did this happen to me?

Stung deep in my flesh, intoxicating each layer of me with poison,  
Waspish, wastrel idiot,

My life has been encroached upon, destined for this hopelessness,  
All windows and doors closed,

Escapism comes but at a price of this cruel and scary worlds worth,  
Shame, dishonour and vulnerability,

Whom I thought would be the truss and last sanctuary of my life,  
Cut every artery of mine

Like a candle in the dark wallowing in the hot translucent wax,  
Beauty ironed, blackened and burnt.

The burns at least are concealed, blemishes no one else can see,  
The fire is extinguished.

Dangerous no more to me, a corpse merely left,  
Ready for the pyre,  
Darkness surrounds me in this coffin called home, death hollering at me,  
my unbridled volition maybe?

The waxen mosaic of macabre masquerade is surely over,  
Inert, motionless, day after day

I can never muster myself from this sorry hopeless state  
Eyes transfixed upon the floor,

Just a pool of water, thirsty for me, for a few more tears of mine,  
But there is nothing....

Nothing at all....just the torture in my mind.

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## Exploring Common Grounds

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### **Visit by Mr. Ellen Golz** *Embassy of Germany*

On January 13, 2005, Mr. Ellen Golz from *Embassy of Germany* paid a visit to School of Human Rights. The visit was special in the sense that it was very informative for both the Embassy and the organization. The Embassy was fully briefed about the working of the School of Human Rights, which was appreciated by Mr. Ellen.

### **Visit by His Excellency Mr. Bent Wigotski** *Royal Danish Embassy*

On February 14, 2005, His excellency Mr. Bent Wigotski, the Ambassador from *Royal Danish Embassy* paid a curtsey visit to School of Human Rights. The guest was however, briefed about the work strategy of the School of Human Rights, and the efforts being made on the part of the School, towards the promotion of the cause of human rights. The honorable guest was also briefed about the ongoing courses and workshops of the School. Towards the end of the session, the honorable guest visited the organization, seeing and appreciating the library and other offices/departments of the School of Human Rights.

### **Visit by Mr. Brian Joseph** *National Endowment for Democracy*

Mr. Brian Joseph, *Senior Program Officer for Asia*, from *National Endowment for Democracy*, Washington, DC, visited *School of Human rights*. The guest spent quite some time, showing the keen interest in the working and functioning of the School. However, commendable efforts on the part of the organization were viewed and appreciated by Mr. Joseph. A mutual consonance on the views was shown in the arguments, with a resolve to work jointly for upholding the cause of human rights.



*Visit by His Excellency Mr. Bent Wigotski  
Royal Danish Embassy*



*Workshop on Interactive Theatre*



*Workshop on Rights-based Programming in the Area of Children & Women's Development*

## Workshops

### Workshop on Reiki

**Date:** December 9, 2004

**Venue:** School of Human Rights

Reiki is a healing method, roots of which can be tracked down in Japan, and is all the more getting popularity throughout the globe. Those having interest in Reiki have now started practicing and imparting training to the general public which seems to be inquisitive learning about this novel, yet ancient method of healing that involves not medication. However, the method stands on a seemingly queer phenomenon of the origination of certain rays from human hands, which ultimately helps in the healing process.

Voice Against Torture in this connection organized a one-day workshop at its premises. Ms. Tina served as the resource person for the workshop. People from different walks of life participated and took keen interest in the training workshop. Voice Against Torture intends to continue such activities in future as well, since the organization believes in having a healthy culture, where people struggle to eradicate problems of the fellow beings.

### Workshop on Interactive Theatre

**Date:** February 7-8, 2005

**Venue:** School of Human Rights

A two-day interactive theatre workshop was organized at School of Human Rights. Mr Safeer-ullah Khan conducted this workshop with the students of Greenwich University, Islamabad. The workshop comprised of several activities, both individual and group. Especially the participation of the students made it more

lively an event. Different sessions of the workshop made the students aware of as to how must they be ready to perform any assigned role, and that too without hesitation and with utmost confidence. They realized the importance of individual and group rehearsals for a quality performance.

Workshops of this sort are not very commonly conducted in development sector. But Voice Against Torture realizes that theatre performance may serve as a tool that can be used to profess the noble cause of human rights to the masses, within a short time, and that too through the adoption of play-way methodology. In this connection, the educated class can easily convey the message to those who have not been able to get an access to even the basic right to education.

### Workshop on Introduction to Corporate Social Responsibility

**Date:** February 22, 2005

**Venue:** School of Human Rights

Voice Against Torture in its quest to strike diversified settings, so as to promote human rights in general, hosted a workshop on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) conducted by Mr Shujaat Ali. Participants from corporate sector attended the workshop. Those attending the workshop, shared views towards the end of the session, which led to a very positive discussion about the social responsibility of the corporate sector. Towards the end of the workshop, the facilitator concluded the sessions in an effective manner, keeping in view the opinion shared by different participants. The feedback at the end of the workshop reflected that participants would encourage such workshops in future.

## Workshop on Rights-based Programming in the Area of Children & Women's Development

**Date:** January 10-11, 2005

**Venue:** School of Human Rights

As Voice Against Torture believes to work in collaboration with other organizations as well, it organized a workshop on *"Workshop on Rights-based Programming in the Area of Children & Women's Development"* which was organized by Ms Anila from *Khwendo kor* a Peshawar-based organization, being headed by Ms Mariam Bibi. The organization works on the awareness raising among people of distant remote areas with a special focus on educational and health issues of women.

The other facilitator from the host organization was Ms Fizza Sabir. Different sessions were conducted by the two facilitators, and questions were raised by the participants, which gave a different dimension to the workshop.

It was realized that a series of such workshops is needed to discuss various gender-related issues, which would of course lead to a better understanding of such issues. Towards the end of the workshop, participants were awarded certificates of participation, whereas, the facilitators were presented with insignias of the organization.

Voice Against Torture was pleased to have Ms Anila as the facilitator and acknowledged the contribution of Khwendo Kor. Both the organizations also decided to arrange such workshops in future, and most probably at far-flung areas of Pakistan.



## National News

### **F**IA Anti-Trafficking Wing to Control Human Smuggling

Peshawar, Jan 1, 2005: Federal Interior Minister Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao said that a full fledged anti-trafficking wing has started functioning in the FIA to effectively check the growing menace of human smuggling. Shelter houses would be set up at Islamabad Airport on experimental basis to keep the arrested women for questioning and debriefing, he said.

### **Low Income in Tribal Areas Encouraging Child Labour**

Peshawar, Jan 1, 2005: According to a survey report recently compiled by Directorate of Industries, Commerce and Labour, NWFP in collaboration with International Labour Organization (ILO), tribal areas including Federally Administered Tribal Areas, Frontier Regions and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas are lacking employment opportunities, as there are no industries, very little cultivated area, poor access to civic amenities and infrastructure, therefore, average income is very low. More than 68% families survive on a meager monthly income of Rs.2500 forcing them to send their children for different types of labour.

### **Gang Kidnaps Landlord, Constable**

Dera Ghazi Khan, Jan 5, 2005: The Bosan gang which is notorious for kidnapping for ransom in kutch area of Muzaffargarh on the eastern side of the Sindh river, Rajanpur on its western side, and Dera Ghazi Khan, has kidnapped for Rs.5 million, a former councilor of Jatoi Tehsil. Besides the ex-councilor, who is also a known landlord, a police constable has been kidnapped. The two men, as reports revealed were guiding the police party operating for the recovery of another kidnapped landlord.

### **Employer Accused of Torturing Girl**

Haripur, Jan 5, 2005: An 11-year-old maid was subjected to torture by her employers. The victim was admitted to District Headquarters Hospital with cuts and bruises on her neck, arms, legs, abdomen and other parts of the body.

### **Curse of Honour Killing**

Islamabad, Jan 6, 2005: The prime minister's advisor on Women Development Nilofar Bakhtiar has said that in 2004 as many as 1250 women were killed in the name honour all over Pakistan. In 2003 the number of killings on this score was put at 930.

### **Women asked to struggle for Rights of Inheritance**

Peshawar, Jan 7, 2005: The womenfolk should at least forge unity among their ranks and jointly struggle for the right of inheritance, which Islam guarantees to them since long, said prominent religious scholar, Aamir Liaquat Hussain.

### **Hudood Laws' Amendments to be 'Mixed Blessing'**

Lahore, Jan 14, 2005: The amendments prepared by the Ministry of Law to make certain provisions of the offence of adultery non-cognizable may take much of the bite away from the Islamic laws. The law has been used even by parents against their own daughters for marrying of their free will in defiance of the family and social taboos. The Lahore High Court has witnessed a number of such cases in the recent past. It has, however, been allowing the newly wed couples to lead a matrimonial life on the grounds that they have a constitutional right to do so.

### **South Punjab 115 Women fell prey to Honour Killing in 2004**

Multan, Jan 16, 2005: At least 115 women lost their lives due to honour killing while 167 others were killed in the incidents of domestic violence in southern Punjab during the year 2004. According to the report released by the Multan task force of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, some 57 women fell prey to the honour killing were married while 56 were unmarried. The remaining two were divorcees. As per the HRCP report, only 17 accused were arrested in the 115 reported cases of honour killing while no case has been registered in eight cases. Besides, some 55 men were also killed in the name of honour.

### **Long Wait for Justice**

Jan 20, 2005: In a very telling sign of the operational flaws inherent in the country's judicial system, Afzal Haider, who languished 17 years in jail without being convicted, was finally released after being acquitted of the charges against him.

### **Child Rehabilitation by Government**

Lahore, Feb 3, 2005: Punjab Chief Minister has said the government will provide maximum resources for bringing homeless, neglected and stray children into the mainstream of the society. He said setting up of Child Protection and Welfare Bureau was the realization of his dream of rehabilitating homeless children.

### **Thar Sufferings**

Feb 15, 2005: World Bank team observed that one in every six women living in Thar died prematurely, primarily because of malnutrition and poor health care.

### **Equal Rights Sought for Nationalities**

Mardan, Feb 15, 2005: Senator Akram Khan has alleged that people of smaller provinces would not accept the situation in which their rights have been suspended. He said the Pakistan Oppressed Nations Movement rejected the present system and constitution and demanded a new constitution.

### **Prisoners Refuse to Enter Lock-up**

Dera Ghazi Khan, Feb 17, 2005: As many as 85 prisoners, who were brought here for court proceedings, refused to enter the judicial lock-up as a mark of their protest against the bad condition of the building.

### **Centre for Child Beggars**

Peshawar, Feb 19, 2005: The provincial government will open a Darul Kafala, a rehabilitation center for child beggars as soon as a suitable building becomes available. This is going to be a three-year project and the government has allocated Rs.6.3 million for it.

### **Crisis Centre for Women**

Peshawar, Feb 19, 2005: The Federal government plans to set up a crisis center in the provincial city to provide free counseling and legal facilities to women facing serious problems.

### **Non-availability of Medical Aid Seven Die**

Feb 5, 2005: At least seven people have died due to non-availability of medical treatment in the district.

### **Teenager Arrested**

Naushehro Feroze, Feb 23, 2005: A teenager boy was arrested by the Darya Khan Mari police

in place of his uncle who reported owes huge amount of money to some people.

#### **Case Against 1,600 Okara Tenants**

Okara, Feb 24, 2005: The Okara police registered a case against 1,600 tenants, including 69 women. The tenants had protested against their forcible ejection from agricultural land by the Rangers and the army.

#### **President Defends Army Captain in Dr. Shazia Case**

Islamabad, Feb 25, 2005: President Pervez Musharraf said Thursday that the culprit behind the rape of a female doctor, which sparked an armed uprising in Balochistan will face hanging. However, the military leader defended an army captain who is the chief suspect in the case, saying he believed the man was not guilty.

#### **Dr. Shazia Wants to Begin New Life Abroad**

Karachi, Feb 25, 2005: Dr. Shazia Khalid, the rape victim is determined to leave the country as the 32-year-old doctor believes that she would not get justice in this part of the world.

#### **US Accuses Pakistan of Rights Violation**

Washington, Feb 28, 2005: The US State department blamed Pakistan on for allowing widespread violations of human rights ranging from rapes and deaths in police custody to suppression of individual and political rights by the government.

#### **Jirga's Decision Condemned**

Haripur, March 2, 2005: Parliamentarian's Commission on Human Rights condemned a Jirga's decision to marry a two-year-old girl with a person forty years old.

#### **Decision on Mukhtaran Mai Case Disappoints HRCP**

Lahore, March 5, 2005: The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan expressed disappointment over the acquittal of five of the six men convicted of gang-rape of Mukhtaran Mai.

#### **Victim of Injustice Freed at Last**

Quetta, March 5, 2005: Azizullah, 30, was arrested by police wrongly accusing him of being a Myanmar national. Chief justice of Balochistan High Court ordered his release after a report of an inquiry ordered by the chief justice was presented to him.

#### **Killer of 130 Persons Arrested**

Quetta, March 5, 2005: Police claim to have arrested a militant, who is a member of the outlawed Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. He is accused of killing 130 persons in recent years.

#### **Sui Probe Futile After Musharraf's Comments**

Quetta, March 6, 2005: Jamhoori Watan Party chief Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti said that the comments made by President Gen. Pervez Musharraf about innocence of an army captain in the Sui rape case had rendered the investigation report meaningless.

#### **EU Concerned at HR Abuses in Pakistan**

Rawalpindi, March 7, 2005: The European Union has expressed concern over the increasing incidents of human rights abuses in Pakistan, citing violence against women, police torture, illegal detention, extra-judicial killings still taking place in the country.

### 1,549 Children Sexually Abused in 2004

Islamabad, March 7, 2005: On average three children were sexually abused daily during the year 2004, a report launched by an NGO said. The statistics were based on cases reported in 27 newspapers last year.

### A Woman Who Won't be Silenced

March 9, 2005: Mukhtaran Mai has once again risen against her oppressors. The woman who suffered her nightmare in 2002 proved that she wouldn't be cowed down by leading a rally near the very city where she was gang-raped. The Lahore High Court decision to acquit five of the six men accused of the gang rape came as a blow to supporters of women's rights and most of all to Mukhtaran Mai.

### Four Accused in Mukhtaran Mai Case Released

Dera Ghazi Khan, March 15, 2005: Four of the five men convicted in the Mukhtaran Mai rape case but acquitted by the Lahore High Court were released from Central Jail.

### Police Show How the Crime Pays

Islamabad, March 16, 2005: Street crime increased alarmingly by a whopping 101.21% with 881 offences of dacoities, robberies, burglaries, mugging, purse snatching, thefts, car-jacking and bike lifting as compared to 441 in 2003. Name any crime from ordinary theft, extensive bootlegging, growing prostitution and one will find the police deeply involved. According to the *The News* study the crime rate is actually going up.

News

## International News

**246m Children Engaged in Child Labour Worldwide** Jan 1, 2005: An estimated 246 million children are engaged in child labour, according to a UNICEF report.

Of those, almost three-quarters work in hazardous situations or conditions, such as working in mines, working with chemicals and pesticides in agriculture or working with dangerous machinery.

Millions of girls work as domestic servants and unpaid household help and are especially vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Millions of others work under horrific circumstances. They may be trafficked, forced into debt bondage or other forms of slavery, into participating in armed conflict or other illicit activities. However,

the vast majority of child labours, 70 per cent or more work in agriculture. The Asian and Pacific regions harbour the largest number of child workers in the five to fourteen age group, 127.3 million in total.

### Human Rights Activists Held in Nepal

Kathmandu, Feb 11, 2005: Nine activists were arrested near the central government offices in the capital when they stood out from a gathered crowd and began chanting slogans against the king. Political sources claim that up to 1,000 people have been detained countrywide since the king sacked the government, declared emergency and assumed absolute power.

### **Palestinian Boy Shot Dead**

Amallah, Feb 16, 2005: A 15-year-old boy was shot dead by Israeli troops in the West Bank near Ramallah.

### **Opium Addicts Sell Girls Like Cattle in Afghanistan**

Peshawar, Jan 17, 2005: Opium-eating families of Badakhshan province of Afghanistan, mainly from the Ismaili sect, strike bargains with the opium dealers to offer girls to them as it was not simply possible for them to pay money. The fate of these opium-eating families is that the whole family becomes addicted, as mothers transfer the opium eating habit even to infants and children at an early age.

### **Torture of Taliban Prisoners**

Jan 18, 2005: Eighty-one Taliban prisoners released by the United States authorities in Afghanistan have complained of torture and abuse during their four-year long custody. They were kept in custody for four years because they were perceived as a security risk, while no charges were ever brought against them, countering the basics of fundamental human rights. There are thousands of others who continue to languish in jails in conditions that are not known.

### **US Alerts World to Child Trafficking**

Washington, Jan 7, 2005: US authorities have alerted relief agencies working in tsunami-affected areas of the potential for human trafficking especially of tens of thousands of children who have been orphaned by the disaster.

### **HR Violations Continue at Guantanamo Bay**

Guantanamo Bay, Jan 13, 2005: Most of the 550 prisoners from 42 countries no longer are considered of significant intelligence value, but many are not expected to be freed soon some because of the stalled legal proceedings, others

because they allegedly still pose a threat to the United States or its allies.

Such uncertainties, coupled with multiplying allegations of abuse, are under attack from lawyers and human rights groups who say the camp is an affront to American values. Only four men have been charged, and most prisoners are denied access to lawyers.

### **Sudan - Darfur Violence Rises**

United Nations, Jan 9, 2005: Fighting in Darfur is escalating and the Sudanese region could face a new upsurge of violence despite efforts by the United Nations' Security Council. UN Secretary General said, "A buildup of arms and intensification of violence, including air attacks, suggest the security situation is deteriorating."

### **A New, Traumatized Afghanistan**

London, Feb 16, 2005: One woman dies from pregnancy-related causes approximately every 30 minutes. One in five children dies before the age of five from diseases that are 80% preventable. An estimated one-third of the population suffers from anxiety, depression or post-traumatic stress. Annual per capita income is \$190. Average life expectancy is 44.5 years. Its education system is now 'the worst in the world'. These are just few of the findings contained in a United Nations Development Programme report on Afghanistan published this week.

More than three years after the US and Britain declared victory in Kabul and promised to rebuild the country, it paints a disturbing portrait of 'a fragile nation still at odds if no longer at war with itself that could easily slip back into chaos an abject poverty.'

### **Cambodian Woman Sex-trader Jailed**

Bangkok, March 10, 2005: A Thai court has jailed a woman for a 50-year jail term for procuring young women for prostitution and immigration violations.

## Review - RAHAT Medical Journal (Vol. 3, No. 1, February 2005)

**R**ehabilitation and Health Aid Centre for Torture Victims (RAHAT) is an Islamabad-based non-governmental organization publishing a quarterly journal titled *RAHAT Medical Journal*, and quarterly *Newsletter*. The journal primarily carries articles and research papers dealing with rehabilitation and treatment of torture victims, which is the concern of medical doctors, in particular, besides psychologists and social workers who are often called upon to deal with torture victims for either forensic purposes or for treatment and rehabilitation.

February 2005 issue of *RAHAT Medical Journal* contains three articles and two research papers.

The first article discusses the situation when a government finds itself the target of criticism. General form of reaction of the government is to suppress the dissenting voice as also to victimize the dissenters. Dr. Mahboob Mehdi, et al, discuss this situation in a well-researched article.

The second article *Psychological Dilemmas in Military Obedience* deals with the psychological makeup of the troops during and soon after active hostilities. The authors give an in-depth study of why soldiers tend to disregard norms of discipline when dealing with prisoners and the people at large. This study, though comprehensive in its own way, might not explain the treatment meted out to the hapless Iraqis in Abu Gharib and Guantanamo prisons. Dehumanizing treatment by the American soldiers, it appears, has been a part of the wider policy of the American government towards Iraqis and the alleged Al Qaida prisoners.

Another article *Re-traumatizing the Refugees* concerns those refugees who faced or escaped torture in their own countries and were

subjected to torture in the host countries. Case of an Iranian lady who sought refuge in Austria is discussed in detail. The lady's assertion that she was raped while under custody in Iran may well be taken with a pinch of salt as we do not find evidence to this effect with respected organizations like Amnesty International so far as Iran is concerned.

We all know about the horrid war crimes against the Muslims in the Balkans. In this research study, the authors discuss post-trauma stress disorder suffered by the Albanian ex-POWs. Figures provided highlight the mental health situation of the prisoners who were subjected to torture.

Ms. Tehmina and Ms. Amra tell us about sexual harassment suffered by medical nurses. As we know, all professional women are subject to sexual harassment and abuse. The degree of harassment depends upon the amount of exposure they happen to have in their workplace. The research study has given appalling facts and figures based on their interviews concerning gender harassment, unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion. The study very rightly recommends further research to find the effect of sexual harassment on physical, emotional well being of the nurses.

Aim of this medical journal is to provide information and data in the field of torture for medical practitioners and others with regard to the latest research and treatment. A person suffering from an injury as a result of an accident is not likely to suffer from psychological disability as compared to a person who faced the ordeal of willful torture particularly when the perpetrator was government functionary doing it in consonance with the government policy.

## Call for Articles

Voice Against Torture an interdisciplinary human rights organization, aims at making methodical efforts in order to combat serious problems of torture in any part of the globe. It does strive to raise consciousness within the general public, regarding their rights.

Quarterly Newsletter is one of the publications of Voice Against Torture, for which contributions are invited in the form of articles, researches, reports, comments on current issues, news items, poems or short stories, relating either to the issue of torture or to human rights infringements, in any part of the world. It thus serves as a nexus amongst those living poles apart, in distant lands, for exchanging and sharing of the views, thus minimizing the psychic, social, and, physical boundaries.

Manuscripts must be from 3000-5000 words, typed in English language, double-spaced, and sent via e-mails. References/bibliography need be numbered, if provided with the article. Similarly, brief biographical details must be supplied, including the author's name, designation, qualifications, etc. The editor however, retains the right to suggest any change in style, if required.

***Final date for submission: 1st May, 2005***  
We would highly appreciate your contribution.

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***Note: The contributors' opinions and statements are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial board.***